



The management of posted workers in the European Union



Author: Sébastien Richard

The situation of the posted worker in view of the social laws of the host country is addressed by the 1974 regulation, modified in 2004, which maintains the posted worker's affiliation with the social security regime of the sending State and by the 1996 directive which endorses the application of the salary, working hours and conditions of the host country except if the standards of the sending country are more advantageous. With growing numbers of cases of fraud in a context in which there have been increasing numbers of posted workers in the wake of the enlargement of 2004-2007, the European Commission has put forward a draft implementing directive designed to prevent the circumvention of the 1996 directive.

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Front page! :

American point of view of the European elections 2014



On 29th January Lysios Public Affairs consulting is organising a debate together with the Robert Schuman Foundation in Brussels. It is entitled "European Resurgence or European Shutdown? An American Perspective on the 2014 European Elections." Jean-Dominique Giuliani will be debating with Tyson Barker, Director of the Bertelsmann Foundation based in Washington DC... [Read more](#)

The Foundation in the "Global Go-to-Think Tanks 2013"

The "Global Go-To Think Tanks 2013" ranking put together by the



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University of Pennsylvania which reviews 6,826 Think Tanks in 182 countries has just been published. For the first time the Robert Schuman Foundation is included and occupies a good position in the European category : 6th in the category "Best New Idea or Paradigm Developed by a Think Tank" and 10th in the category "Best Managed Think Tank". It also comes 30th and 21st in these two categories internationally...

Financial Crisis :

Decline in unemployment in the UK



The Office for National Statistics in the UK announced in a report published on 22nd January 2014 that unemployment had declined: hence the percentage of job seekers between September and November 2013 had dropped by 0.5 points in comparison with the June-August period 2013 to total 7.1%. Over one year unemployment has dropped by 0.6 points... [Read more](#)

Fall in the number of financial establishments



The European Central Bank indicated on 21st January 2014 that the number of financial establishments in the euro zone was down in 2013 by 3.8% in comparison with 2012. The euro zone had 6,790 financial establishments on January 1st 2014 in comparison with 7,059 on January 1st 2013, ie 269 establishments less. Financial establishments fell in number in France (-76), Luxembourg (-70), Spain and Cyprus (-36 each). In relative terms this reduction has been greater in Cyprus (-26%), Greece (-17%), in Luxembourg (-16%), Spain (-9%), in Malta (-9%) and in France (-7%)... [Read more](#)

World growth provisions raised to 3.7%



On 21st January 2014 the IMF published the most recent update of its world economic prospects. It raises its world growth forecast for 2014 to 3.7%. The IMF reveals that there has been a rise in optimism over the world's economy raising its growth forecast for the first time in nearly two years, but it still highlights the "fragility" of recovery. After having increased by 3% in 2013 the world GDP is due to progress to 3.7% in 2014 before gathering pace in 2015 with growth of 3.9%. "The obstacles that weigh over recovery are gradually receding, the burden of deficit reduction is declining, the financial system is slowly recovering and uncertainty is changing its course," summarised the IMF's Chief Economist Olivier Blanchard... [Read more](#)

Slight rise in employment in 3rd quarter of 2013



On 21st January the OECD announced that the employment rate in the OECD zone had risen by 0.1% to total 65.2%. In the euro zone the employment rate was up for the first time since the second quarter of 2011 (+0.1% to total 63.5%) but remained 0.3% lower than the previous year. In comparison with the previous quarter the employment rate had risen in the UK (+0.2 to total 70.8%). But this rate had especially risen in Portugal (+0.7, 61.3%), Slovenia (+0.7, 63.7%) and in Ireland (+0.6, 60.7%). The sharpest decreases were recorded in Estonia (-1.1 67.9%), the Netherlands (0.4, 74%) and in Denmark (-0.4, 72.4%)... [Read more](#)

GDP rise, likewise unemployment in Spain



After two quarters of decline in 2013 unemployment started rising again in the last quarter of 2013. The Spanish national statistics institute (INE) announced on 23rd January 2014 that unemployment had risen from 26.03% in the last quarter of 2013 in spite of a return of weak growth. Hence at the end of December 2013 Spain had 5,896,300 people out of work, 8,400 less than in the previous quarter, since the working population has also decreased. Moreover Spain's GDP rose by 0.3% in the last quarter of 2013 but contracted by 1.2% over the entire year, according to estimates released by the Bank of Spain on 23rd January. These figures confirm the return of weak growth... [Read more](#)

