

### Committee news

The beginning of 2010 brings with it a new Presidency, with Spain taking over the helm until the end of June, while on 1 January Mr Van Rompuy took over as the first permanent President of the Council.

2010 will be an important year for the UK, for the debate on European integration and for the European Movement itself and we, here at the London branch, are planning a series of activities as part of our efforts to inform the debate and reach out to as many people as possible. So watch this space, as well as our [website](#) and [facebook](#) page, for news and announcements.

In the meantime we would like to wish you all a happy new year!

The Committee

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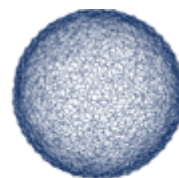
### A Copenhagen Climate Tale.

Copenhagen is outstanding in using its public spaces for interaction with its citizens. That is the case with both culture and politics. During the Copenhagen Climate Summit the city performed excellently and both the local citizens and visitors were highly motivated. However, during the summit's last week Copenhagen started to feel less thrilled about climate change but 'Hopenhagen' lived on and was just as positive and 'high' on hope and a happy ending as Hans Christian Andersen must have been

when he wrote the fairy tale of the Ugly Duckling.

It is a known thing that when hopes are high the deeper they can fall and the larger the disappointment can be. On the last day of the summit it became clear that 'Hopenhagen' was in reality 'Brokenhagen', i.e. Copenhagen was unable to produce a legally binding agreement and was only able to draft a so-called Copenhagen Accord that recognises the scientific case for keeping temperature rises to no more than 2C but doesn't contain commitments to emissions reductions in order to achieve that goal.

Was it a failure? Of course it was when it comes to cutting emissions and committing the world. But, as Martin Krasnik, journalist of the Danish weekly 'Weekendavisen', puts it, it was a success when it comes to showing that there is a new world order and that no one really knows how that order works and what it is all about. The 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties staged the show, not only for people in Copenhagen but also for people in the rest of the world: the world order isn't as we knew it, or what we might want it to be, and diplomacy as we knew it just doesn't work in this world.



COP15  
COPENHAGEN

Source: United Nations

So where is the EU in this? The EU has a long experience in such multilateral efforts; the EU provides a stage for joint efforts but it is up to each member state to put action onto that stage – as was the case in Copenhagen. ‘Leadership’ has been a buzzword for the EU when it got stuck in the Lisbon process, and leadership was expected in Copenhagen but it didn’t occur – not even when president Obama came. In either case the world isn’t as we knew it and the West’s global leadership is jeopardised. This was the play staged in Copenhagen probably more than it was a play about how the Danes saved the world.

As the interactive Climate-Summit-play ended the Danes dismantled their interactive public spaces and started getting back to normal. A lot of blame still had to be put on someone as the play had no happy ending after all.

Catja Gaebel

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### [Council reaches compromise on new Financial Supervision architecture.](#)

The EU came, before the holidays, a step closer to adopting a new financial supervision infrastructure. The Council agreed on the creation of three new European supervisory Authorities. Each one will be responsible for overseeing the insurance, banking and securities sectors and they will be set up in London, Paris and Frankfurt. The new Authorities will be made up of national regulators from each Member State and, day to day supervision will remain the responsibility of national regulators, with the Authorities being responsible for creating a common rulebook, applicable across the EU, and for arbitrating in disputes between national regulators.

In similar vein the Council agreed back in October on the creation of a European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB). The ESRB will be made up of central bankers from the 27 Member States as well a representative from the Commission and the chairpersons of the 3 Authorities. It will be chaired by the President of the European Central Bank. The ESRB will complement the Authorities work and will be responsible for monitoring the European economy in an effort to spot the build up of systemic risks, like asset bubbles, before they become damaging for the European economy.

Negotiations on the 3 Authorities proved quite difficult and complicated. The UK insisted that the Authorities’ decisions should not have an effect on Member States’ fiscal sovereignty, fearing that it might be forced to bail out a London-based bank against its will. London is the biggest financial services hub in the EU with many global banks setting shop here. As a result a complicated appeals mechanism was put in place enabling Member States to challenge a decision made by one of the 3 Authorities.

The process now moves to the European Parliament, An agreement on the final text needs to be reached between the two co-legislators, the EP and the Council, before the draft legislation becomes law. MEPs, though, have already indicated that they are not satisfied with the watered down Council version of the proposals. Shortly after the Council decision was reached, the heads of the four largest political groups in the EP issued a joint statement criticising the compromise reached by the Member States and arguing that efforts to redesign the EU’s supervisory system are “going in the wrong direction”.

