

WEEK IN BRUSSELS

European Commission publishes Communication on skills

The European Commission has published a communication outlining an agenda for new skills and jobs. The European Union has targeted an employment rate for women and men of 75% for the 20-64 years age group by 2020: a commitment to the sustainability of Europe's social model, welfare systems, economic growth and public finances. The economic downturn brought the employment rate down to 69%, and the unemployment rate up to 10%; assuming the labour market stabilises in 2010-2011, achieving an employment rate of 75% by 2020 will require an average employment growth slightly above 1% per annum. With declining birth rates, the EU working age population (15-64) will start shrinking as early as 2012; even with continuing immigrant flows. The Commission says a skilled workforce is essential to develop a competitive, sustainable and innovative economy in line with Europe 2020 goals. (Source: European Commission)

europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/10/602&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en



Martin Callanan elected to lead Conservative MEPs

North East of England MEP, Martin Callanan, has been elected to lead the Conservative delegation in the European Parliament. He won a three-way election, beating Richard Ashworth and Charles Tannock, securing more than 50% of the vote on the first ballot. In addition, Giles Chichester beat Jacqui Foster for the deputy leadership while Ashley Fox and Emma McClarkin were elected to serve on the the bureau, beating Philip Bradbourn and Struan Stevenson. Syed Kamall was returned as Treasurer unopposed. Martin Callanan, leading up to the election, said: "If I am elected leader of the Conservative delegation next week I will ensure that we lend our solid, but not slavish, support to the Conservative led Government in Westminster."

(Source: ConservativeHome)

conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2010/11/martin-callanan-elected-to-lead-the-conservative-meeps.html

EU urged to 'show leadership' in Cancún climate talks

Ahead of the UN climate change negotiations in Cancún next week, the European Parliament has urged EU leaders to show leadership. Next week world leaders will gather in Mexico for the latest attempt to find a legally binding deal that could limit greenhouse gas emissions. In a resolution adopted this week, the Parliament "deplores the fact that there has not been more progress" in preparing for the climate summit. The resolution underlines a target to reduce CO₂ emissions by 30 per cent by 2020 which is "essential for the future sustainable economic growth of the European economy." (Source: TheParliament)

www.theparliament.com/latest-news/article/newsarticle/eu-urged-to-show-leadership-in-cancun-climate-talks/

Catherine Ashton appoints new head of EU Delegation to WTO

Catherine Ashton, EU high representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Commission vice-president, appointed Angelos Pangratis as the new head of EU Delegation to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva. Angelos Pangratis is a Commission official of Greek nationality, currently deputy head of the EU Delegation in Washington. Ms. Ashton said: "As I continue the process of setting up the External Action Service I am delighted to appoint Angelos Pangratis as the new head of the EU Delegation to WTO. The Geneva WTO Delegation is central to the delivery of the EU's common trade policy: Mr Pangratis is an excellent choice for the job." The 54-year-old Greek economist was formerly posted by the European Commission in Argentina, South Africa and South Korea. He was also head of unit on China in Brussels. (Source: EUobserver) euobserver.com/24/31300

Week ahead

European Commission

Wednesday 1 December – Investment in SMEs
Communication looking at the barriers to investment in SMEs

Council of Ministers

Thursday 2 December – Transport Council
Ministers will discuss:

- Draft directive on cross-border exchange of information on traffic offences jeopardising road safety
- Single European railway area
- Public regulated service (PRS) under Galileo programme
- High level group on air cargo security.

The Council will adopt conclusions on the full integration of waterborne transport into the EU transport and logistics chains, and measures to enhance road safety.

European Parliament (Committees Brussels)

29/30 November – IMCO Committee - Visit of Commission on approval and market surveillance of two- or three-wheel vehicles and quadricycles, presentation of impact assessment.

29/30 November – IMCO Committee - An Industrial Policy for the Globalised Era, consideration of draft opinion.

29/30 November/ 1 December – ENVI - Visit of Commission on CO2 reduction potential of heavy commercial vehicles, exchange of views

29/30 November/ 1 December – ENVI - Visit of Commission on indirect land use and biofuels, exchange of views

29/30 November/ 1 December – ENVI - Visit of Commission on emission trading and air pollution, exchange of views

30 November/ 1/2 December – TRAN - European road safety 2011-2020, exchange of views

1/2 December – EMPL - An Industrial Policy for the Globalised Era, consideration of amendments

1/2 December – EMPL - A New Trade Policy for Europe under the Europe 2020 Strategy, First exchange of views

