

## ACEA – Rise in passenger car registrations: +6.7%

ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association, has released the passenger car registration figures for January 2015. Last month, EU passenger car registrations recorded growth for the seventeenth consecutive month (+6.7%), reaching almost 1 million units. Looking at the largest markets, the increase in demand was driven mainly by the significant growth recorded in Spain (+27.5%) and Italy (+10.9%), followed by the UK (+6.7%), France (+6.2%) and Germany (+2.6%). Substantial growth was also posted by the new EU member states (+4.6%) contributing to last month's positive outcome across the region.

(Source: ACEA)

<http://www.acea.be/press-releases/article/passenger-car-registrations-6.7-in-january>

## EU politicians edge towards 2018 start date for carbon reform

EU politicians are expected to agree on a compromise 2018 start date for reforms to the Emissions Trading System (ETS) to try to bridge decisions over efforts to prop up the world's biggest carbon market. In an attempt to boost carbon prices and spur industry to switch to greener energy, the European Commission has proposed a plan to remove hundreds of millions of surplus carbon allowances (EUAs) from the trading system from 2021. Member states Britain and Germany, which back zero-carbon generation based on nuclear or renewable power, have led calls to start sooner, by 2017. But energy-intensive industry and Poland, dependent on carbon-heavy coal, say the original proposal is soon enough. Members of the European Parliament are preparing for the next vote on the market reform on 24 February in the environment committee.

(Source: EurActiv)

<http://www.euractiv.com/sections/energy/eu-politicians-edge-towards-2018-start-date-carbon-reform-312121>

## Commission consults on Capital Markets Union

The European Commission launched its landmark project to unlock funding for Europe's businesses and to boost growth in the EU's Member States with the creation of a true single market for capital. The Capital Markets Union (CMU) aims to break down the barriers that are blocking cross-border investments in the EU and preventing businesses from getting access to finance. With the CMU, the Commission also wants to clear obstacles that are preventing those who need financing from reaching investors. The Commission launched a three-month consultation round, known as a Green Paper, the outcome of which will shape an Action Plan to help unlock non-bank funding so that start-ups can thrive and larger companies can expand further. The purpose of the Green Paper on the CMU is to kick-start a debate across the EU over the possible measures needed to create a true single market for capital. The Commission is seeking feedback from the European Parliament and the Council, other EU institutions, national parliaments, businesses, the financial sector and all those interested. All stakeholders and interested parties are invited to submit their contributions by 13 May 2015 (see link to consultation [page](#)). On the basis of the outcome of this consultation, the Commission will identify the actions that are necessary to achieve the following objectives:

- improve access to finance for all businesses and infrastructure projects across Europe;
- help SMEs raise finance as easily as large companies;
- create a single market for capital by removing barrier to cross-border investments;
- diversify the funding of the economy and reduce the cost of raising capital

(Source: European Commission)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-4433\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-4433_en.htm)

## Euro area international trade in goods surplus €194.8bn

Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, has released figures showing that the first estimate for the euro area (EA18) trade in goods balance within the rest of the world in December 2014 gave a €24.3bn surplus, compared with +€13.6bn in December 2013. The November 2014 balance was +€21.2 bn, compared with +€16.5bn in November 2013. In December 2014 compared with November 2014, seasonally adjusted exports fell by 1.1% and imports by 2.4%. The first estimate for the December 2014 extra-EU28 trade balance was a €12.4bn surplus, compared with +€8.1bn in December 2013. In November 2014 the balance was +€10.5bn, compared with +€2.5bn in November 2013. In December 2014 compared with November 2014, seasonally adjusted exports fell by 1.8% and imports by 1.3%. During 2014, euro area trade in goods recorded a surplus of €194.8bn, compared with €152.3bn in 2013. The EU28 recorded a surplus of €24.2bn in 2014, compared with €51.8bn in 2013.

(Source: Eurostat)

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/6635645/6-16022015-AP-EN.pdf/44edb859-b0e8-423c-9798-d11b610bfc18>



## MEPs back tax investigation committee

The European Parliament has voted to set up a special temporary committee to look into the tax rulings of EU member states. MEPs backed the motion to establish the committee by 612 votes to 19, with 23 abstentions. The idea had been supported in a petition signed by 192 MEPs, following the "Luxleaks" revelations that emerged shortly after the current Commission took office last November. The

leaders of the Parliament's biggest groups blocked the proposals last week, saying that such an inquiry was not the appropriate mechanism to address the issue and arguing that the proposed scope of a full inquiry committee was too vague. A report by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists alleged "sweetheart" tax rulings had been given to large multinational companies in Luxembourg. Speaking before the vote, Green group co-leader Philippe Lamberts said that the decision not to put the inquiry committee proposals to the vote violated the Parliament's rules of procedure.

(Source: BBC)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/europe-31438898>

## Week ahead

### European Parliament

Monday 23 February

- ECON – European Fund for Strategic Investments
- IMCO – Exchange of views with Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President responsible for Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations; TTIP – Challenges and opportunities for the Internal Market
- ITRE – European Energy Strategy; Exchange of views with Günther Oettinger, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society

Tuesday, 24 February

- AFET – The state of EU-Russia relations
- INTA - Recommendations the European Commission on the negotiations for TTIP; Exchange of views on the negotiations for an EU-Vietnam FTA
- ITRE - Recommendations the European Commission on the negotiations for TTIP
- ENVI – Establishment and operation of a market stability reserve for the Union greenhouse gas emission trading scheme
- TRAN – Maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community

Thursday, 26 February

- ECON – Recommendations the European Commission on the negotiations for TTIP

### European Commission

Wednesday 25 February

- Commission presents Energy Union Strategy