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Portugal: adoption of amending budget 2014



On 24th January the Portuguese Parliament adopted on first reading an amending budget for 2014 comprising austerity measures decided by the government to compensate for those that were invalidated by the Constitutional Court. The amended version of the finance bill for 2014 that should enable Portugal to bring its public deficit down to 4% of the GDP widens the solidarity tax base on pensions that is already in force and increases civil servants' healthcare insurance contributions... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

The Commission supports European industrial revival



On 22nd January the European Commission encouraged the Member States to take steps in support of reviving Europe's industries since this will help create jobs, growth and competitiveness. In this context the Commission is inviting the Council and the European Parliament to adopt proposals relative to energy, transport, space and communication networks as well as the implementation of legislation that finalises the internal market. Moreover the Commission is encouraging the development of a Europe that is more open to business via the simplification of the legal framework and by improving the effectiveness of national and regional civil services Europe wide... [Read more](#)

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40% and producing 27% of renewable energies



On 22nd January 2014 the European Commission presented its goals for 2030 for the climate and energy. It has recommended Member States reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 40% in comparison with 1990 and that they bring their renewable energy production up to 27%. Heads of State and government will be deciding on this proposal in the next European Council on 20th and 21st March 2014. Response by MEPs in the European Parliament's Environment Committee were mitigated even though they supported the Commission's proposals during a joint vote with the Industry Committee. Moreover the European Commission adopted several recommendations on 22nd January regarding fracking techniques notably used in the extraction of shale gas... [Read more](#)

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Bulgaria: slow progress in the reform of the judiciary and the fight to counter corruption



The European Commission published a report on the progress made by Bulgaria as part of the cooperation and verification mechanism, i.e. the reform of the judiciary and the fight to counter corruption. Generally speaking progress is not yet adequate and is still weak. For example cases in which corruption or organised crime affairs have brought before the criminal courts are rare. However some improvements have been introduced from the point of view of appointment procedures, useful management measures have been taken by the Prosecutor General and some results have been registered by the Higher Magistrates' Council regarding work load issues... [Read more](#)

Romania, concern about the reform of the judiciary and the fight to counter corruption



On 22nd January 2014 the European Commission published a report on the progress made by Romania as part of the cooperation and verification mechanism, i.e. the reform of the judiciary and the fight to counter corruption. From a general point of view the results produced by the main legal institutions and those responsible for managing issues of integrity are positive, even if there is still concern about the independence of the judiciary. For example changes in December 2013 to the criminal law which challenged the overall regime to fight corruption and to promote integrity were the source of concern... [Read more](#)

The Commission supports "Blue Energy"



The European Commission presented a new plan of action on 20th January 2014 to facilitate continued development of renewable ocean energies in Europe. It suggests establishing a forum on ocean energy that will strengthen cooperation between the various parties. Moreover this plan of action aims to develop the "blue energy" sector towards total industrialisation since its use should provide safer and more reliable renewable energy... [Read more](#)

Council :

Informal meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers



On 23rd and 24th January 2014 Justice and Home Affairs Ministers met in Athens for an Informal Council where they discussed legal and illegal immigration, data protection as well as issues linked to terrorism. The fight to counter racism and xenophobia were also the focus of discussion... [Read more](#)

Fishing: adoption of a regulation on total fishing opportunities in 2014



The 28 Member States adopted a regulation on 20th January 2014 offering the total fishing opportunities in 2014 to European ships in the EU and in some non-European waters. A political agreement was found during the meeting on 17th December 2013 between the Ministers responsible for fisheries. This regulation stipulates the total fishing opportunities and fishing quotas for the Member States in 2014 regarding fish stocks which are not the focus of international negotiations or agreements... [Read more](#)

Launch of EU-Serbia negotiations



Negotiations for Serbia's accession to the EU were officially launched on 21st January 2014. Serbia has therefore made a symbolic but decisive step in its rapprochement with the EU but membership negotiations which are now starting will be tough because of differences over Kosovo... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Syria - Negotiations at the Geneva 2 Conference



