

## WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 6 September

### EU Vice-President discusses transport's potential in smart cities

EU Vice-President Siim Kallas, has highlighted the potential role that transport can play in the move to increasingly 'smart' cities at a conference in London to mark the City Climate Leadership Awards. Mr Kallas noted that the urban environment is where many of transport's negative impacts are felt the strongest, stating that this is why urban transport lies at the heart of the European Commission's plans for sustainable smart growth and the transition to a resource-efficient economy. Mr Kallas highlighted the success of the CIVITAS programme, which promotes city initiatives for low-emission vehicles, improved safety and reduced congestion and noted that the EU will continue to support EU countries to develop and implement sustainable urban mobility plans to promote cleaner local transport, particularly public transport. He also highlighted London's investment in recharging infrastructure as a positive step, but noted that the move to cleaner fuel is still held back by the high cost of vehicles, a low level of consumer acceptance, and insufficient numbers of recharging and refuelling stations. Mr Kallas noted that by the end of 2013, the EU's new funding programme for research and innovation – Horizon 2020 - will start. Of its overall budget, the proposed allocation for transport research is € 7.7 billion, which is a 50 % increase on the current budget. Urban transport, logistics, green vehicles and infrastructures are priority areas for funding. Mr Kallas closed by noting that the Smart Cities initiative is not an EU funding programme but a partnership that brings together people, business and organisations to integrate different aspects of innovative technology across the transport, energy and ICT sectors. A Strategic Implementation Plan on the initiative is planned to be announced by mid-October.

(Source: European Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-12-545\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-12-545_en.htm)

### Commission publishes report on trade protectionism

The European Commission has released a report which states that global efforts to battle trade protectionism need to be reinforced to help shield the economic recovery across the world. The report identifies around 150 new trade restrictions introduced over the last year, whereas only 18 existing measures have been dismantled. A total of almost 700 new measures have been identified since October 2008, when the European Commission started monitoring global protectionist trends. Commenting on the report, EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht stated: "All of us need to stick to our pledge to fight back against protectionism. It is worrisome to see so many restrictive measures still being adopted and virtually none abolished. The G20 agreed a long time ago to avoid protectionist tendencies because we all know these only hurt the global recovery in the long run." (Source: European Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-807\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-807_en.htm)



### EPP Group host Reindustrialising Europe event

The centre-right EPP group in the European Parliament has hosted an event on the reindustrialisation of Europe through innovation in industry. The event witnessed an interesting debate

on the state of the German automotive industry's innovation proceedings. Ralf Diemer, Head of the Brussels Office, VDA, German Association of the Automotive Industry highlighted that "technology neutrality means that a regulation like the one on CO2 emission levels for cars should enable all companies to retain their business model so their strengths are not lost".

(Source: EPP Group)

<http://www.eppgroup.eu/>



## Week ahead

### European Commission

Wednesday 11 September

State of the Union Address 2013

### Council of Ministers

13-14 September

Informal Economic and Financial Affairs Council

Ministers are expected to discuss:

- The economic outlook, options for growth and current financial stability within the EU.
- Policy options for improving access to finance for SME's
- Development of the Banking Union and the future shape of the financial system.
- A global standard on the automatic exchange of tax information in order to more effectively tackle tax fraud and evasion.
- Outcomes of the G20 Leaders' Summit (taking place on 5-6 September)

### European Parliament (Plenary - Strasbourg)

Monday 9 September

Fuel Quality Directive (indirect land use charge):

Debate and vote

Monday 9 September

European transport technology strategy for Europe's future sustainable mobility: Debate and vote