The supervision package (which consists of 5 legislative proposals) will be debated in the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON). The EP Rapporteurs are supposed to produce their respective reports on each one of the Commission's proposals by 5 February 2009, with Committee members then having until 4 March to propose amendments. ECON Committee is set to vote on the reports on 4 May 2009. A period of negotiations between the EP and the Council will follow with the intention of reaching a compromise agreement between the two law-making institutions on time for the EP to vote in Plenary before the summer recess.

Petros Fassoulas

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### [Spain takes over EU rotating Presidency.](#)

Spain took over the Presidency of the Council on 1 January 2010, making it the first Member State that will have to perform its duties under the new Lisbon Treaty institutional innovations.

Despite the introduction of the post of the permanent President of the European Council by the Lisbon Treaty, the rotating Presidency system is maintained, albeit with a somewhat less prominent role. Under the new system Spain will be responsible for the day-to-day business of the Council, chairing most of the monthly Council ministerial meetings. Mr Van Rompuy's job will be to chair the European Council of Heads of State and Government, offering direction and continuity to its work and representing its members to the international stage. The potential for overlapping is strong so many see the Spanish Presidency as the blueprint for the way this new system will

operate in the future. Some fear the emergence of turf wars between the President and the rotating Presidencies but the Spanish have been eager to stress that they will concentrate during their 6 months at the helm on making the new arrangements work as effectively as possible.



Source: Spanish Presidency

At a more practical level, the Spanish Presidency's work programme, which was coordinated with Belgium and Hungary, the next two countries to assume the rotating EU presidency, in the format of the so-called 'trio of presidencies', will focus on four main priorities. First of all will be the economy, with special emphasis on recovering from the crisis and generating growth and jobs for the EU. The adoption of the new financial supervision package also features prominently in Spain's economic plans. Secondly, Spain will focus on the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. Spain's third priority will be citizenship, with the implementation of the 'Stockholm Programme' for freedom, security and justice in the EU taking centre stage. Last but certainly not least Spain, in an effort to improve the Union's international standing, Spain intends to focus on foreign affairs, making full use of the instruments that the Lisbon Treaty has put in place, namely the President, the High Representative and of course the diplomatic service, or European External Action Service (EEAS). Spain plans to hold a whole host of summits with the EU-US, EU-Russia, EU-

Canada and EU-Latin America summits among them.

The Spanish will hold the Presidency until the end of June and they will be followed by Belgium (July-December 2010) and Hungary (January-June 2011).

Petros Fassoulas

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### European Parliament hearings of the Commissioners-designate.

The European Parliament will be holding from [11 to 19 January hearings of all Commissioners-designate](#). These hearings are the first opportunity for law-makers and the public to acquaint themselves with the people that will make up the Commission for the next 5 years, scrutinise their backgrounds and investigate their policy priorities.

The European Parliament sent ahead of the meetings each Commissioner-designate a questionnaire. All candidates have now returned the questionnaires and their individual responses are available at the [European Parliament website](#), together with other information on the Commissioners-designate and the process itself. The responses make interesting reading and provide a first glimpse into the Commissioners'-designate work programme.



Source: European Parliament

The hearings, which in some ways resemble job interviews, are supposed

to focus on the candidates' credentials and the policy priorities they will focus on during their term in office. But Commissioners-designate are often quizzed on more personal issues as well. The EP has in past dismissed candidates and this time around question-marks hang over a variety of candidates. The next Commission is already late in taking up office and, with the EP Plenary scheduled to vote on the whole College of Commissioners on 26 January, President Barroso is on stand-by in case he needs to replace a candidate, as was the case with the Italian Commissioner-designate before the first Barroso administration took office.

Petros Fassoulas

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### Dates for the Diary – January.

- **18 January, Committee Meeting** (the agenda will be made available on the website and facebook page).
- **21 January, EMiL Monthly Social** at 18.30 at the Royal Horseguard Hotel, Whitehall, London.
- **27 January, EMiL Event on the Post-Copenhagen Negotiations**, at the Danish Ambassadors Residence, 2 Hans Street, London SW1X 0NJ. 18.30-20.30