

**Dear members and friends of
the ECRN,**

2010 has started with a full agenda for our association - and a new Commission.

Therefore we use this edition of the inside news to introduce to you some relevant Commissioners which will cross our association's way during the coming years.

Inside the ECRN we keep on our schedule and organize our General Assembly and our Executive Board Meeting end of February at the Representation of the Free State of Bavaria in Brussels. Currently the secretariat is busy with the preparation of these events, the final planning and organization.

As every year: we count on our members and your continuous support of our unique network.

We look forward welcoming you in Brussels soon and I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Michael Hack

Director of the ECRN Network
Secretariat



ECRN Team in January 2010!

**ECRN Inside
News**

January 2010

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ECRN Affairs

Reminder: ECRN meetings in February 2010

On 25th and 26th February 2010, the ECRN starts into the new year with three important internal meetings which will all take place in the Representation of member region Bavaria in Brussels: On 25th February from 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., all ECRN members are warmly invited to attend the first Permanent Working Group meeting of 2010. On 3:30 p.m. of the same day, the first Executive Board meeting of 2010 will take place. The day will end with the opportunity for ECRN members to participate in a networking dinner which will take place at 7 p.m. in the same location and to which also MEPs from the chemical regions are invited. In the morning of the 26th February, the annual ECRN General Assembly meeting will start at 9:30 a.m. and will be located also in the Bavarian repre-

sentation. The General Assembly meeting is the most important internal ECRN event of the year, and among other things, ECRN President's and Director's reports on 2009, the election of Presidium's members and decisions on working and budget plan for 2010 are on the agenda of the meeting.

The draft agendas of the different meetings, the draft budget and working plans will be sent to the members in the coming days. ECRN members are warmly invited to attend the February events and to register their participation before 5th February 2010 by sending an email to ecrn@ecrn.net

In case of any further questions, please contact the ECRN Secretariat.

Outlook: ECRN Congress in 2010 on 7th October in Brussels

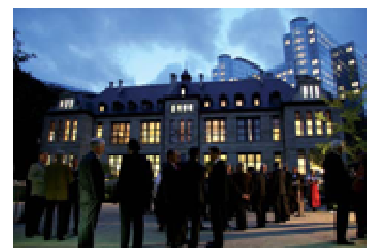
Apart from the events on 25th and 26th February mentioned above, the exact date is fixed also for the 7th ECRN Congress already and ECRN members are warmly invited to save the date in their agendas: The 8th ECRN Congress will take place on 7th October 2010 in Brussels and will

be co-organized by ECRN and the Belgian partners. ECRN members will receive more information in due time.

For any questions, please contact the ECRN Network Secretariat.



Upcoming ECRN events on the 25th and 26th of February will take place in cooperation with member region Bavaria



Representation of member region Bavaria in Brussels

ECRN Affairs

Dear ECRN members,

I have recently joined the ECRN as an intern since the beginning of 2010. This is my first professional experience after the completion of my master's degree in European Studies from the Catholic University of Leuven in September 2009. My internship at the ECRN so far has shown me of how the organizational communication of an association is important for the provision and flow of information. Meanwhile, I am having the opportunity to get an insight of the cur-

rent situation of the chemical industry in Europe and the discussions that have been raised over the EU's concern of its security of supply.

I am looking forward to continue my work and to meet you finally on the upcoming ECRN events!

My best regards,

Joana Jácome



Press Clippings

"Chemical cocktails": The effects of multiple chemicals exposure

In conformity with a Euroactiv article (5/1/2010), there is a wide consensus for the need for EU legislation action regarding the exposure of human and animal health to multiple chemicals. The so-called "Chemical cocktails", which refer to the combined effects of chemicals that appear safe in isolation but when absorbed together contain several health risks such as declining sperm counts or increased rates of cancer, have long been the central focus of environmental and health NGOs. At the last environment ministers meeting in 2009, conclusions were adopted on the combined effects of chemicals. The ministers agreed that assessments for individual chemicals are not sufficient to evaluate risks and asked the Commission to adapt EU legislation in order to address the "chemicals cocktails" issue.

