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Commission launches aid package for Haiti

Following the devastating earthquake in Haiti, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, offered his deepest condolences to the victims and to the people of Haiti and pledged Europe's full support in the international relief effort.

Vice President of the European Commission and High Representative of the European Union, Catherine Ashton, in a press conference on 14 January said: *"Let me begin by saying once again that the thoughts of people all over Europe are with the victims of this terrible tragedy and with their families. We must show that we are indeed a 'global community', able to find the resources needed to save lives and to rebuild existences. The European Union, through its member states and common resources, has already acted. We are working closely together on the humanitarian relief side with the Member States. Within hours of the disaster, the European Commission's humanitarian department provided 3 million Euros in an initial, emergency humanitarian aid response. This money is channelled through our international humanitarian partners – such as the UN relief agencies and the International Red Cross family – to ensure life-saving supplies get to the people of Haiti right now. But it is not only about the immediate help for the humanitarian disaster. We also have started to work on our assistance that we can give to the people of Haiti in the medium- and long-term. To that end, the Commission has two of its own humanitarian relief experts "on the ground" able to provide an analysis of the needs of our humanitarian partners (such as the International Red Cross) to ensure the stricken population get the help they need quickly. It is important to tell the people of Haiti that we stand ready to help them as much as we can in this tragedy. They can count on Europe."*

For more information on the EU's programs, please see the table of current assistance offered by EU Member States through the European Civil Protection Mechanism: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/civil/pdfdocs/haiti_2010.pdf and the Emergency link on the Civil Protection homepage which will be updated in real time: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/civil/haiti_2010.htm

[Situation in Haiti](#)

Agreement between EU & Australia : security of classified information

On 13 January, the Council of the European Union issued a press release on the signing of an agreement between the EU and Australia on the security of classified information.

Welcoming the Agreement, Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the European Union Delegation to Australia, John Richards, said "The agreement is designed to facilitate cooperation between the EU and Australia by providing a structured framework in which information that either side has restricted by way of a security classification can be shared with the other, subject to appropriate conditions. This will in particular facilitate exchanges of information in the areas covered by the EU-Australia Partnership Framework such as those

relating to common foreign and security policy issues."

The full text of the [release](#), the [Agreement](#), and the [EU-Australia Partnership Framework](#), can be read on the Delegation's website.

Year of Renewal



For the European Union, 2010 will be a year of renewal of its institutions and policies, said Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council. *"Entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon will herald institutional renewal. Then there will be policy renewal, with a series of important milestones coming up. We shall be under new leadership, with the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, taking office; a new European Commission settling in, and my own election as permanent President of the European Council. Over the short term, the European Union will continue to grapple with the economic and social effects of the financial and economic crisis. We have to end this crisis and consolidate public finances, to build a prosperous and dynamic Europe which is fit to meet the challenges of unemployment, an ageing population and climate change."*

[President Van Rompuy's home page](#)

EU economic update



The **Business Climate Indicator** (BCI) for the euro area improved further in December – its ninth consecutive monthly increase. The **Economic Sentiment Indicator** (ESI) rose once again in December to 92.0 (+4.1 points) in the EU and to 91.3 (+2.5) in the euro area. It has improved in both areas for nine consecutive months since its trough in March 2009, though it still remains below its long-term average.

The annual **inflation** rate in the euro area was 0.9% in December 2009. In November the rate was 0.5%.

In October 2009 compared with September 2009, the euro area (EA16) **industrial new orders** index fell by 2.2%. In September the index rose by 1.7%. In the EU27 new orders declined by 1.6% in October 2009, after an increase of 1.4% in September.

In November 2009 compared with October 2009, the **industrial producer price index** rose by 0.1% in the euro area (EA16) and by 0.2% in the EU27. In October, prices increased by 0.3% and 0.6% respectively. In November 2009 compared with November 2008, **industrial producer prices** dropped by 4.4% in the euro area and by 3.2% in the EU27.

In November 2009, compared with October 2009, the **volume of retail trade** fell by 1.2% in the euro area (EA16) and by 0.8% in the EU27. In October retail trade rose by 0.2% and 0.5% respectively. In November 2009, compared with November 2008, the retail sales index decreased by 4.0% in the euro area and by 2.1% in the EU27.

