

Agenda of the European Commission ***9 – 15 March 2015***

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

Monday 9 March:

The Commission releases the 2015 edition of the Justice Scoreboard

Saturday 14 – Wednesday 18 March:

Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

Monday 9 March:

The Commission releases the 2015 edition of the Justice Scoreboard

The news:

The European Commission will release the third edition of the Justice Scoreboard on 9 March. Věra Jourová, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality will present the main findings of the 2015 edition.

The 2015 Scoreboard includes more fine-tuned data and new indicators, including use of IT, alternative dispute resolution (ADR) efficiency of courts in public procurement, and gender balance among judges. For the first time, it will identify possible trends in the three key sections: efficiency, quality, and independence of justice.

The background:

The EU Justice Scoreboard is an information tool aiming to assist the EU and Member States to achieve more effective justice by providing objective, reliable and comparable data on the quality, independence and efficiency of justice systems in all Member States. It covers civil, commercial and administrative justice.

Effective justice systems are important structural components of economic growth and play a key role in restoring confidence throughout the entire business cycle. In Member States with sound and reliable justice systems, creditors are more likely to invest, and firms are discouraged from opportunistic behaviour. More effective courts promote the entry of entrepreneurs into the market and foster competition.

The Scoreboard contributes to identifying good practices, improvements and aims to present trends on the functioning of the national justice systems over time. It does not present an overall single ranking but an overview of the functioning of all justice systems based on various indicators which are of common interest for all Member States.

The Justice scoreboard contributes to the European Semester, the EU's annual economic policy coordination process that aims to boost Member States' economic performance and competitiveness. The Scoreboard indicators may eventually lead the Commission to propose to the Council country-specific recommendations on the need to improve the justice systems. In 2014, 12 Member States received country specific recommendations relating to the justice system.

The event:

- Commissioner Jourová will present the 2015 Justice scoreboard on Monday 9 March at 12:00 in the press room.
- Available on EbS

The sources:

Press releases, a Q&A and a fact sheet will be available.

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Saturday 14 – Wednesday 18 March:

Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

The news:

Kristalina Georgieva, Vice-President of the European Commission and Christos Stylianides, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, will lead the European Union's delegation to the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, taking place in Sendai, Japan. The conference in Sendai will review the Hyogo Framework for Action and aims to conclude the international negotiations on a new framework for disaster risk reduction.

The background:

Disaster risk has increased significantly and cost the EU alone around €100 billion during the last decade. On average, natural disasters cause the death of more than 100,000 people every year worldwide. Risk reduction, prevention and management policies are essential to reduce the impact of disasters thereby saving lives and underpinning economic development.

The Hyogo Framework for Action 'Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters' is a 10-year plan adopted by 168 United Nations Member States that committed to make the world safer from natural hazards and building disaster resilience.

Adopted in 2005, the Hyogo Framework for Action is due to expire in 2015 and a wide negotiation process has taken place on shaping the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction that is foreseen to be finalised at the upcoming World Conference.

The EU has taken a leading role in building a robust and ambitious post-2015 framework, which is to place disaster risk reduction as a key element of sustainable development efforts, to define further steps to reduce risks and foster resilience. In April 2014, the European Commission adopted a Communication on The Post 2015 Hyogo Framework for Action: Managing Risks to achieve Resilience. This document has served as basis for discussions between the Member States, the European Parliament and other stakeholders for the common EU position for the global negotiations in Sendai.

The event:

The third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will take place in Sendai, Japan from 14 to 18 March 2015. EbS will cover the event.

The sources:

- Memo on 'Boosting global efforts to reduce the impact of disasters: Commission charts the course for EU action': [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-14-268_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-268_en.htm)
- World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction: <http://ec.europa.eu/echo/en/partnerships/european-and-international-cooperation/third-world-conference-disaster-risk-reduction>

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