

## WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 6 April

### Commission publishes proposals on cross-border vehicle re-registrations

The European Commission has published proposals to simplify cross-border vehicle re-registrations. The Commission says that the proposals will lead to savings of at least € 1.5 billion per year for businesses, citizens and registration authorities. The issue has been highlighted by the Commission as an example of removing barriers within the single market to encourage growth. The Commission says it takes on average 5 weeks to complete the re-registration procedure at present and the cost is estimated at €400. The proposals look to make it easier to re-register cars, vans, buses and trucks within the EU, for example when moving residence from one EU country to another. It will also become impossible to register a stolen car in another EU country. The Commission says that vehicle-rental companies will save substantially, as they will be able to transfer cars to another EU country during the holiday periods without re-registration. European Commission President José Manuel Barroso said: "With today's proposal the Commission wants to make it as easy as possible for citizens and companies to move and register cars across borders in the European Union. Greatly simplified rules for cross-border car registration and a substantial reduction of administrative burden will bring us a step closer to a smooth functioning Single Market, our engine for growth and jobs." (European Commission)

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/242&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

### EU-Ukraine Association Agreement initialled

The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement has been initialled by the EU and Ukraine's chief negotiators following December's EU-Ukraine Summit where leaders announced they had finalised their negotiations on economic and political partnership. The agreement includes provisions on the establishment of a 'Deep and Comprehensive Free

Trade Area' as an integral part. Both sides expressed their common commitment to undertake further technical steps, required to prepare conclusion of the Association Agreement. (Source: European Commission)

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/12/238&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>



### EU and Vietnam move closer to starting trade negotiations

European Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht has announced that the EU and Vietnam have concluded preparations for starting negotiations on a bilateral free trade agreement. Mr De Gucht said: "Today's decision marks a clear desire to deepen trade relations and improve the business environment between the EU and Vietnam. The EU and Vietnam are complementary economies with much to gain from even closer cooperation. In stepping up our trade relations, we will provide new opportunities for importers, exporters and consumers as well as contributing to generating growth in both economies. The EU is committed to increasing its engagement with dynamic Asian emerging markets to boost trade and growth."

(Source: European Commission)

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/339&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

## Commissioner De Gucht speaks at ASEAN business summit

European Trade Commissioner, Karel De Gucht, has delivered a speech at the EU-ASEAN Business Summit in Cambodia. The Commissioner spoke of the European economic crisis and the prospects for growth through trade. He outlined the need of a comprehensive 21<sup>st</sup> century free trade agreement between European and the ASEAN region, highlighting progress in negotiations with Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and other ASEAN partners. (Source: European Commission)

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/12/253&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>



## Commissioner Potočnik speaks on resource efficiency

Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for Environment has delivered a speech on resource efficiency at the OECD's Ministerial Meeting of the Environment Policy Committee in Brussels. He said that resource efficiency is not a choice but is inevitable, outlining that being resource efficient is good for growth, highlighting a McKinsey Resource report suggesting savings of \$3 billion a year by 2030 by using resources more productively. One element that was emphasised included a shift away from the taxation of labour towards environmental taxation. The Commissioner also outlined the five areas in which the EU is proposing to focus on, "sustainable energy, water efficiency, the fight against land degradation and protecting our oceans – all of which are vital for food security - and moving to a zero waste, resource-efficient economy". (Source: European Commission)

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/12/248&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>



## Week ahead

### European Commission

No relevant activity

### Council of Ministers

No relevant activity

### European Parliament (Committee/Group week)

No relevant activity