

WEEKLY ROUND-UP

TOP STORIES: 30 August to 5 September 2014

1

Tusk and Mogherini appointed to EU's top jobs: The European Council made two senior appointments at a summit on Saturday, electing Poland's Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, as the next President of the European Council, and appointing Italy's Foreign Minister, Federica Mogherini, as Commission Vice-President and High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Tusk received the unanimous backing of his fellow leaders while Mogherini was backed by all except the Lithuanian President, Dalia Grybauskaitė, who abstained. *Links:* [European Voice](#); [EurActiv](#); [Inet Post](#); [EUObserver](#); [New York Times](#); [New Europe](#); [SBS](#); [Polskie Radio](#); [wn.com](#); [Newzulu](#); [Bloomberg](#); [New Europe](#)

2

Juncker names Commission team: Jean-Claude Juncker has interviewed all nominees for positions in the European Commission as he continues to prepare his College. The final list of nominees, which comprises 14 members of the European People's Party (including Juncker), eight from the Party of European Socialists, five Liberals and a Conservative, must be agreed by the Council. Juncker will then announce the distribution of portfolios and the way he intends to organise the work of the next European Commission. This announcement is expected early next week. All candidates will then go through hearings in the European Parliament, before a final vote on the entire Commission. *Links:* [EurActiv](#); [EUObserver](#); [New Europe](#)

3

Juncker meets Parliament's gender balance target: Jean-Claude Juncker's list of nominees for the Commission includes nine women – the same number as were appointed to the Barroso II Commission in 2010. Four of the women come from the Liberals, with three from the EPP and two Socialists. The Socialists, Greens and Liberals in the European Parliament had threatened to veto the College unless the gender balance matched that of the current team, although it falls short of the 'ten or more' women demanded by the current female commissioners. Two countries switched nominees this week from men to women: Romania named Corina Crețu, a Social Democrat and vice-president of the European Parliament, to replace Dacian Cioloș, while Poland nominated Elżbieta Bieńkowska, the country's Deputy Prime Minister, to replace Radosław Sikorski, the Foreign Minister, after he failed in his bid to be made High Representative. *Links:* [New Europe](#); [EurActiv](#); [Europe Decides Twitter](#); [EurActiv](#)

4

Senior names complete Juncker's team: Denmark has picked Margrethe Vestager, the Danish Deputy Prime Minister and Economics and Internal Affairs, as its next nominee to the Commission. Another Liberal, the outgoing Slovenian Prime Minister, Alenka Bratušek, was also named after weeks of speculation. Both are expected to get significant roles in the new Commission, as is the Dutch Foreign Minister, Frans Timmermans (from the Party of European Socialists), who may become the new College's 'enforcer'. Cyprus appointed Christos Stylianides, a centre-right MEP, while another EPP MEP, Marianne Thyssen, was nominated by Belgium. It was a welcome appointment for Jean-Claude Juncker, who had earlier criticised Belgium for delaying the formation of his team. *Links:* [EurActiv](#); [Europe Decides Twitter](#); [European Voice](#); [EUObserver](#); [European Voice](#); [EurActiv](#); [Europe Decides Twitter](#); [EUObserver](#); [EUObserver](#); [Europe Decides Twitter](#); [EurActiv](#); [Europe Decides Twitter](#); [Europolitics](#); [European Voice](#); [EurActiv](#)

5

Delay forces Parliament to adjust hearings schedule: As the announcement of portfolios in the next Commission has been delayed, the European Parliament is likely to put back the hearings of the nominees by one week. The hearings are now set to begin on 29 September, but MEPs still plan to vote on Juncker's College in October. *Link:* [European Voice](#)

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ALSO IN THE NEWS

Swedish PM Reinfeldt aims for third term: Sweden's Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt is aiming for a third term as Swedish Prime Minister, but recent opinion polls suggest that the opposition Social Democratic party is still ahead of Reinfeldt's centre-right Moderates in the polls. The anti-immigration Sweden Democrats are set to win ten per cent of the vote in the election, to be held on 14 September. *Links: [Financial Times](#); [EUObserver](#); [Reuters](#); [EUObserver](#)*

Eurosceptics make breakthrough in Saxony poll: Angela Merkel's centre-right Christian Democratic Union has won state elections in Saxony, but it was the performance of the eurosceptic Alternative for Germany (AfD) that raised most eyebrows. The AfD won around ten percent of the vote, entering a German state parliament for the first time since the party's foundation in 2013. *Link: [Reuters](#)*

'New start' for Austrian government: Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann has praised his new centre-right Finance Minister, Hans Joerg Schelling, and called the reshuffling of his coalition government a "new start". The Social Democratic Chancellor declared that this would focus on the areas of tax reform, government finances and education. New centre-right leader Reinhold Mitterlehner becomes Vice-Chancellor. *Link: [New Europe](#)*

García to lead Spanish socialist MEPs: Iratxe García, the Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, has been made leader of the Spanish Socialist delegation in the European Parliament. García replaces Elena Valenciano, a close associate of Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, who stood down as head of the party after a poor European Parliament election result. *Link: [European Voice](#)*

New Polish PM to be chosen by end of September: The name of the new Polish prime minister will be revealed by President Bronislaw Komorowski once Donald Tusk's government resigns. Tusk, who was appointed as the new President of the European Council on Saturday, is thought to be planning to step down this month. Further details on the schedule will be known next week, after a meeting between Tusk and Komorowski. *Link: [New Europe](#)*

Poll predicts first Ukip win in UK parliament contest: Opinion polls suggest that Britain's anti-EU UK Independence Party (Ukip) will win its first seat in the British parliament next month. The by-election in Clacton, Essex, was caused by the resignation of MP Douglas Carswell, who quit the Conservatives for Ukip. Support for Carswell, who will be Ukip's candidate, is said to be at 56%, ahead of the Conservatives, on 24%. The vote takes place on 9 October – coincidentally, the 48th birthday of UK Prime Minister David Cameron. *Link: [Reuters](#)*

Scotland independence vote narrows: According to an opinion poll conducted by YouGov, the gap between supporters and opponents of Scottish independence is narrowing. According to the poll, 47% of voters back independence while 53% oppose it. *Link: [EUObserver](#)*