

## WEEKLY ROUND-UP

### TOP STORIES: 5–11 July 2014

1

**Eurosceptics shut out as committees elect chairs and vice-chairs:** The European Parliament's 20 committees and two sub-committees have elected their key office-holders for the next two-and-a-half years. The centre-right European People's Party and centre-left Socialists and Democrats groups won most of the top posts and teamed up with the Liberal ALDE Group to prevent positions going to the hardline Eurosceptic Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD). Members of the Petitions committee blocked the election of EFDD MEP Eleonora Evi to the chair, with EFDD leader Nigel Farage attacking "*the europhile groups*" and their "*fear of democracy*". Similarly, two German Eurosceptic deputies from the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, Bernd Lucke and Beatrix Storch, were rejected as vice-chairs by the economic affairs and women's rights committees respectively. *Links:* [New Europe](#); [EUObserver](#); [EUObserver](#); [Euranet Plus](#); [EurActiv](#); [European Parliament News](#); [European Voice](#); [European Voice](#); [Europe Decides Twitter](#)

2

**Juncker exchanges views with political groups in European Parliament:** The European Council's candidate for the Commission presidency, Jean-Claude Juncker, has held meetings with the political groups of the European Parliament to gain support for his candidacy in the election on 15 July. The candidate had sent all groups a summary of his campaign priorities. Even though the Conservative ECR Group will vote against Juncker, and the Greens remain divided, the majority of the EPP, S&D and ALDE groups are expected to vote in favour of his candidacy, guaranteeing him therefore a majority. The EPP confirmed their support for Juncker, but the Socialists said his performance was "*positive and useful but not yet fully satisfactory*", and looked for greater assurances on a number of issues. The ALDE Group will take a decision on Monday. *Links:* [EUReporter](#); [European Commission](#); [Europolitics](#); [European Voice](#); [European Voice](#); [New Europe](#); [EurActiv](#); [Euranet](#); [European Voice](#); [EPP group](#); [S&D news](#)

3

**Confusion over Juncker promise on key economic role:** At a meeting with the Socialists and Democrats Group in the European Parliament, Jean-Claude Juncker allegedly announced that Olli Rehn's successor as Commissioner for Economics and Monetary Affairs will be a Socialist. The top contenders for the position include Pierre Moscovici, a former French finance minister, and Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the current head of the Eurogroup and the Netherlands' Finance Minister. However, in a press release following Juncker's hearing before Liberal MEPs, the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Group claimed that during their hearing Juncker noted that European Commission portfolios have not yet been allocated. *Links:* [ALDE](#); [European Voice](#); [Europolitics](#); [EUObserver](#); [Europe Decides Twitter](#)

4

**Leaders gear up for appointments summit:** On Wednesday EU leaders will meet in an extraordinary summit to choose the future president of the European Council, the new foreign policy chief and the chair of the Eurozone finance ministers group. The current President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, has been consulting with national leaders and expects to conclude these talks on 11 July. Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt is a favourite for the European Council role, with Federica Mogherini, Italy's Foreign Minister in line to replace Catherine Ashton as the new High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. *Link:* [European Voice](#)

### ALSO IN THE NEWS

**Replacement commissioners to be grilled by MEPs:** On 17 July the European Parliament will vote on the four people nominated to replace commissioners who recently joined the Parliament as MEPs. Former Finnish prime

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minister Jyrki Katainen is the only one expected to remain for the next term (see *below*) and will take, for the next few months, the role of economic and monetary affairs commissioner, replacing Olli Rehn. The other three nominees who will be grilled in hearings before parliament committees on Monday are Jacek Dominik (who will take over the position of former Budget Commissioner Janusz Lewandowski), Martine Reicherts (replacing former Justice Commissioner Viviane Reding), and Ferdinando Nelli Feroci (taking over from ex-Industry Commissioner Antonio Tajani). *Link: [European Voice](#)*

**Katanien nominated as potential next European Commissioner:** On 10 July Finland nominated Jyrki Katainen to be a commissioner in the next College. However, he is unlikely to keep the economic and monetary affairs brief he will look after for the rest of this term. *Link: [EurActiv](#)*

**Juncker wants more women in new Commission team:** Jean-Claude Juncker has called on member states to nominate more women to the next European Commission, with some sources claiming that he even promised important portfolios to member states that put forward female candidates. So far, only men have been officially nominated by national governments. Federica Mogherini, the Italian Foreign Minister, Dora Bakoyiannis, Greece's former Foreign Minister, and Kristalina Georgieva, the current Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response are a few of the women whose names have been circulating but have yet to be confirmed. In turn, a group of current female Commissioners, including Neelie Kroes, have made a plea to Juncker to push further for diversity in the College. *Links: [EurActiv](#); [EUBusiness](#); [European Voice](#)*

**Romanian PNL MEP Norica Nicolai quits EPP to rejoin ALDE:** The Romanian National Liberal Party (PNL) MEP Norica Nicolai has quit the EPP Group to rejoin ALDE. She stated her unhappiness at committee allocations by the EPP. The other five PNL MEPs remain in the centre-right group, which they officially joined last week. *Links: [Agerpres](#); [Europe Decides twitter](#)*