The so-called "Geneva 2" Conference that has been ongoing since 22nd January 2014 in Montreux is the second attempt by the international community to find a settlement via diplomatic means to the Syrian conflict. The EU's High Representative Catherine Ashton welcomed the initiators of the meeting during her inaugural speech (UN, US and Russia) and recalled the goals: ensuring political transition and the settlement of humanitarian problems in Syria. She recalled that the EU, which has promised 225 million euro to help Syrian refugees, would do everything it could to support the Syrian population both by way of financial donations and support to civil society. Although the UN mediator Lakhdar Brahimi won commitment on both sides that they would sit down at the negotiating table, talks came to a halt over political transition issues... [Read more](#)

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Court of Justice :

The ESMA can intervene on Member States' financial markets



The European Court of Justice deemed on 22nd January 2014 that the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) could intervene as a matter of urgency on the financial markets of Member States to regulate or ban shortselling. Following the financial crisis in 2012 the EU adopted a regulation to harmonise shortselling to prevent the prices of financial instruments from falling uncontrollably in the event of financial market turbulence. The UK made an appeal deeming that the ESMA had provided itself with discretionary political power in defiance of the principles of Union law. However the Court rejected the British appeal entirely and said that the ESMA's powers were governed quite precisely and were liable for legal control in terms of the goals that had been set which makes them compatible with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union... [Read more](#)

ECB :

Sabine Lautenschläger on the ECB board

German Sabine Lautenschläger became one of the six members of the ECB's executive board on 27th January 2014 and is the only woman to occupy this post after having won the EU Council's approval on 21st January. The ECB's Council of Governors put Sabine Lautenschläger forward on 22nd January to take the post of Vice-President of the Single



Supervisory Mechanism of euro zone banks... [Read more](#)

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Germany :

German government seminar on the 2014 roadmap



On 23rd January 2014 after a two-day government seminar at the Meseberg Castle German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Vice-Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel presented the roadmap of the "grand coalition" for 2014. The first area to be addressed will be retirement pensions. The German government will present its draft reform on 29th January 2014. The second issue will be the "Energiewende", or the reform of the renewable energy bill that provides for a reduction in subsidies. Europe and international issues are also on the agenda... [Read more](#)

Strengthening military cooperation between Berlin and Paris



German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen met her French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian in Paris on 20th January 2014. Germany is due to take part in the European mission in Central Africa by sending transport and medical planes on condition that the Bundestag gives its greenlight. Berlin is already providing support to the French mission in Mali. The strengthening of military cooperation between Paris and Berlin is due to be undertaken via the Franco-German Brigade. The subject will be on the Franco-German Council of Ministers' agenda planned for 19th February in Paris... [Read more](#)

Spain :

No independence for Catalonia according to Mariano Rajoy



Spain has been shaken over the last few weeks by demonstrations notably in Catalonia where the Parliament decided that a referendum would take place on the province's independence. Just as this decision met with major approval amongst the population the President of the Spanish government, Mariano Rajoy, declared in a TV interview that no regions of Spain would become independent under his presidency nor under that of his successors... [Read more](#)

France :

Meeting of French President with Pope Francis at the Vatican



French President François Hollande travelled to the Vatican on 24th January to meet Pope Francis. This, a first meeting for both Heads of State, gave both men an opportunity to address international issues - conflict in the Middle East, Africa - questions about society, the area of defence and the promotion of human issues - family, bioethics, respect of religious communities and the protection of places of worship. Both men reiterated their mutual commitment to maintaining regular dialogue between the State and the Catholic Church and to cooperate constructively on issues of common interest... [Read more](#)

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French President makes an official visit to the Netherlands



During his official visit to the Netherlands on 20th January 2014 French President François Hollande held a press conference with his Dutch counterpart Mark Rutte. The two men explained that they had concluded a strategic partnership. They spoke of their common goals for the EU: a pertinent Europe, that is committed to its citizens in terms of growth and jobs and a more effective Commission. Finally they spoke of European Defence. François Hollande then took part in an economic forum in Amsterdam with Mr Rutte together with business heads from both countries. At the forum he spoke of common interests shared by both countries: the stability of the European Union, banking union, growth and competitiveness... [Read more](#)

Latvia :

