

WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 26 October

Commission publishes 2013 Work Programme

The European Commission has adopted its Work Programme (CWP) for 2013. President Barroso set out his vision for the EU in his State of the Union address on 12 September, with the overarching task stated as returning the EU to sustainable growth. The Commission Work Programme 2013 (CWP), which was adopted on 23 October, sets out how the Commission will work to this end for the next year and beyond. The CWP announces around 50 new initiatives to be tabled during 2013 and the first part of 2014. Key legislative initiatives need to take into account the end of the current parliamentary legislature in 2014. The Commission has stated that new initiatives addressing concrete challenges will focus on seven key policy areas and will cover:

- **A genuine Economic and Monetary Union:** additional legislation to enhance stability, transparency and consumer protection in the financial sector, based in particular on the blueprint to a genuine economic and monetary union.
- **Boosting competitiveness through the Single Market and industrial policy:** initiatives to cut costs for businesses in areas such as VAT and invoicing, tackle obstacles to competitiveness and encourage key growth sectors through public-private partnerships in research.
- **Connect to compete: building tomorrow's networks today:** modernising networks by liberalising in energy, by boosting investment in infrastructure like broadband, and by modernising Europe's transport and logistics.
- **Growth for jobs: inclusion and excellence:** building up practical support to the unemployed in areas like public employment services, and making sure the EU does its utmost to support social inclusion.
- **Using Europe's resources to compete better:** giving the long-term perspective that is critical to sustainable growth with a framework for energy and climate change to 2030 and dedicated action on air quality and waste.
- **Building a safe and secure Europe:** working to boost justice through a European Public

Prosecutor's Office to protect the EU's financial interests, security by fighting traffic in firearms and consolidating citizenship in the European Year of Citizens.

- **Pulling our weight: Europe as a global actor:** driving forward European interest and values through a new generation of trade agreements, targeted action in the European neighbourhood, and furthering the Millennium Development Goals as the world's leading development cooperation partner.

(Source: European Commission)

http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/key-documents/index_en.htm

European commercial vehicle registrations down 13.7% in September

Figures published by ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association, show that in September commercial vehicle registrations in the EU fell 13.7% to 150,910 units. Of the largest markets, the UK was the only one to expand (+0.7%) while France (-13.4%), Germany (-16.6%), Italy (-28.2%) and Spain (-32.7%) all contracted. From January to September, demand for commercial vehicles was down by 10.7%, to 1,282,248 new registrations. All major markets recorded negative figures: -3.1% in the UK, -4.2% in Germany, -7.7% in France, -25.7% in Spain, -34.6% in Italy. (Source: ACEA)

http://www.acea.be/index.php/news/news_detail/commercial_vehicle_registrations_-_10.7_over_nine_months_-13.7_in_september



European Parliament calls for the commencement of free trade talks with Japan

MEPs have called for the EU to start talks on a free trade deal with Japan, but stated that negotiations should be suspended if Japan fails to remove barriers in key sectors, including EU car sales. Metin Kazak MEP, rapporteur for the vote on the Japan trade resolution has tabled amendments for a binding review clause within one year of the launch of negotiations to allow for a thorough review of progress, stating that the key to success will be to ensure that Japan acts on its commitments to eliminate non-tariff barriers, particularly in the car sector. The non-binding resolution, which reminds the negotiating parties that Parliament can block such trade deals, was passed by a show of hands. The resolution stresses that non-tariff barriers (NTBs) create regulatory or traditional advantages for local business and are harder to eliminate than customs duties. In the past, they have prevented EU businesses from benefiting fully from trade opportunities with Japan. EU exports to Japan could be boosted by up to 71% if tariffs and non-tariff barriers were reduced to the greatest possible extent. MEPs insist that the mandate for the talks should include "clear and measurable targets" for removing NTBs especially in the car sector such as "zoning regulations", restrictions on electric and hybrid vehicles and preferential treatment for Japan's ultra-light "kei cars". (Source: European Parliament) <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/content/20121024IPR54372/html/Start-free-trade-talks-with-Japan-but-make-room-for-EU-car-sales-say-MEPs>

European Parliament adopts resolution on trade with the United States

The European Parliament has adopted a resolution drafted by Rapporteur Vital Moreira (S&D, Portugal) on trade and economic relations with the United States. The resolution was adopted with 526 votes for, 94 against, and with 7 abstentions. At the EU-US Summit on 28 November 2011, leaders established the High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth and tasked it to identify policies and measures to increase transatlantic trade and investment. The Working Group published its Interim Report in June

2011, which stated that both sides had reached the preliminary conclusion that a comprehensive agreement addressing a broad range of bilateral trade and investment policies as well as issues of common concern with respect to third countries would, if achievable, provide the most significant benefit of the various options that have been considered. The European Parliament's resolution welcomes the recommendations contained in the High-Level Working Group's (HLWG) interim report of June 2012, and agrees that a comprehensive agreement should include an ambitious reciprocal market opening in goods, services and investment. Pending the outcome of the final report from the High-Level Working Group, scheduled to be published by the end of this year, the Commission intends to request a negotiating mandate from Council in early 2013, and has set an aspirational timeframe of concluding negotiations within a period of 18 months.

(Source: European Parliament)

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2012-0321+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>



Week ahead

European Commission

No relevant activity

Council of Ministers

29 October – Transport, Telecommunications & Energy Council

- new regulation on the tachograph used in road transport (political agreement);
- update of the rules on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles, intended to improve road safety and protection of the environment (debate);

European Parliament (constituency week)

No relevant activity