

Commission and Council discuss vehicle emissions testing

The European Parliament and European Council both discussed the issue of car emissions testing and Real Driving Emissions this week, in the wake of the recent announcements from VW. On October 6th the Parliament expressed strong support for real-world driving emissions tests and urged the Commission to speed up its work on a new test procedure. The S&D, the EPP, ALDE and the Greens also called for the establishment of an independent European inspection body to ensure the same level of oversight as the US EPA. MEPs stated their anger at the lack of checks at Member State and EU level, and wanted an explanation from the Commissioner as to why this practice was discovered in the United States and not in the EU. Commissioner Bienkowska insisted on the need for proper investigations and said she fully shared the concerns of the Parliament. She promised that the Commission will be accelerating the adoption of a regulatory framework for emissions and changing the approval and surveillance system so that this cannot happen again. In a meeting of the Transport Council on 8 October, Commissioner Bienkowska detailed that the Commission is launching a proposal to improve the legal framework for real driving emissions tests, stating that the second RDE package must be adopted and implemented fast. She hoped for a vote on the Commission proposal by the end of October. (Source: Dods)

Chancellor Merkel and President Hollande address the European Parliament

During the European Parliament's plenary session in Strasbourg this week, a key debate took place on the current situation in Europe with François Hollande, President of the French Republic and Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. In their initial statements, the two EU leaders focused on the crises that Europe has faced in recent years,

ranging from economic to social to the threat of terrorism to the current refugee crisis. They were challenged by MEPs on the current state of the European project, with some calling for stronger leadership, some warning of Europe a la carte and others promoting eurosceptic sentiments. Both leaders held the view that we need more Europe now more than ever before and that we must strive towards a strong and competitive European economy, by using the potential of the Single Market, progressing TTIP negotiations and reaching an ambitious deal at the upcoming COP21 Conference. (Source: CBI)

China uses Juncker Plan to boost involvement in Europe

China could become the largest non-EU contributor to the so-called "Juncker Plan", the European Commission President's flagship investment initiative to revive growth in Europe. European Commission sources told EurActiv that Beijing could invest between five and ten billion euros in the European Fund for Strategic Investments, the EU's guarantee scheme to back risky projects in the EU. Jyrki Katainen, the Commission's Vice-President in charge of the dossier, visited China on 29 September to discuss investment opportunities with Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang, and other members of his cabinet. EU officials and Chinese authorities are examining what instruments could be used to channel the investment. The European Investment Bank has set up a working group to explore areas and opportunities for co-financing and participation from the Chinese side, as well as how further to enhance the exchange of best practices. The group will include experts from China's Silk Road Fund, the Commission, and the EIB.

(Source: [Euractiv](#))

Merkel against Turkey joining the EU

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Wednesday that Turkey's help was needed to stem the flow of refugees to Europe but that this hadn't changed her view that Ankara should not become a member of the European Union. Merkel was an outspoken opponent of Turkey joining the EU before she took power in 2005, advocating instead a "privileged partnership" that stopped short of full membership. But she has avoided using that term or stating her opposition too loudly in recent years, maintaining instead that membership talks between Ankara and the EU, which were launched shortly before she took office, should proceed but have no pre-determined outcome. Turkey's bid has stalled in recent years, as interest from the Turkish side has waned and European officials have grown critical of what they see as increasingly authoritarian policies from Turkish President Erdogan. Now Europe is reaching out to Turkey again, hoping that it can help with the record flows of refugees from its neighbour Syria and other war-torn countries in the Middle East. Mr Erdogan visited Brussels on Monday and was presented with a draft action plan under which Europe would offer more funding for Syrian and Iraqi refugees living in Turkey. (Source: [Euractiv](#))

UNEP – World finance must flow towards low carbon infrastructure

The transition to a more sustainable economy can only be achieved by mobilising more of the world's capital towards climate action, according to a [report published by the United Nations Environment Programme](#) (UNEP) on Thursday. But too much money was still backing high carbon and resource intensive projects. Rules and incentives in financial markets worldwide can discourage sustainable investment, UNEP warned yesterday. UNEP wants changes to the design of the global financial system, including the actions of regulators, governments, and stock exchanges, to boost investment in infrastructure and slow environmental destruction. (Source: [Euractiv](#))

Week ahead

European Council

Monday 12 October

- Foreign Affairs Council – to discuss the latest developments in Syria and migration policy

Thursday 15 – Friday 16 October

- European Council - Items on the agenda include migration, the Economic and Monetary Union and the Referendum in the UK

European Parliament

Monday 12 October

- ENVI – Environmental legislation
- EMPL – EU Social and Labour rights and EU internal market law
- ITRE – State of play of Digital Single Market actions
- TRAN – TEN-T

Tuesday 13 October

- ECON – Annual report on EU competition policy
- ITRE+IMCO – joint meeting: towards a Digital Single Market Act
- JURI – Towards a Digital Single Market Act; Reforming the Brussels II Regulation

Wednesday 14 October

- Plenary meeting – preparation of the European Council meeting; Debate: towards a new international climate agreement