In accordance to an article from Chemistry World (12/1/2010), the REACH legislation that registers, evaluates, authorizes and restricts chemicals, only covers the risks to health from individual chemicals; it does not take into consideration the cumulative effect of different substances. The environment counselor at the Swedish Representation to the EU, Ulf Björnholm commented there is insufficient knowledge within the EU on risk assessments to the combined effects of chemicals, because they are usually performed on a chemical-by-chemical basis. The environment ministers referred to a recent Danish study, which measured the substances to which two-year-old children are exposed through food, water, air and objects at home, that showed that the chemicals...



Press Clippings

combined effects can cause much more injuries than one expected. The EU ministers were deeply concerned with the effects of endocrine disrupters, which are substances capable of interfering with human and wildlife hormone systems with dangerous consequences for the development of the brain and reproductive organs.

The European Commission's reaction for 2010 is to start a study that assesses the risks related to

exposure to multiple chemicals and to provide an evaluation in order to see the extent to which EU legislation is sufficiently capable of managing the risks from combined exposure and to find appropriate alternatives.

For more information, please consult the EuroActiv Website (<http://www.euractiv.com>) and you may visit the following website: <http://www.rsc.org/chemistryworld/News>

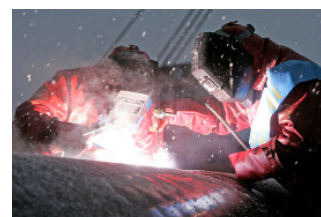
REACH list of chemicals under scrutiny

In accordance to a EuroActiv article from the 15th January 2010, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) added fourteen chemicals to the list of Substances of Very High Concern (SVHC) to the REACH regulation for health and safety scrutiny.

ECHA presented the first list of chemicals in 2008 which will be put on a priority list and which need to be under scrutiny before their authorization. The companies have legal obligations to inform their customers and consumers with information, notify ECHA or provide safety data, once a substance has been included on the list. For many public interest groups and NGOs, to the current list which has 29 substances, 270-odd substances should be added. Six member states - Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Sweden

and the Netherlands convened an informal group in order to help other member states to choose the most relevant substances for inclusion on the list. For the new Commissioner-designate, Janez Potočnik the REACH regulation is insufficient to cover nanomaterials, suggesting therefore the required action from the EU.

For more information, please consult the EuroActiv Website: <http://www.euractiv.com>



Press Clippings

Green reactions towards the Nord Stream pipeline

According to a EuroActiv article (8/1/2010), the Estonian Green Movement and the Estonian Fund for Nature have accused the EU member states of failing to comply with EU environmental laws, facing their permission to construct the Nord Stream pipeline; therefore they ask the European Commission to take action against the EU countries. The Estonian environmental groups argue that Denmark, Finland, Germany and Sweden have violated EU directives on environmental impact assessment (EIA) and conservation of wild birds and habitats.

In addition, it was pointed out that in many parts of national environmental impact assessments data is misused in the approval process. The Nord Stream pipeline (a Russian-German-Dutch project) located in the Baltic Sea, which is of key importance for the EU's security strategy, is intended to deliver natural gas straight from

Russia to Germany and its construction is due to start in April. The Commission does not have the power to stop the gas pipe's construction, but NGOs are confident that the Commission will ask member states to implement the EU directives properly.

The policy advisor from the Estonian Green Movement has criticized that the overall impact of the pipeline is being assessed by each country individually, as they look at the part of the pipeline that will run through their sea territory, leaving aside the overall cumulative impact. The Nord Stream team commissioned a report to assess the potential impact, however the World Wildlife Fund group commented that that was insufficient, mentioning the lack of data for instances.

Please consult EuroActiv Website: <http://www.euractiv.com>

Selection of Funding Calls

Below you will find for your information some recent calls for European Funding programs of potential relevance for the ECRN members. It is a selection and makes no claim to be complete. These are some calls and programs which could be worth to be looked at in more detail, depending on regional priorities. For more details on the different programs, please refer to the web-addresses given.

Very recent news: The new calls for applications for 2010 for the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) are now open and can be found by following the respective link in the table below. The new work programme for the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP) can be accessed now as well.

In case of any suggestions or questions, please feel free to contact the ECRN Secretariat.

