

In touch with EU



News from the Association

No decisions yet

As the end of the EIA draws closer, there is no sign of any agreement on a successor.

The decision to open up the Association's Eurotalk discussion list to anyone wishing to join has seen a surge in people joining, with nearly 230 now signed up. Yet that apparent interest has not resulted in any increased use of the list. There has been an average of just four messages sent to the list in each of the last six months. And any interest in organising a successor to the Association seems to have evaporated.

Nothing further has been heard either from EUDUG - which seemed for a brief time a possible home for ex-EIA members looking for solace and support post-EIA.



And the 40-member LinkedIn group 'EU information in the UK' - which had fleetingly looked as though it might generate some interest in creating a network of people interested in EU information - also seems to be attracting little substantive discussion.

So with just three months to go before the EIA disappears forever, it's looking less and less likely that there will be anything to replace it.

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This newsletter can be printed, but the embedded URLs will be lost ...

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It's official:

EU documents , publications and sources

State of the Union

On 12 September, José Manuel Barroso presented his 2012 State of the Union address (SOTEU). Speaking at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, he conceded that the EU remains in crisis: 'A financial and economic crisis. A social crisis. But also a political crisis, a crisis of confidence.' Mr Barroso went on to call for new thinking about Europe and for a 'decisive deal' encompassing both economic union and political union.

See: [SOTEU 2012 pages](#)

Cloud computing

In its Communication 'Unleashing the potential of cloud computing in Europe' (COM(2012) 529), the European Commission defines 'cloud computing' as 'the storing, processing and use of data on remotely located computers accessed over the internet'. With the aim of cutting ICT costs and boosting productivity, growth and jobs in the EU, the Commission wants to enable and facilitate faster adoption of cloud computing in all sectors of the economy.

See: [Communication text](#)

Blue Growth

The Communication 'Blue Growth: opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth' (COM(2012) 494) identifies five areas which the European Commission believes have potential for boosting economic growth and employment prospects in the marine and maritime economy. The areas are: maritime, coastal and cruise tourism; 'blue energy'; marine mineral resources; aquaculture; and 'blue biotechnology'. The 'Blue growth' initiative is intended to drive a second phase of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP). Progress with the IMP is reviewed in the associated report COM(2012) 491.

See: [Press Release IP/12/955](#)

Council turns 60

To mark its 60th anniversary, the Council has issued a Press Release giving a brief history of the Council, plus some interesting facts - including that the number of Council meetings has varied from 20 to 96 per year, with 70-75 currently being held annually.

See: [Press Release 13507/12](#)

Cultural and creative growth

COM(2012) 537 is the Communication 'Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU'. In it, the European Commission argues that 'the contribution that cultural and creative sectors can bring to social and economic development in the EU is still not fully recognised.' The Commission highlights the broad sectors of heritage, visual and performing arts, cinema, music, publishing, fashion and design, and proposes a strategy to exploit their potential for promoting growth and jobs.

See: [Communication text](#)

Literacy

The Final Report of the EU High Level Group of Experts on Literacy aims to 'kick-start an ambitious, comprehensive and structural approach within and across EU Member States to prevent and reduce literacy problems.' Described as 'a wake-up call about the crisis that affects every country in Europe', the 80-page report includes 'advice for parents on creating a culture of reading for pleasure with their children, to siting libraries in unconventional settings like shopping centres and the need to attract more male teachers to act as role models for boys'.

See: [Literacy pages](#)

Focus on ...

EU e-books

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E-books

- The EU and the economic crisis
- Partnership Publications
- European Year of Active Ageing
- Easy reading about the EU
- Citizens' rights
- Comics
- Environment
- Grants & Fundings
- Kids' corner
- Magazines
- Maps
- Posters

Browse results



It's easily missed, but the website of the Publications Office has a page showing a small collection of e-books.

Amongst the dozen or so titles currently available are:

- the excellent and highly recommended *The ABC of European Union law* (the blurb states 'The author offers insight into how the European Union is built, its broad principles and the legal order underpinning it', and also 'intended for people with no specialist legal knowledge who wish to understand the implications of European law for their daily lives')
- the potentially useful *General report on the activities of the European Union 2011* (the makeover of a few years ago seriously detracts from its usefulness as a serious reference work)
- *Europe in 12 lessons* (an introduction to the EU for the general reader)
- and *The EU legislation on GMOs* ('provides an overview of the key provisions of [the] extensive EU legislation on GMOs' and includes key texts)

There are also consolidated versions of the *Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community*, the *Treaty on European Union*, the *Treaty on the functioning of the European Union*, and the *Charter of Fundamental Rights*.

Plus Eurofound's *Foundation focus* magazine and - for the young at heart - an environmentally aware story involving two children and a fox: *What scorching weather!* Claims to help readers 'take care of the environment and make the world a better place.'

The page is well worth the occasional visit to see if there's anything of interest in what looks like being a useful - if somewhat idiosyncratic - collection.

Items are available in e-pub format. Help is available for the technologically-challenged!



Snippets:

News and views from non-EU sources

Notre Europe

From: [Do the Europeans still believe in the EU?](#)

On average, one out of every two EU citizens gives a positive response to the questions asked on their country's membership of the EU and the ensuing benefits obtained. Although less than one in five declares this membership as something negative, one in three abstains from adopting a position, and over one in three considers that their country has not benefited from the EU.

Euobserver

From: [What is "SECRET UE" anyway?](#)

EU countries have a protocol for sharing official "secrets." But people's motives for classifying EU files are not always pure and the number of really hush hush papers in Brussels is tiny.

European Policy Centre

From: [The climate is changing - is Europe ready?](#)

This Issue Paper 'shows that although climate-change adaptation is primarily a national responsibility, the EU has various tools at its disposal to help member states, regions and businesses to carry out adaptation measures in a smart and cost-effective way.'

European Voice

From: [Why EU bank reform matters for overseas development](#)

European Union bank reform is important for overseas development because government bail-outs in Europe have also affected people overseas.

This is evident not just in dwindling aid levels – aid from major donors was 3% lower in 2011 than in 2010. Re-

duced consumption also means that the markets for developing-country exports have dwindled ...

EurActiv

From: [REACH benefits not obvious yet, EU admits](#)

The REACH chemical safety regulation has so far showed limited results, with only "anecdotal evidence" that industry was starting to phase out the most dangerous substances, the European Commission said ahead of a review of the legislation due later this month.

Presseurop

From: [The secret of 3% finally revealed](#)

At a time when the countries of the Eurozone are presenting austerity budgets to ensure that public spending deficits do not exceed the 3% of GDP ceiling required for the single currency, Aujourd'hui en France reveals "the incredible story of the birth" of this limit.

EUbusiness

From: [Europe's fiscal treaty, or budget 'golden rules'](#)

The new fiscal treaty for most EU countries, held up awaiting a ruling on its legality by Germany's Constitutional Court on Wednesday, aims to reinforce budgetary discipline in the wake of the debt crisis.

Signed by 25 European Union states -- the Czech Republic and Britain remained outside -- the treaty was demanded by Germany as the price of financial solidarity with debt-laden eurozone partners and will introduce "golden rules" making balanced budgets mandatory.

Here are the main points of the Treaty on Stability, Co-ordination and Governance ...