

Brussels blog round up for 10– 16 November: More delays for Greece's bailout, strikes across Europe, and will France be the next victim of austerity politics?

by Blog Admin

Chris Gilson and Stuart A Brown take a look at the week in Brussels blogging.

The EU centre

Lost in Europe covers the continuing row over the EU budget, with the Erasmus education programme now under threat of running out of money. On Wednesday, the Greens' budgetary spokesperson *Helga Trüpel* reports that the negotiations over the budget have failed. Meanwhile, *Nucleus* at Blogactiv.eu says that both the European Commission and governments have mishandled the negotiations. Wyn Grant at the *Common Agricultural Policy* blog assesses *Herman Van Rompuy's proposed budget*, which includes significant cuts to agricultural subsidies and has drawn a hostile response from the French government.

CafeBabel discusses the survey carried out by PR firm Burson-Marsteller to gauge the performance of the European Commission over the last 12 months. Views on the overall policy delivery of the Commission were largely negative, while Guy Verhofstadt was seen as the most likely to be the next President of the Commission, ahead of Tony Blair. Meanwhile, the *European Citizen* ponders how a US-style Electoral College system for a directly elected president might work.

Schengen Justice at Blogactiv.eu is critical of the EU's visa policy, saying the 'unjust and arbitrary' process prevents many potential tourists from coming to Europe.

Jon Worth says that the potential nomination of the Maltese Tonio Borg as a European Commissioner has hit trouble in the European Parliament due to his views on abortion and divorce.

Public Affairs 2.0 looks at air quality across Europe ahead of 2013, the "Year of Air", when the EU will be pushing for stronger law which address admissions from the source. *Debating Europe* looks at how Europe can avoid an energy crisis, and move towards more sustainable, cost-effective energy sources; while the *Centre for European Reform* has an in-depth look at the impact of policies aimed at reducing carbon dioxide emissions within the EU. Meanwhile, *Brian Gardner* at Blogactiv.eu writes that it is time that the Common Agricultural policy should be phased out – preferably by 2012.

EU Foreign policy and the European neighbourhood

Writing at BlogActiv.eu *EU Logos* looks at a new report that says that five migrants die every day attempting to get into Europe, usually by sea.

Looking at the first meeting of the *EU-Egypt task force* this week, the *Fride* blog says that the EU should use its considerable leverage to ensure that civil society actors from Egypt are represented.

This week sees China's Party Congress appoint a new leader. *Global Perspectives* at Blogactiv.eu looks



French President Francois Hollande Credit: francediplomatie (Creative Commons BY NC SA)

at the how this [leadership transition](#) might affect the EU. Meanwhile, *Rhein on Energy and Climate* at Blogactiv.eu [makes the case](#) for an EU-US free trade agreement, in order to counterbalance the rise of China's economic power.

The Euro Crisis

Move looks at Spain's [lost generation](#) of recent graduates who have left the country due to high unemployment. Meanwhile the *GMF blog* says that the unemployed, immigrants and those just outside the EU should be at the [front and centre](#) of a strategy for the renaissance of Southern Europe.

On Monday eurozone finance ministers met to discuss the terms of Greece's second bailout. Just before the meeting, the *FT's Brussels blog* [writes](#) that the group is unlikely to make any decisions, thus delaying the bailout once again. After the meeting, they look at the Troika's report on Greece, saying that the [devil is in the details](#); there is more austerity ahead for the weak Greek government. Meanwhile *Dimitris Rapidis* assesses [George Soros'](#) proposed solution for Greece, arguing that while it is "pro-poverty", it "lacks cohesion and trust in terms of some of its very basic elements of implementation".

Ahead of Wednesday's "European Day of Action and Solidarity", *Revolting Europe* says that it is the [first international strike of the 21st century](#), with actions to take place across Europe. On the day of the strike, *Lost in EUrope* has a round up of the [activity](#).

Across Europe

The European Citizen revisits the debate on [abortion laws in Ireland](#), following the highly publicised case of a woman who died after a miscarriage.