Call Identifier	Call Title	Funding Scheme	Eligibility Conditions	Deadline	Website
	Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP)	Erasmus Grundtvig Comenius Leonardo da Vinci	The Lifelong Learning Programme applies to all types and levels of education and vocational education and training, for details please check the different sub-programmes of interest	Deadlines differ for every sub-programme.	http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/doc848_en.htm
FP7-NMP-2010-CSA-4	Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and new Production Technologies Call	FP7-Cooperation (Nanosciences etc.)	applicable under certain conditions to non-profit bodies, secondary and higher education establishments, research organisations and SMEs	02 February 2010	http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.CooperationDetailsCallPage&call_id=261
SP1-JTI-CS-2009-02	Clean Sky JTI 2009-02	FP7—Cooperation (Joint Technology Initiative)	applicable under certain conditions to non-profit bodies, secondary and higher education establishments, research organisations and SMEs	23 February 2010	http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.CooperationDetailsCallPage&call_id=299
FP7-ENERGY-2010-2	FP7-ENERGY-2010-2	FP7-Cooperation (Energy)	applicable under certain conditions to non-profit bodies, secondary and higher education establishments, research organisations and SMEs	04 March 2010	http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.CooperationDetailsCallPage&call_id=264
	Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP)	Sub-programme of CIP (Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme)	See newly available work programme for 2010		http://ec.europa.eu/cip/document/work-programmes/index_en.htm

Agence Europe - Summary

EU aid to Energy Technology

In accordance to an Agence Europe article from the 9th of December 2009, the European Commission has granted € 1.5 billion to 15 energy projects in order to enhance the EU energy supply security and to lower its Co2 emissions. Six carbon capture and storage projects (CCS) have received in total €1 billion, whereas € 565 million were granted to nine offshore wind farms. The total fund granted is part of the European recovery plan which main goal has been to fund European Key energy projects in 2009 and 2010.

The decision to fund projects for the electricity and gas sectors will take place in February 2010. The previous Commissioner for Energy, Andris Piebalgs considered that the Commission's initiative to fund the 15 projects is essential for the development of innovative energy technology and for the EU's fight against climate change.

For further information on this article, please consult the Agence Europe website: <http://www.agenceurope.com>



The Gas Coordination Group discusses energy supply security

According to an Agence Europe article from the 15th of December 2009, the EU gas supply prospects for the winter 2009/2010 led the Gas Coordination Group, composed of representatives of the member states, gas industry, consumers and national regulators, under the chairmanship of the Commission, to gather on the 15th of December 2009 to discuss the EU's capabilities and of the Energy Community of South East Europe to face the possible interruption of energy supply.

The EU and Gazprom representatives considered the energy supply of the EU market by the Russian's largest energy company, Gazprom and its investment strategy in Rus-

sia and the EU. Views were exchanged with the Ukrainian gas company Naftogaz regarding the Russian gas supply through Ukraine to the EU. The Group's meeting took into account the need to ensure gas supply protection to the customers from central and south-eastern Europe, affected by the gas crisis in January 2009. The Group assessed gas infrastructure development in the EU and the security of supply, matters that are to be included in the 10 year network plan being developed by the European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas (ENTSOG) and the European Regulators' Group for...



Agence Europe - Summary

Electricity and Gas (ERGEG). Finally, it was determined the best responses to possible regional and European supply-break-scenarios.

As stated by a Lithuanian News Website called Penki, the Gas Coordinator Group held a meeting on the 12th of January 2010, the security of supply and the top priorities for work of the Group being the main topics under discussion. The Commission observed that storage levels in the EU are higher than last year's levels, welcoming therefore the ability of the European gas industry to ensure continuous gas supplies to all consum-

ers. The next meeting will take place on the 15 February 2010.

The Gas Coordination Group was convened in 2006 in line with directive 2004/67/EC as a means to help member states facing supply cuts. The directive has recently been amended by the Commission in order to enhance measures capable of having more effective action in the event of a gas crisis.

More information can be found on the Agence Europe website (www.agenceurope.com) and you can visit the following website: <http://news.penki> (Accessed on the 18th of January)



ELENA facility designed to help cities and regions to promote energy efficiency

As stated by Agence Europe on the 15th December 2009, the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) granted aid to local and regional authorities to promote investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable transport. The European Local Energy Assistance (ELENA) facility has been designed to help cities and regions with technical assistance, to structure and implement projects efficiently in order to attract outside funding.