The euro area (EA16) seasonally-adjusted **unemployment** rate was 10.0% in November 2009, compared with 9.9% in October. It was 8.0% in November 2008. The EU27 **unemployment** rate was 9.5% in November 2009, compared with 9.4% in October. It was 7.5% in November 2008. For the euro area this is the highest rate since August 1998 and for the EU27 since the start of the series (January 2000).

Euro area (EA16) **GDP** increased by 0.4% and EU27 GDP by 0.3% during the third quarter of 2009, compared with the previous quarter, according to second estimates from Eurostat. In the second quarter of 2009, **growth rates** were -0.1% in the euro area and -

0.3% in the EU27. In comparison with the same quarter of the previous year, seasonally adjusted GDP declined in the third quarter of 2009 by 4.0% in the euro area and by 4.3% in the EU27, after -4.8% and -5.0% respectively in the previous quarter.

[Read full report](#)

Commission awards major contracts : Galileo operational early 2014

The European Commission announced on 7 January the award of three of the six contracts for the procurement of Galileo's initial operational capability which will allow the initial deployment and service provision of Europe's satellite navigation system as of early 2014. Galileo is Europe's initiative for a state-of-the-art global satellite navigation system, providing a highly accurate, guaranteed global positioning service under civilian control. While providing autonomous navigation and positioning services, Galileo will at the same time be interoperable with GPS and GLONASS, the two other global satellite navigation systems. The fully deployed Galileo system will consist of 30 satellites and the associated ground infrastructure. The contracts are expected to be signed in the next few weeks between the chosen companies and the European Space Agency, on behalf of the European Commission. The remaining three procurement contracts, for the ground mission infrastructure, the ground control infrastructure and the operations should be awarded by mid-2010.

[more information on Galileo](#)

New fisheries system for better control of illegal fishing

On 1 January 2010, a set of new, strong rules entered into force to bolster the control system of the European Union's Common Fisheries Policy. These rules give the European Union and its Member States new and powerful tools not only to protect the resources of our seas and oceans from unscrupulous operators, but also to protect the livelihoods of honest fishermen who would otherwise be exposed to unfair competition. With no preferential treatment from one country to another and no real temptation to cheat, the new system will enable fishermen to ply their trade under equal conditions, thus promoting a culture of compliance throughout the fisheries sector.

Europe Street at the National Multicultural Festival



Nineteen Member States and the European Union Delegation will form Europe Street at the National Multicultural Festival on Saturday 6 February. Europe Street will again be located in Ainslie Avenue, Canberra, and will feature country information, information on travelling and studying as well as some giveaways. It's a great opportunity to come along to see what Europe has to offer. Participating countries include Bulgaria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

<http://www.delous.ec.europa.eu/News&events/Cultural/EuropeStreet2010.htm>

On Sunday 7 February, the EU Delegation and its Member States will participate, as Team *Eurostars*, in the 2010 Chinese New Year Dragon Boat Challenge, competing for the All-Nations Trophy (billed as "a battle between Canberra's multicultural groups") as part of the National Multicultural Festival. Rivals include *Team America* and *USAwesome* from the US Embassy.

National Multicultural Festival 2010

Windows on Europe Film Festival



Don't miss the 5th annual Windows on Europe Film Festival, which commences in Canberra on 6 February 2010. Seventeen award winning films will be screened in Canberra, Sydney,

Brisbane, Auckland and Melbourne. For the full programme, and information on all films, please visit our website:

<http://www.delaus.ec.europa.eu/News&events/Cultural/FilmFestival2010/index.htm>

Essen, Pécs & Istanbul celebrate debut as European capitals of culture

Three European cities are set to kick off a year-long culture fest featuring exhibitions, music and theatre. The cities chosen to be this year's European capitals of culture are Essen and the Ruhr region of Germany, Pécs in southern Hungary, and Istanbul in Turkey. Taking over from Linz (Austria) and Vilnius (Lithuania), the three have put together a packed programme of events that should attract tens of thousands of visitors.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the EU's culture capital programme. European Cultural Capitals help to promote European diversity and cultural heritage. They lead to improved mutual knowledge between citizens. Designed to help "bring European people together" the European Town of Culture established in 1985 was renamed European Cultural Capital in 1999. Istanbul is highlighting its history as a crossroads of European civilisation and a bridge between Europe and Asia. Halfway between Essen and Istanbul, the Hungarian city of Pécs is emphasising its rich multicultural heritage.

