Brussels blog round up for 5 – 11 May 2012: A rotten dilemma in Greece, Hollande faces early tests, and what has the EU done for the UK?

May 11 2012

Chris Gilson *and* **Julian Kirchherr** *take a look at the week in Brussels blogging.*

The EU Centre

Europe needs jobs: The *European Economic and Social Committee* calls for more women entrepreneurs to boost employment. Meanwhile, MladiInfo on *BlogActiv.eu* finds that internships are a helpful first step for young people to find full-time employment. Jobs are lost in traditional industries, while new opportunities emerge in the digital economy. The *EU Energy Policy Blog* explores the demise of European refineries. They argue that recent closings all over the continent are a symbol of deindustrialization.

Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the European Commission, blogs about opportunities for healthcare in a digital age. Meanwhile, *Rhein on Energy and Climate Change* calls for EU health policy to focus on life-long health prevention. *Spanishwalker* looks at how the .EU domain might be able to help in the 'Europeanization' of European pan-European websites.

Amelia Andersdotter is the youngest current Member of the European Parliament. CafeBabel.com interviewed her about why she entered politics and what she thinks of the European Union. On Europe Day, 9 May, *The Honeyball Buzz* looks at what the EU has done for the UK. *German Joys* looks at European equality legislation, determining that some "have loopholes large enough to drive an airbus through", and *Jon Worth* is frustrated at the EU's often lack of transparency.

The New Federalist Blog looks at the UK's Lord Mandelson's recent calls for a debate on a federal Europe, and *The European Citizen* wonders why there is no political group for the EU's small states.

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EU Foreign policy and the European neighbourhood

With Yulia Tymoshenko in jail and on hunger strike, European leaders threaten to politically boycott this summer's Euro 2012 in Ukraine. Is such a boycott recommendable? Karpfenteich on *BlogActiv.eu* explores why particularly many German politicians now call for such a measure.

NATO's Partnership for Peace connects European non-NATO members to the Alliance. This initiative played an influential role in preparing Central and East European countries for membership and should be further expanded, finds *The FRIDE blog*.

The *GMF Blog* explores why Serbia is still interested in joining the EU – despite the EU's current financial and economic crisis.

Elections in Greece and France, and Across Europe

On May 6th, elections took place in France, Greece and Schleswig-Holstein (Germany). *Open Europe* calls it 'Super Sunday'. "Europe is in revolt", comments the *GMF Blog* on the outcomes. *Debating Europe* wonders if the French and Greek elections have broken the consensus for austerity in Europe. *The German Marshall Fund Blog* believes this is the case.

France elected its first Socialist President in 17 years this Sunday while Greek voters pushed their government out of office. *The European Citizen* calls the new French president the "leader of counter-austerity in Europe", as François Hollande after his victory announced that "finally austerity is no longer destiny." As *A Fistful of Euros* looks at Hollande's likely economic policies, *Charlemagne's Notebook* predicts that these policies will mean that Hollande will face an early test. The FT's *Brussels Blog* wonders if Hollande will be a friend to the City of London, concluding that a French hard line on financial reforms is unlikely. *Open Europe* also points out that Hollande's victory is an opportunity for the economically conservative David Cameron to strengthen his position with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Meanwhile, *Polscieu* argues that European Commissioner László Andor is the only openly socialist/social-democrat Commissionerin the European Commission, as he congratulated François Hollande on Twitter and now expects a "new direction for Europe."

Konstandinos on *BlogActiv.eu* calls the outcome of the Greek elections "a rotten dilemma". *Open Europe* argues that the outcome of the elections is the "beginning of the end game", and *Protesilaos Stavrou* wonders if they show that reason has given in to populism.

Jon Worth finds that the British Labour Party can learn much from the Pirate Party: The Pirate Party is a post-hierarchy-party and it makes prominent use of the Internet. Supposedly, that is what the Labour Party is lacking. However, he fears that the British majoritarian system will not allow such a party to grow and emerge.

Open Europe looks at Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti's proposals for 'debt to be swept under the carpet' if it is from public spending aimed to increase growth.

And finally…

The European Citizen has noticed ten things about Brussels.

The *European Public Policy Blog* is in Tunisia this week.

Kunveno is a new European podcast you really need to listen to, finds *Polscieu.*

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