The technical assistance will be provided by the Intelligent Energy Europe II (IEE) programme, with a

budget of € 15 million euro for the facility's first year of operation. ELENA facility will support the Covenant of Mayors, which has been signed by several member states, to help local authorities and regions to reduce their Co2 emissions by more than the EU target of 20% by 2020.

For further information on this article, please consult the Agence Europe website: <http://www.agenceurope.com>



ECRN Special

The new European Commissioners relevant for the ECRN

The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso has chosen the new European team which is composed of twenty-seven commissioners. In the new team you will find new members and previous commissioners who will hold new portfolios. The new College includes nine women.

The portfolios have been subject to change: A new portfolio - Climate Action - has been created, which will be under the authority of the Danish politician Connie Hedegaard, setting therefore the spirit of action of the new Commission. Most of the portfolios have been remodeled, for instances Directorate General (DG) Enterprise and Industry (ENTR), which loses the Better Regulation Unity to the Secretariat General, the Pharmaceutical Products and Cosmetics Units to DG Health and Consumers (SANCO) and the co-ordination of the Trans-Atlantic Economic Council (TEC) to DG Trade. DG Energy and Transport (TREN) has been separated, reserving for each policy area a different authority. The Satellite Navigation Units move to DG ENTR from the previous Energy and Transport portfolio and the Global Navigation Satellites System Supervision Agency (Galileo) comes under the Industry and Entrepreneurship portfolio.

The European Commission represents and upholds the interests of Europe as a whole and each Commissioner has responsibility for a particular EU policy area. The new EU Commissioners are nominated by their national

governments in consultation with the in-coming President, and must be approved by the European Parliament. The current nominees will take office of the designated portfolios until 31 October 2014, after the European Parliament's vote of consent on the 26 of January. The Commissioner designates whose activities are of utmost importance for the ECRN are the following:

Antonio TAJANI holds the Industry and Entrepreneurship portfolio and is Vice-President;

Günther OETTINGER is the responsible for the Energy portfolio

Janez POTOČNIK is taking care of the Environment portfolio;

Connie HEDEGAARD is the new authority for the Climate Action portfolio;

Johannes HAHN is in charge of the Regional Policy portfolio;

Siim KALLAS holds the portfolio of Transport and is Vice-President;

Catherine ASHTON is the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security and is Vice-President.

The Treaty of Lisbon envisages the creation of a permanent Council President, serving a two-and-half-year term. The Belgian Herman van Rompuy is the first President of the European Council.

In the following, the Commissioners and the Council President mentioned above will be presented in more detail.



José Manuel Barroso

ECRN Special

Industry and Entrepreneurship

Antonio Tajani has been nominated for the Industry and Entrepreneurship portfolio. The Italian politician was European Commission's Vice-President and commissioner for the Transport portfolio since 2008. One cannot deny that Tajani's involvement with the European political life was of a paramount importance for his renomination. The Commissioner-designate was member of the Convention on the Future of Europe, which formulated the text of the European Constitution. In 2006, Antonio Tajani was re-elected Vice-Chair of the European People's Party at the EEP Congress in Rome. The Commissioner has 15 years experience at the European Parliament with participation in several committees such as Foreign Affairs, Constitutional Affairs, Transport and Tourism, Fisheries, Security and Defence.

Prior to this, he was a Spokesman for the President of the Italian Council of Ministers during the first Berlusconi Government. Tajani has worked as a professional journalist and parliamentary journalist Editor of the Italian weekly 'Il Settimanale' for the RAI 1 radio news programme. The Italian politician graduated in Law from the "La Sapienza" University.

In accordance with the political guidelines, the Commissioner for industry and entrepreneurship is supposed to develop a strategic framework for an integrated industrial policy, while preparing the transition to a lower carbon intense economy that conducts the success of the EU2020 agenda. The Commissioner-designate will also be in charge of promoting the development of SMEs in Europe and implementing and developing a new culture for entrepreneurship in Europe. In addition, due to the Treaty of Lisbon the Commissioner responsible for the Directorate General Enterprise and Industry, has more competences towards space policy.

