

Brussels blog round up for 7-13 April 2012: ‘Merkelism’ may be the solution to Europe’s problems, the EU gives €10 million to Facebook, and can Denmark lead in energy efficiency?

Chris Gilson and [Julian Kirchherr](#) take a look at the week in Brussels blogging.

The EU Centre

“The allocation of EU structural funding is not only determined by economic and social needs. It is also a political game,” [argued](#) Achim Kemmerling this week on *LSE EUROPP*. *Polscieu* points out that [findings](#) by Lisa Maria Dellmuth [imply the opposite](#) and wonders why Kemmerling has not addressed these contradictions. Kemmerling’s reply: “The data is not good enough.”

Open Europe Blog also argues that EU structural funds desperately need reform citing the example of Sweden, where the European Commission and local authorities [have earmarked](#) nearly £10 million through EU structural funds to subsidise Facebook – the company is currently valued at around £63 billion – under plans to build giant server halls in Lulea in Northern Sweden.

Is there a life after the European Commission? *Polscieu* discusses a recent paper by [Roland Vaubel](#), Bernhard Klingen and David Müller on “[There is life after the Commission: An empirical analysis of private interest representation by former EU-commissioners, 1981–2009](#)”. A key finding of their research is that 36 of the 92 examined European Commissioners entered into private interest jobs after their time in office. *The New Federalist* then wonders why we are all so [trusting](#) of the European Commission. Lobbyism is also a hot topic at *The Honeyball Buzz* which is concerned that two large British [public affairs](#) firms might be about to take over the new European Citizens Initiative.

2012 has been declared the International Year of Sustainable Energy. The EU’s development policy particularly aims at fostering the usage of sustainable energy sources in emerging economies. Although the [demand for energy services](#) in developing countries is projected to rise rapidly in the coming decade, there is sufficient evidence that universal access to electricity and modern cooking facilities is possible, argues the *EU Energy Policy Blog*. The *Centre for European Reform* wonders if Denmark, with its current presidency of the EU Council of Ministers, can export its [energy efficiency](#) measures to the rest of Europe.



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EU Foreign policy and the European neighbourhood

EU-Ukraine Relations at BlogActiv.eu says that the Ukraine's [preparations for Euro-2012](#) show just how incompatible the country is with European integration at present.

16 years after the end of the war, Bosnia-Herzegovina is divided more than ever. However, there are hopes that [the desire to join the EU will make all ethnic groups link their forces](#) in order to achieve this goal, argues the *NewFederalist*.

Croatia, the War and the Future explores why there are [giant Easter eggs](#) all over Zagreb. Just a day later, the blog presents [the most alluring world heritage](#) sites to visit in Croatia. After the Easter break, the blog becomes more political again reporting on the new delegation of [Croatian observers](#) at the European Parliament, as ahead of Croatia's EU accession next year.

Blogging at BlogActiv.eu, *Spotlight on Geopolitics*, examines the EU's role in what could end up being a [G-2 or G-3](#) world.

The Euro Crisis and Greece

Who will lead Europe out of the crisis? *Nucleus* at BlogActiv.eu reckons that the Euro is just as close to [collapse as it is to recovery](#). As Spain's borrowing costs soar to nearly 6% for ten year bonds, *Open Europe Blog* says that we may be only seeing the [beginning of Spain's problems](#).

NPThinking labels Germany's persistence on austerity measures all over Europe as a solution to the debt crisis as '[Merkelism](#)', while *Open Europe* looks at a possible [legal challenge](#) for the European Stability Mechanism and the fiscal treaty in the German Constitutional Court (Bundesverfassungsgericht).

Across Europe

Protesilaos Stavrou continues his [investigation](#) of the roots of the European identity, while *Eurosearch* says that Norwegians are [Euroceptics](#) for the opposite reasons many British are.

Polscieu says that the European Commission's buy-in of the *Euronews* channel essentially means that it is now a '[propaganda channel](#)' for the Commission.

The *Fride blog* looks at possibilities for [Polish/Spanish collaboration](#) from economics to foreign policy, and also calls for the [Union for the Mediterranean](#), an EU organisation created in 2008 to promote multilateral cooperation across the Mediterranean area, to be abolished.

NPThinking says that 6 May might well be Europe's "[Super Monday](#)" with elections in Greece, Germany, Serbia and France.

And finally...

Is there a European blogosphere in Italy? *Polscieu* is optimistic after he stumbled upon several articles and blog posts on the Italian platform [Liquida](#) which "[clearly qualify as European blogging](#)".

Meanwhile, Matthew Flinders, a professor at the University of Sheffield, argues for better writing in the social sciences and new ways to engage with real audiences, instead of wasting time with "[methodological masturbation](#)" that no human-being could ever understand. The mission of LSE EUROPP is not mentioned in the post, but it is in the air!

Writing for (y)EU released a [practical guide to Latvian Easter traditions](#).

Related posts:

1. [Brussels blog round up for 31 March – 6 April 2012: Unemployment reaches 25 million, all quiet on the Brussels front over Easter, and will the new Citizens Initiative help solve the EU's 'democratic deficit'? \(12.3\)](#)
2. [More tourism exports will not lead Greece out of its crisis. But investing in solar energy might. \(11.2\)](#)
3. [The political and economic crisis in Europe has meant a step back for the EU's major institutions. Solutions in 2012 must not come at the expense of democracy. \(9\)](#)