



New
Direction

the foundation for european reform

THE HERALD

newdirectionfoundation.org follow us @europeanreform



From Saturday 16 to Sunday 17 April, EU HR/VP Federica Mogherini will lead a high-level delegation to Iran including Commissioners Elbieta Bienkowska, Violeta Bulc, Miguel Arias Cañete, Carlos Moedas, Tibor Navracsics, Christos Styliandes, and Karmenu Vella. The EU delegation will explore different sectors of cooperation with Iran, following on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.



OFFICIAL CAMPAIGNS FOR BREXIT VOTE ANNOUNCED

EURACTIV.COM

Britain's elections watchdog named the two lead campaigns for the EU referendum on Wednesday (13 April), a status that brings higher spending limits and public funds, leaving one disappointed organisation seeking legal advice.

The UK Electoral Commission decided against the campaign group backed by UK Independence Party (UKIP) leader Nigel Farage and in favour of Vote Leave, the group supported by Conservative Mayor of London Boris Johnson.

The Stronger in Europe group was granted lead status on the "Remain" side, which is supported by Prime Minister David Cameron, as the only organisation that had applied.

Farage was gracious in defeat, urging all campaigners for a Brexit to join forces. But his Leave.EU group, which is backed by UKIP donor Arron Banks, said it was consulting lawyers about a legal challenge – and warned that any action could delay the referendum.

"I am thoroughly unsatisfied with the Electoral Commission's decision for a variety of reasons that I will be making clear in my application for judicial review," Banks said in a statement.

"It is to be regretted that this process may put the referendum back until October but if we are to avoid the most important vote of our lives being rigged then I feel duty bound to take this course of action."

Lead campaign status brings with it a spending limit of £7 million (8.7 million euros) for each side, significantly more than the £700,000 that other registered campaign groups can spend.

[READ MORE](#)



MEPS RAP POLAND OVER RULE OF LAW

EURACTIV.COM



MEPs passed a non-binding resolution on Wednesday, calling on the Polish authorities to restore the ability of Poland's Constitutional Tribunal to uphold its Constitution and guarantee respect for the rule of law. The resolution, passed by 513 votes to 142 with 30 abstentions, wraps up a plenary debate held in January.

[READ MORE](#)



ITALIAN COASTGUARD RESCUES 4,000 MIGRANTS IN TWO DAYS

EUOBSERVER.COM



Italy's coastguard said Tuesday it had rescued some 4,000 migrants in the past two days, indicating that Libya is the new main point for migrants trying to reach Europe. A vessel from the EU border agency Frontex and a Greek cargo ship assisted the Italian navy in the rescue operations.

[READ MORE](#)



JEAN-CLAUDE JUNCKER BLASTS TURKEY'S ATTEMPT TO MUZZLE GERMAN COMEDIAN

POLITICO.EU

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said Wednesday the EU would not abandon its fundamental values despite making a deal with Turkey to stem migrant flows, after criticism over Ankara's response to a German satirist. "One thing is clear to me: No matter how important the work for refugees may be, our values on press freedom and fundamental values do not change," Juncker said at the European Parliament's plenary session.

[READ MORE](#)



MACEDONIA FIRES TEAR GAS AT MIGRANTS ON GREEK BORDER

EKATHIMERINI.COM

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) border police fired tear gas and stun grenades on Wednesday at several dozen frustrated refugees and migrants protesting the closure of the border in northern Greece, in the latest saga along the migrant trail to Europe. Protestors demanded Macedonian police open the border, while some attempted to break through the razor wire, triggering the Macedonian response. Greek police then intervened to break up the crowd.

[READ MORE](#)



TSIPRAS, HOLLANDE AGREE GREEK REVIEW SHOULD BE FINISHED QUICKLY

EKATHIMERINI.COM

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and French President Francois Hollande agreed that Athens must fulfill its obligations and conclude the first review of Greece's rescue package as quickly as possible - by next week if possible. They met in Paris in a bid by Tsipras to enlist France's help to break the deadlock with the country's creditors and conclude negotiations on the review of Greece's third bailout which were suspended on Tuesday until next week.