[European Capitals of Culture](#)

European Border Breaker Music Awards

The 2010 European Border Breaker Awards (EBBA's), funded through the EU Culture Programme, were presented by the European Commission in a TV show spectacle on 14 January at the EuroSonic Noorderslag Festival in Groningen, the Netherlands. The awards' show, which featured live performances by eight of the ten award-winning acts, will be broadcast throughout Europe in the coming days and weeks. After an online vote, the Belgian winner Milow was awarded the first ever Public Choice EBBA.

By granting these awards, the European Commission, in cooperation with the European Broadcasting Union, rewards debut artists and groups who have successfully crossed national borders and reached audiences outside their home country. At the same time the prizes highlight and promote the richness and diversity of European music, its creativity, and its role in bringing people together and forging mutual understanding. The show was presented by BBC-TV personality Jools Holland and former EBBA winner Ida Corr. Amongst the winners were the UK's Charlie Winston, Sweden's Jenny Wilson, Italy's Giusy Ferreri, Portugal's Buraka Som Sistema and Germany's Peter Fox.

[EBBA](#)

EU welcomes moratorium on death penalty in Mongolia

Catherine Ashton, High Representative, on behalf of the European Union welcomed the announcement on 14 January 2010, of a moratorium on the use of the death penalty in Mongolia. The EU congratulates the Mongolian President, the State Great Khural - the unicameral Parliament of Mongolia -, the Mongolian Government and the Mongolian people on this important decision. The EU encourages Mongolia to commute all existing death sentences into life sentences.

The European Union considers that the abolition of capital punishment contributes to the enhancement of human dignity. The EU considers capital punishment to be a cruel and inhuman punishment, which fails to provide deterrence to criminal behaviour and represents an unacceptable denial of human dignity and integrity.

The European Union reaffirms its objective of working towards universal abolition of the death penalty. It hopes the moratorium in Mongolia is the first step towards the abolition of the death penalty which might encourage other countries in the region to follow suit.

EU tube: History in the Making



EU Tube: Europe and You 2010:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3p9AhXrcJ4> Have you ever wondered what exactly is that the European Union does for you? If so, this video provides the answer with a brief glimpse at 10 actions that have been put in place over the past year and that will make a real difference in the lives of each and everyone of us.

http://ec.europa.eu/snapshot/index_en.htm

[see EUtube](#)

Reminders: 2010 Jean Monnet and 2010 Erasmus Mundus

Call for Proposals under all three Actions of the **Erasmus Mundus** programme: Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes; Erasmus Mundus Partnerships; and Promotion of European higher education. To assist those submitting applications under the program, an **information day** has been organised on **22 January 2010** explaining the application process and documents, to take place in Brussels, and also broadcast live via webstreaming. The deadline for submission of applications under all three Actions is **30 April 2010**. More information:

<http://www.delau.ec.europa.eu/education/Erasmus/ErasmusMundus2010.htm>

The European Commission's **Jean Monnet** Programme is designed to increase knowledge and awareness about European integration world-wide. It encourages universities from **any country in the world** to set up teaching, research and conference activities on the European Union and on relations between the EU and other regions and countries. University-level institutions in countries outside the European Union are highly encouraged to apply. The deadline for applications is **12 February 2010**.

[Jean Monnet: further information](#)

European Union Delegation: publications available online



The following publications are available from our website. If, however, you would like to receive hard copies of any of these publications, please send an email to delegation-australia@ec.europa.eu specifying the name of the publication (s) and the number you would like to receive.

[EU Insight: Education](#)

[EU Insight: Lisbon Treaty](#)

[European Union Australia Partnership Framework](#)

[EU Insight: Climate change](#)

[EU Insight: Economic relationship](#)

Upcoming events: Australia



European Union Film Festival - Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane, Auckland, Melbourne, commencing 6 February 2010. More information on our website:

<http://www.delau.ec.europa.eu/News&Events/Cultural/filmFestival2010/in>

Europe Street at the National Multicultural Festival on Saturday 6

February. Europe Street will again be located in Ainslie Avenue, Canberra.

<http://www.delau.ec.europa.eu/News&events/Cultural/EuropeStreet2010.htm>

20 years of the Peaceful Revolution and of the German Reunification

Exhibition, 30 Oct 2009 - 31 March 2010, Goethe-Institut Australien, Melbourne

<http://www.goethe.de/ins/au/lp/ver/vsy/en5000568v.htm>

[More events](#)

Upcoming events in New Zealand

Gateway to the EU in New Zealand <http://www.eu.org.nz/>

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