The Political Bouillon looks at the possibility for the rise of a [new centrist party](#) in French politics. *Craig Willy* looks at the economic convergences and differences between France and Germany in a blog article of [20 graphs](#), while the OFCE blog [examines](#) how France's 2013 Budget Bill, which proposes special treatment for entrepreneurs might work. *Lost in EUrope* says that France is continuing to be [bashed](#) in the German media. *Dimitris Rapidis* at Blogactiv.eu wonders, with questions about the country's competitiveness, if France will be the next victim of [austerity politics](#).

Nada es Gratis takes an in-depth look at [social care reforms in Spain](#), saying that funding has been cut by 13 per cent this year, and that the system is in need of reform.

Revolting Europe covers a march by 50,000 students, teachers, and parents in Italy over the '[creeping privatization](#)' of Italy's education system. Meanwhile, *Wishing on Europe* looks at the difficulties in [governing](#) Italy given the endemic corruption, and the country's geographical layout.

Europe & Me looks at Poland's continuing pursuit of [shale gas extraction](#) to cope with the EU's environmental policies.

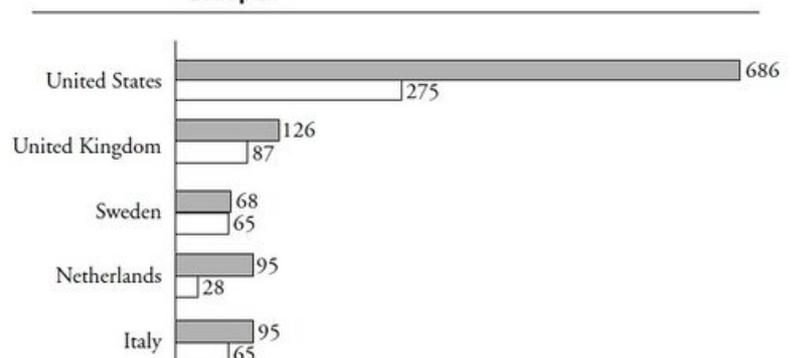
Graph of the week

Andrew Hammel at *German Joys* compares [incarceration rates](#) in the United States and Western Europe:

And finally...

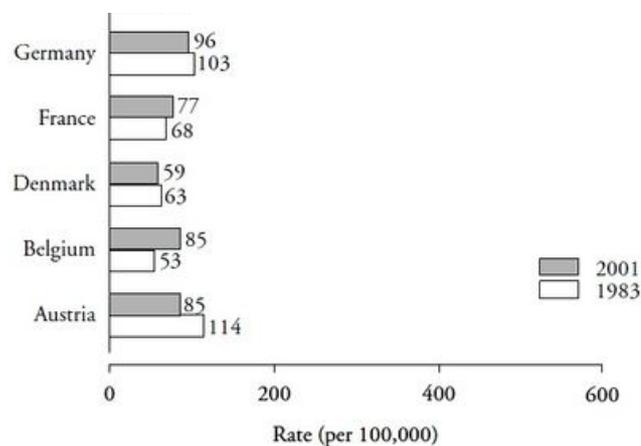
What has President of the European Council, *Herman van Rompuy* been up to? This week he met Prime Minister of Georgia, [Bidzina Ivanishvili](#), Poland's President, [Bronislaw Komorowski](#), the Greek Prime Minister, [Antonis Samaras](#), Latvia's President [Andris Berzins](#), the President of Chile, [Sebastian Pinera](#), and the Georgian President [Mikheil Saakashvili](#).

Figure 1.2 Incarceration in the United States and Western Europe



Jon Worth looks at how European Commissioners are doing on [Twitter](#).

German Joys says that Germany is now overdue for another [hysterical fear attack](#).



Source: European rates taken from Council of Europe (1983, 2002); U.S. rates from Harrison (2000) and Pastore and Maguire (2003, 486).

Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of EUROPP – European Politics and Policy, nor of the London School of Economics.

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