[READ MORE](#)



MEPS APPROVE EXTRA FUNDS TO HELP REFUGEES AND FIGHT TERRORISM

EUROPARL.EUROPA.EU

Parliament gave its green light for €100 million in EU emergency aid for refugees within the EU and €2 million to hire new staff for the EU law enforcement agency EUROPOL's European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC), in a vote on Wednesday. Given the urgency of these measures, MEPs fast-tracked their approval of the funds, in the first draft amending budget of 2016. The procedure was completed in just over a month.

[READ MORE](#)



PARLIAMENT BACKS FOUR OUT OF FIVE NOMINEES TO THE COURT OF AUDITORS

EUROPARL.EUROPA.EU

Parliament approved nominations to the European Court of Auditors from Slovenia, Latvia, Czech Republic and Slovakia, but rejected that from Poland, in plenary votes on Wednesday, on the basis of Budgetary Control Committee recommendations. The Maltese nominee, Anthony Abela, had previously withdrawn his candidature in response to the committee's negative opinion. The final decision on appointments to the Luxembourg body will be taken by the EU Council of Ministers.

[READ MORE](#)



New
Direction
the foundation for european reform



New
Direction

the foundation for european reform

14 APRIL, 2016

THE AGENDA

newdirectionfoundation.org follow us @europeanreform

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

- 9:00 the **plenary session** continues in Strasbourg. On the agenda: Meeting the antipoverty target in the light of increasing household costs (report by **Tamás Meszerics**, Greens/EFA), Short presentation of the following report: Private sector and development (report by **Nirj Deva**, ECR). Debates on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law: Pakistan, in particular the attack in Lahore, Honduras: situation of human rights defenders, Nigeria. 12:00 VOTES followed by explanations of votes: Protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data (recommendation for second reading by **Jan Philipp Albrecht**, Greens/EFA), Processing of personal data for the purposes of crime prevention (recommendation for second reading by **Marju Lauristin**, S&D), Use of Passenger Name Record data (EU PNR) (second report by **Timothy Kirkhope**, ECR), Motions for resolutions concerning debates on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law (Rule 135), Protection of trade secrets against their unlawful acquisition, use and disclosure (report by **Constance Le Grip**, EPP), Parliament's estimates of revenue and expenditure for the financial year 2017 (report by **Indrek Tarand**, Greens/EFA), 2015 Report on Turkey - motion for a resolution, 2015 Report on Albania - motion for a resolution, 2015 Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina - motion for a resolution, Meeting the antipoverty target in the light of increasing household costs (report by **Tamás Meszerics**, Greens/EFA), **Private sector and development** (report by **Nirj Deva**, ECR). 15:00 Debates: Impact of the immigration crisis on the transport sector in the EU - Commission statement, Autonomous driving - oral question.
- 12:00 **President Schulz** officially welcomes and meets **Alexis Tsipras**, Prime Minister of Greece.

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- **Informal EU meeting of transport and environment ministers** to discuss the future of European transport takes place in Scheepvaartmuseum, Amsterdam.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

- **The Commission state aid inquiry on capacity mechanisms** shows they can increase security of electricity supply but many Member States must be more thorough assessing whether they are necessary and in their design to ensure they are targeted and cost-effective. Unnecessary and badly designed capacity mechanisms can distort competition, hinder electricity flows across borders and lead to consumers overpaying for electricity. The Commission now invites Member States, stakeholders in the electricity sector and others to submit comments on its initial findings.

WHO WHEN WHERE

- The European Commission has appointed **Ms Gertrud Ingestad** as **Director-General of its department for Informatics** and **Ms Florika Fink-Hooijer** as **Director-General of its department for Interpretation**. The Commission also appointed three Deputy Directors-General: **Ms Maive Rute** to its **Joint Research Centre**, **Mr Maciej Popowski** to its department for **Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations**, and **Mr Patrick Child** to its department for **Research and Innovation**.
- The European Commission decided to appoint **Mr Mikel Landabaso Álvarez** to the position of **Director "Strategy and corporate communication"** in its Directorate-General for Communication as of 16 April 2016. Furthermore, **Mark Johnston** will take up his new position as **Director "Resources"** in the Directorate-General for **Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations**.

17. 4. CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS



Ulrike TREBESIUS
ECR
(45)



Adam GIEREK
S&D
(78)



Albert DESS
EPP
(69)



Algirdas SAUDARGAS
EPP
(68)