As for Antonio Tajani Industry is an important portfolio for the single market, the Commissioner considers that the Commission will enter in a new engagement by focusing on an important sector, which is tourism. The Commissioner added that having the Galileo project, which is an European initiative for the development of a global satellite navigation system that aims at exploiting the opportunities provided by satellite navigation, is of considerable importance for the Directorate General Enterprise and Industry.



Antonio Tajani

ECRN Special

Energy Portfolio

Günther Oettinger is a German politician who has been nominated as the next Commissioner for Energy. Since 2005 Oettinger holds the position of Minister-President of the federal state of Baden-Württemberg in Germany. The Commissioner-designate belongs to Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union and will replace Günther Verheugen, who has served as Vice-president and Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry.

The new nominee for Energy Commissioner graduated in law and economics from the University of Tübingen, one of the eldest universities in Germany. His nomination to the post was surprisingly received by some observers of the European political scene.

According to the political guidelines established by President José Barroso, the next responsible for the Energy portfolio, which will be under the Directorate General Energy and Transport, is in charge of the functioning of the Single Market for Energy. The Commissioner is supposed to design a long-term strategy to decarbonise the energy inputs, which should include the policies for energy efficiency and the 2006 action plan. The latter consists of the plan to cut European energy consumption by 20% by 2020 in order to reduce the EU's dependency on imported

oil and gas, whereby the goal of preventing 780 million tonnes of CO₂ from being emitted could also be accomplished as set in the Kyoto Protocol. The Commissioner will lead the energy research on industry-driven applied technologies and on the development of a European super-grid and will guide the EU framework for safety in nuclear power.

As for Günther Oettinger the key important questions are the carbon-free vision for 2050, a more concrete energy policy agenda for 2030, and revision of the EU's policies on supporting new energy infrastructure. Oettinger has already listed five priorities for his term: energy efficiency, low carbon technologies, energy infrastructures, implementation of the third package of legislative measures for EU energy markets and, finally, external energy relations.

For the Commission-designate attention will be paid to the energy strategy for 2020 which should be integrated in a road map for a carbon-free energy system by 2050.



Günther Oettinger

ECRN Special

Environment Portfolio

The current Slovenian Commissioner for Science and Research Janez Potočnik has been designated as the next Commissioner for the Environment. Before acceding to his current post, Potočnik joined primarily as European Commissioner for Enlargement. Prior to his work at the European Commission since 2004, Potočnik served as Minister for Foreign Affairs (2002-2004) in Slovenia.

The new nominee for Commissioner for Environment graduated in Economics from the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. In 1993 Potočnik got his PhD in Economics from the same University. The current Commissioner had an important participation as head of the negotiating team for the Accession of Slovenia to the EU between 1998 and 2004.

In accordance to the political guidelines, the Commissioner for Environment is supposed to ensure that Environment policy has a paramount significance for a greener economy. This presupposes the elaboration of action plans for eco-innovation, environmental technology and the next phase of Sustainable Consumption and Production to make the EU more resource efficient. The Commissioner-designate will also be in

charge of contributing to the EU air, land and water management policies to increase the resilience of ecosystems. The Directorate General for Environment will be reconfigured with the creation of the Directorate General responsible for Climate Action.

As for Janez Potočnik who mentioned his priorities for the Environment portfolio, the Slovenian politician considers to promote a green economy, halting the loss of biodiversity and improving environmental legislation. Potočnik has confirmed his satisfaction in assuming the leadership of this portfolio since for him the environment is "a crucial area for Europe's future and that of the planet as a whole".



Janez Potočnik

ECRN Special

Climate Action Portfolio

Connie Hedegaard is a Danish politician nominated for the newly created Climate Action portfolio. The Danish nominee held the post of Minister for Climate and Energy (2007-2009), Minister for Environment (2004-2007) and as President of the UN climate change conference in Copenhagen (COP15) in December 2009. The new Commissioner nominee has been involved not solely in politics; in fact Hedegaard was a journalist during the 1990s until 2004 when she joined the team of the Danish Prime-Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

In the mid-way of the Climate Change Copenhagen summit in December 2009, Hedegaard resigned her post being replaced by Danish Prime-Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen. Even though she said that the move was merely procedural, the rumors for her resignation are connected with the pressure from poorer nations who have accused her of favouring industrialised countries. In addition, it is said that Hedegaard opposed to some of the elements in the "Danish Text" prepared by a small group of rich nations. Now the Danish politician is back in control over the climate change fight as head of the new Directorate General Climate Action.

