



## WEEK IN BRUSSELS



Week ending Friday 19 November 2010

- 1. Focus on Ireland at finance ministers meeting**
- 2. European Commission presents energy infrastructure priorities**
- 3. EU budget negotiations fail to reach conclusion**
- 4. October 2010 European car registration figures published**
- 5. Week ahead**

### **1. Focus on Ireland at finance ministers meeting**

EU finance ministers met this week at the scheduled Economic and Financial Affairs Council amidst the backdrop of financial and economic worries over Ireland. Although the situation facing Ireland's economy was not an official agenda item, a meeting of euro zone member states has led to discussions in Ireland examining possible financial assistance from the EU and the International Monetary Fund. The main results from the Council meeting included ministers giving the go-ahead to a reform of the EU framework for financial supervision, the aim of which is to eliminate deficiencies that were exposed during the financial crisis. The Council also took stock of the outcome of the G-20 summit in Seoul, as well as the October meeting of the European Council and economic governance. European Commission president Jose Manuel Barroso said of the Irish economic situation: "The Irish authorities are committed to working with the Commission, ECB and IMF, to determine the best way to deal with market risks, especially as regards the banking sector. That was the message we've got just yesterday in the Eurogroup. And indeed I welcome the clear will of the Eurogroup to take determined and coordinated action to safeguard the financial stability of the euro area. We have the necessary financial backstops to do so." (Source: Council of the EU)

[www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/117790.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/117790.pdf)

### **2. European Commission presents energy infrastructure priorities**

The European Commission has published a communication outlining its energy infrastructure priorities for the next twenty years. Following last week's publication of the Commission's new energy policy, this announcement defines EU priority corridors for the transport of electricity, gas and oil and details priorities that will serve as a basis for future permit granting and financing decisions on EU projects. Günther Oettinger, EU commissioner for energy, said: "Energy infrastructure is key to all our energy goals: from security of supply, the integration of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency to the proper functioning of the internal market. It is therefore essential that we pull together our resources and accelerate the realisation of EU priority projects." (Source: European Commission)

[europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1512&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1512&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en)

### **3. EU budget negotiations fail to reach conclusion**

EU budget negotiations broke down after discussions between the EU institutions did not reach a satisfactory conclusion for EU spending in 2011. EU budget commissioner Janusz Lewandowski said in a statement: "Despite the best efforts of the Commission and the Belgian Presidency, the Council and the Parliament were unable to reach an agreement on their cooperation on the upcoming negotiations on the next financial framework." He described the situation as "highly regrettable". Failure to agree spending invokes conditions under the Lisbon Treaty meaning that the Commission will present a new draft budget for

approval. The process will likely take several months and from January 2011, EU institutions will work under provisional arrangements where each chapter of the budget will be funded monthly up to a maximum of one twelfth of its appropriations in 2010. The EU budget will be discussed formally at the European Council summit on 16 and 17 December. (Source: European Commission) [europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/10/580&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/10/580&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en)

#### **4. October 2010 European car registration figures published**

ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association, has released figures for October 2010 Europe-wide car registrations. Figures demonstrate that EU new car registrations decreased to 1,027,036 units in October, marking a 16.6% contraction compared to October 2009. Ten months into the year, demand for new cars has decreased by 5.5%. All major markets faced a double-digit downturn in October. (Source: ACEA) [www.acea.be](http://www.acea.be)

#### **5. Week ahead**

##### **European Commission**

Tuesday 23 November 2010: Presentation of the new Europe 2020 flagship initiative "New Skills and Jobs: A European contribution towards full employment"

##### **Council of the EU**

Monday 22 November: General and Foreign Affairs Council

Thursday 25/Friday 26 November: Competitiveness Council - Ministers will discuss implementation of the main elements for a new industrial Policy, development of space policy, implementation of the European Research Area. Ministers will exchange views on the implementation of the "Innovation Union" strategy, with a view to adopting conclusions.

##### **European Parliament (Plenary session, Strasbourg)**

Monday 22 November: Debates on WEEE and Restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment.

Wednesday 24 November: Vote on the bilateral safeguard clause in the EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement