

Agenda of the European Commission

7 – 13 April 2014

**Background notes from the Spokespersons' service for journalists.
The European Commission reserves the right to make changes.**

Monday 7 – Tuesday 8 April:

Commissioner Hahn shares the lessons learnt in Europe's cities at World Urban Forum, Medellin, Colombia

Wednesday 9 April:

- The Commission adopts the Green Paper on mobile Health
- European Commission to adopt a company law and corporate governance package
- Commission to propose European Platform to tackle undeclared work
- Commission adopts new State aid Guidelines on Energy & Environmental aid

Monday 7 – Tuesday 8 April:

Commissioner Hahn shares the lessons learnt in Europe's cities at World Urban Forum, Medellin, Colombia

The news:

EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn travels to Latin America to participate in the most important meeting point of urban policymakers worldwide. Commissioner Hahn is representing the European Union at the high-profile event, where he will share European cities' experience in tackling the common global challenges of pollution, poverty, sustainable mobility and social equity. The invitation to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat) event in Medellin comes as Commissioner Hahn prepares to unveil a communication on a European Urban Agenda by the end of the year.

Commissioner Hahn will also be meeting regional and central government figures who are active in sustainable development in Latin America.

Since 2007 the EU has a number of international Regional Policy cooperation dialogues and agreements with major global partners, such as Brazil, China, Russia and Japan, as well as Argentina, Chile and Peru.

The background:

Calls for a more concerted approach to policy making affecting cities have come from many international organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UN HABITAT as well as individual countries around the world. There is a global realisation that tackling our most pressing challenges - whether climate change mitigation, energy dependence or job creation, as well as growing the economy can only be done with the help of our towns and cities worldwide.

Commissioner Hahn has championed the cause of cities throughout his time in office and has brought forward a reform of Regional Policy with an emphasis on sustainable urban development, underpinned by strategic investments that deliver measurable results. From 2014-2020, over half of European Regional Development Fund investments will be made in cities and urban areas, reflecting the fact that over two-thirds of Europeans live there and underlying the need for a cross-cutting urban agenda in policymaking.

The principle of multi-level governance underlying EU Regional Policy is of particular interest to many third countries who want to tackle uneven economic development and tap into the potential of their regions.

The event:

- Commissioner Hahn attends the World Urban Forum on 7-8 April in his coordination role of the Commission's urban initiatives, ensuring a "joined up approach". He will address the Ministerial Roundtable on Tuesday morning where about 80 ministers from around the world are expected to attend.
- IP is available from today and speech on RAPID April 8.

The sources:

- [Inspiring non-EU countries – Regional Policy dialogues](#)
- [UN Habitat: World Urban Forum](#)
- [Web access to the urban dimension of EU policies and initiatives](#)
- [Twitter: @JHahnEU @EU_Regional](#)

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Wednesday 9 April:

The Commission adopts the Green Paper on mobile Health

The news:

On 9 April, the European Commission will publish a Green Paper on mobile health (mHealth). This discussion document launches a public consultation which will run until 2 July 2014.

mHealth covers medical and public health practice supported by mobile devices - such as smartphones, tablets and other wireless devices – including lifestyle and wellbeing applications connecting to medical devices and sensors. It is an emerging part of eHealth where Information and Communication Technologies are used to improve health products, services and processes.

The Commission wants inputs and ideas on what should be done to solve several issues in mHealth - such as data protection and users trust, patient safety, contribution to high quality healthcare - and at what level (EU, national, regional).

Along with the Green Paper, the European Commission will also give guidance to app developers through a Staff Working Document analysing the existing EU legal framework applicable to lifestyle and wellbeing apps.

The background:

mHealth is a rapidly developing field, which can improve the quality of healthcare and make it more efficient by supporting healthcare professionals in treating patients and easing continuity of care. Estimates show that the use of mobile devices could help healthcare professionals save up to 30% of their time spent on accessing and analysing information. Technologies like remote monitoring solutions can also give patients a bigger role in healthcare and can keep them living independently in their own home environment.

However, despite this potential, the uptake of mHealth remains limited in EU countries and healthcare authorities may need more evidence before they implement mHealth at a wider scale.

Other barriers include:

- The consequent lack of compliance and transparency may prevent users from trusting these apps and hinder the development of the market.
- A low level of knowledge among app developers of the legal requirements applicable to lifestyle and well-being apps.

The Staff Working Document that the Commission will issue along with the Green Paper, will raise app developers' awareness of the EU rules in data protection, medical devices (helping them determine whether such legislation applies to their apps or not) and consumer directives.

The Green Paper on mHealth was announced in the [eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020](#), where the European Commission recognised the current and potential benefits of mobile health apps, as well as potential associated risks.