As stipulated in the political guidelines, the new Commissioner

will lead international negotiations on climate and will be responsible for helping the EU to meet the 2020 targets. The Commissioner will be in charge of developing and implementing the EU emissions trading system with the final goal of building an international carbon trading market. The new authority will have the responsibility of promoting low carbon and adaptation technologies and to work in conjunction with other Commissioners to ensure that an appropriate climate dimension is present in all Community policies.

For Connie Hedegaard to assume the leadership of the Climate Change portfolio suits her preferences. The Conservative politician believes that how Europe chooses to tackle the climate change over the next years will define the EU's strategic role in the world.



Connie Hedegaard

ECRN Special

Regional Policy Portfolio

Johannes Hahn is an Austrian politician who has been nominated as Commissioner for the Regional Policy portfolio. The future Commissioner has held the position of Federal Minister for Science and Research in Austria for three years, while he was Minister for Justice for a short period of time. In order to perform his new role at the European Commission, the ex-Minister resigned his chairmanship of the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP - Christian Democrat) as a sign of its independence.

The new nominee graduated from the University of Vienna with a Doctorate in philosophy in 1987. His nomination is linked with his 10 years experience in regional policy since he made part of the Regional Government of Vienna. The Austrian Commissioner-designate has shown his commitment to the European Political life at an early stage as a member of the youth organization of the conservative Austrian People's Party which was campaigning for Austria's accession to the European Community during the 1980s.

In accordance with the political guidelines written down by the President José Manuel Barroso,

the Commissioner for the Regional portfolio will assume the important task of strengthening social and territorial cohesion and prepare the future Cohesion policy for Europe's regions after 2013.

As for Johannes Hahn it is important not to focus solely on the poorest areas, but all the regions facing the need to adapt to the current challenges. Three of his priorities consist in dealing with the crisis, increasing transparency and the environmental control for EU co-funded expenditure. Johannes Hahn has been cautious when asked to make political statements regarding the potential accession of Turkey and Ukraine to the EU.



Johannes Hahn

ECRN Special

Transport Portfolio

The Estonian Commissioner Siim Kallas has been reappointed by President José Barroso to assume the role of Commissioner for the Transport Portfolio, keeping the same post as Vice-president of the European Commission. Previously the Estonian politician was in charge of the Administrative Affairs, Audit and Anti-Fraud policy area. Indubitably Siim Kallas possesses an important political experience due to the several positions that he has served in the Republic of Estonia as Minister of Foreign Affairs (1995-1996), Minister of Finance (1999-2002) and as Prime Minister (2002-2003). Siim Kallas has been elected to the Estonian Parliament three times.

In addition to his vivid political life, Siim Kallas is a visiting Professor at the University of Tartu, the second oldest university in Estonia. In 1972 the Commissioner graduated from the Finance and Credit Department of the same university. One of the distinguished features of his professional career was his involvement with the Estonian monetary reform that led to the recognition of Siim Kallas as the "the father of the Estonian Kroon".

Undeniably the Commissioner-designate, founder of the Reform Party in 1994, has been the initiator of important reforms such as the Estonian's European Policy and the country's income tax leg-

islation with the introduction of the principle of a zero rate for corporate taxation. Of a paramount importance was his participation during Estonian's accession talks for the country's NATO and EU membership, achieved in March and May 2004 respectively.

As determined by President José Barroso, the next Commissioner for Transport is supposed to develop a transport policy that integrates mobility and decarbonisation in order to set Europe on the road of social and economic progress. Thereby this presupposes the improvement of the Trans-European Networks and the development of the overall European Union infrastructure. The growing climate change pressure on the EU Member States requires the consideration of the use of clean vehicles and alternative propulsion technologies.

The chief challenge for Siim Kallas as the next authority of the Directorate General Transport will be the development of a transport policy for the coming years in an epoch of worldwide pressure for the reduction of carbon emissions.