Press material:

- A press release will be available on the day, with an accompanying memo giving more examples of mHealth in practice.
- Available on EbS

The sources:

- Information on mHealth: <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/eu-policy-ehealth>

- Information on Commissioner Kroes: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kroes/
- Information on Commissioner Borg: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/borg/cabinet_en.htm

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Wednesday 9 April:

European Commission to adopt a company law and corporate governance package

The news:

On Wednesday 9 April the European Commission will adopt a company law and corporate On Wednesday, 9 April, the European Commission will adopt a company law and corporate governance package, which will include:

- a proposal to revise the [Shareholder Rights Directive](#) to tackle certain corporate governance shortcomings in European listed companies, mainly relating to insufficient engagement of shareholders and lack of adequate transparency.

- a proposal for a Directive on single-member companies to make it easier to set up companies with a single shareholder across the EU; and

- a Commission Recommendation to improve corporate governance reporting by listed companies.

The aim of this package of measures is to improve the corporate governance of companies listed on the stock exchange, which in turn will help to increase the competitiveness and long-term sustainability of these companies, and to provide cost-efficient company law solutions for SMEs which operate across borders.

The background:

Companies play an essential role in strengthening the EU economy. It is important for the Single Market to offer an optimal business environment for all types of companies.

The package of measures to be adopted follows the 2012 [Action Plan on European company law and corporate governance](#) (IP/12/1340) and the Communication on the long-term financing of the European economy (IP/13/274) published on 27 March 2014. Stakeholders were extensively consulted on what they considered to be the most important issues to be tackled at European level to improve corporate governance - see 2011 Green Paper on EU corporate governance (IP/11/404) and the on-line public consultation on the future of European company law (IP/12/149).

The event:

- Internal Market and Services Commissioner Michel Barnier will present the package of measures at a press conference, preceded by a technical briefing – details to be confirmed.
- Press release and memo will be available on the day.
- Available on EbS

The sources:

- Company Law and Corporate Governance http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/index_en.htm
- Commissioner Michel Barnier's website http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/barnier/index_en.htm

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Wednesday 9 April:

Commission to propose European Platform to tackle undeclared work

The news:

On 9 April, the Commission is due to propose the creation of a European Platform on the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work, with the aim to stepping up cooperation between Member States to tackle the issue more effectively. The Platform would bring together Member States' various enforcement bodies, such as labour inspectorates, social security, tax and migration authorities, together with other stakeholders, to exchange best practices on prevention and deterrence measures. The Platform could substantially complement the crucial role played by these authorities in preventing undeclared work.

The background:

[Undeclared work](#) is defined as all paid activities that are lawful as regards their nature but are not declared to public authorities, taking into account differences in the regulations in Member States.

The April 2012 [Employment Package](#) already underlined that transforming informal or undeclared work into regular employment could help to reduce unemployment, as well as the need for improved cooperation between Member States.

The Commission proposal takes into account the result of the consultation launched in July 2013 with representatives of trade unions and employers' organisations on possible future EU measures to prevent and deter undeclared work (see [IP/13/650](#)).

A recent Eurobarometer survey revealed that undeclared work remains a widespread problem in Europe. Around one in ten Europeans (11%) admits that they have bought goods or services involving undeclared work in the previous year, while 4% concede that they have themselves received undeclared pay in return for work. Furthermore, one in 30 (3%) was paid partly in cash by his or her employer— see [IP/14/298](#).

The event:

- László Andor, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion will present the proposal in the Commission's press room.
- Press materials will be available on the day.
- Available on EbS

The sources:

[Eurobarometer "Undeclared work in the EU"](#)

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Wednesday 9 April 2014:

Commission adopts new State aid Guidelines on Energy & Environmental aid

The news:

The European Commission will adopt new Guidelines defining criteria how it will assess public support to energy or environmental projects.

Examples of the measures covered by the Guidelines include: Public support to renewable energy production, exemptions for energy intensive users from the financing of renewables, and investments in energy infrastructure or in capacity mechanisms to ensure security of supply.

The new rules aim at helping Member States to design State aid measures that contribute to reaching their 2020 climate targets, while ensuring they are cost-effective for society and do not cause undue distortions of competition or a fragmentation of the Single Market.

The background:

The new Guidelines will replace the [2008 State aid Guidelines on Environmental Protection](#), which contain assessment criteria for State aid measures in 12 environmental protection areas, such as improving environmental performance or supporting waste management, energy savings or the cleaning up of contaminated sites.

Since 2008, a large part of the public expenditure assessed under these Guidelines has served to promote renewable energy, such as wind and solar energy. Increasingly, Member States have granted State aid also to measures such as energy infrastructure projects or security of supply measures, for which the existing Guidelines do not include compatibility criteria. The scope of the Guidelines will be extended to incorporate assessment criteria for such areas.

The event:

- Vice-President Almunia will give a press conference.
- Available on EbS
- Press details to be announced.

Press release and memo will be available on the day.

The sources:

- European Commission's website on http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/energy/legislation_en.html
- Commissioner Almunia's website: http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/almunia/index_en.htm

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