Siim Kallas

ECRN Special

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

The Treaty of Lisbon which has entered into force on the first of December 2009, which amended the Treaty on the European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Communities, has introduced two new main institutional figures. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security and the President of the European Council. The former will combine the main role of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, as President of the Foreign Affairs Council and as Vice-President of the Commission.

Catherine Ashton is a British politician who was appointed to be the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security and the first Vice-President of the European Commission in December 2009. The new nominee became European Commissioner for the Trade portfolio in 2008 in order to replace the British Labour politician, Peter Mandelson. During her term as Trade Commissioner the free trade agreement with South Korea was established. Catherine Ashton represented the EU in the Doha Round talks and she co-chaired EU-China High Level Economic and Trade Dialogue with Chinese Vice-Premier Wang Qishan.

The main criticism after Ashton's appointment was that she lacks experience in foreign policy issues. In fact, while the British politician was member of the House of the Lords she was in

charge of issues such as education, justice, equality and human rights. Catherine Ashton also had an important role in securing the passage of the reforming Lisbon Treaty in the British Parliament. In 2001, Ashton was made parliamentary under-secretary of state in the Department for Education and Skills, where she dealt with issues ranging from school policies to a ban on smacking by child-minders. In 2004, she took up a similar role at the Department for Constitutional Affairs, dealing with human rights, equality and justice issues.

The Lisbon Treaty establishes that the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy will also be a Vice President of the European Commission. The High Representative will be in charge of conducting the Union's common foreign and security policy, supported by the new European External Action Service. The EU foreign affairs chief will chair meetings of EU ministers in the Foreign Affairs Council.

For Catherine Ashton, two pillars of her policy are "quiet diplomacy" and "building confidence". In her opinion, the EU's foreign policy is based on important values and that the Union is the biggest provider of humanitarian and development aid in the world.



Catherine Ashton

ECRN Special

President of the European Council

The President of the European Council has to ensure the preparation and continuity of the work of the European Council, facilitate consensus and to represent the Union in the international arena in conformity with his capacity.

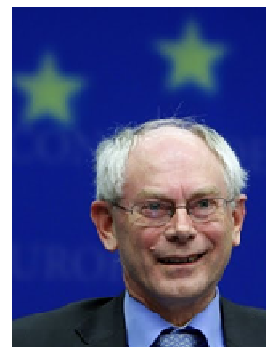
Herman van Rompuy, the previous Belgian Prime-Minister has been designated by the leaders of the 27 EU Member States to become the first permanent President of the European Council. The Belgian politician will chair the institution from now till 31 of May 2012. Van Rompuy emerged as the potential candidate to take the leadership of the European Council, after former British Prime Minister Tony Blair failed to win over liberal European leaders, in part due to his support for the invasion of Iraq. The choice was most probably based on his capability of stabilize Belgium's fractious politics between Flemish and Francophone parties, after his nomination in December 2008. Due to his experience as Prime-Minister, Herman van Rompuy came to be seen as a politician with a fair-minded style.

Rompuy is member of the Christian Democratic Party and Flemish Party. The current President of the European Council served as Belgium's Budget Minister and Deputy Prime Minister from 1993 to 1999 and he was in fact able to lower the country's significant debt load. From July 2007 to December 2008, Van Rompuy joined Belgium's Parliament. Herman Van Rompuy holds a Bachelor in philosophy (1968)

and a Master in applied economics (1971) from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

Under the Treaty of Lisbon, the President of the European Council is a stable and full-time function. The main functions are the preparation of the work of the European Council in cooperation with the President of the Commission, and on the basis of the work of the General Affairs Council; to facilitate cohesion and consensus within the European Council and to present presents a report to the European Parliament after each of the meetings of the European Council.

For the new President of the European Council, Herman van Rompuy the most important is to ensure that EU's work develops over the long-term, referring to the urgency in tackling the financial crisis and address the environmental and energy challenges. The main handicaps are the period of anxiety, uncertainty and lack of confidence that must be overcome. In his term, the President intends to consider everyone's interest and sensitivities and to pay attention, listen carefully to everyone, and to make sure that EU's deliberations turn into results for everyone. Rompuy points out that: "My whole political life has been marked by a search for understanding, respecting both adversaries and travel companions. I shall continue along this same path."



Herman van Rompuy

**European
Chemical Regions
Network**



ECRN Inside News

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