A woman to lead the Latvian government



On 22nd January 2014 the Latvian Parliament (Saeima) approved the new government with 64 MPs voting in favour, 27 against and 2 abstentions. For the first time in Latvia's history a woman will be leading the government. Laimdota Straujuma, 62, will lead a government comprising 13 ministers of whom 4 are women at the head of the Ministries of Education and Science, Culture, Justice and Health. She will take over from Valdis Dombrovskis who resigned at the end of November 2013 following an incident in a shopping centre that led to the death of several people... [Read more](#)

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UK :

The House of Lords delays the procedure to organise a referendum



The text providing for the organisation of a referendum on the UK's possible exit from the EU by 2017 may never become a reality after the decision by the House of Lords on 24th January 2014 to send it back to the House of Commons. During a tumultuous debate, a majority of Lords asked to amend the question set by the referendum. As a result the draft bill must now return to the lower house which may delay the procedure permanently. This is because it has to enter into force before the end of the parliamentary session in April otherwise the government will have to reintroduce the text during the next session if it still wants to - a very rare event... [Read more](#)

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Switzerland :

Europe at the World Economic Forum



From 22nd to 25th January 2014 the 44th World Economic Forum took place in Davos. Europe was the focus of several round tables. On 22nd January "Is Europe back?" European and American economists met and promoted the positive aspects of the European economy but all expressed their concern about its future, if it does not reform. On 23rd January "Closing Europe's Competitiveness Gap" with José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission. On 25th January a round table put forward the reforms that might be possible in terms of the European banking system. On 24th January José Manuel Barroso and Neelie Kroes also signed a declaration promoting a "Grand Coalition for Digital Employment"... [Read more](#)

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Turkey :

Visit by Turkish Prime Minister to Brussels



Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan went to Brussels on 21st January to meet the President of the European Council Herman van Rompuy, President the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso and the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz. They addressed the present situation in Turkey. Indeed the country is suffering a major political crisis having undertaken a government reshuffle and making many arrests. Messrs van Rompuy and Barroso said they were concerned. They highlighted the need for Turkey to find a solution to this crisis in line with European criteria. The issue of Cyprus, the energy partnership, the liberalisation of passports and the crisis in Syria were also on the agenda during these discussions... [Read more](#)

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Ukraine :

Resignation of the Ukrainian Prime Minister and opening of extraordinary session of Parliament



In a press release published on the government's site on 28th January 2014 Ukrainian Prime Minister announced that he was resigning. "I took the decision to ask the President (Viktor Yanukovich) to accept my resignation from this post, in order to provide additional conditions for a political compromise and a peaceful settlement to the conflict", wrote Mr Azarov. On the same day MPs are to vote on a series of measures, notably the repeal of the repressive laws concerning the demonstrations. Tension remains high in Kiev between demonstrators and the police. On 27th January 2014 activists evacuated the Justice Ministry which had been occupied since 26th January and the police discovered another body, the 7th, in Independence Square. The European delegation in Kiev said it was extremely concerned about the "worsening human rights situation." Referring to the massive arrests and fatal events of the last few days the Union called for an end to this kind of behaviour and for the "re-

establishment of confidence between the government and civil society." On the eve of an extraordinary session of the Ukrainian parliament to settle the crisis the opposition declared that it was prepared to continue discussions with the government. The Council of Europe asked the Ukrainian parliament to repeal or suspend the repressive laws that were approved on 16th January stressing their incompatibility with the Charter of Human Rights. The head of the EU's diplomacy, Catherine Ashton, advanced her journey to Kiev by two days in a bid to try and defuse the crisis... [Read more](#)

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Eurostat :

Public debt declines in the euro zone but rises in the EU



On 22nd January 2014 Eurostat said that public debt in the euro zone was down and totalled 92.7% of the GDP, in the third quarter of 2013 against 93.4% in the second quarter of the same year. Euro zone debt has not been as low as this since the fourth quarter of 2007. Europe wide public debt was up and totalled 86.8% of the GDP in the third quarter of 2013 against 86.7% in the previous quarter... [Read more](#)

Current account trade surplus of 31.4 billion euro in the EU



On 23rd January 2014 Eurostat indicated that the EU had recorded a current trade surplus in the third quarter of 2013 totalling 31.4 billion euro whilst it was only 33.3 billion euro in the third quarter of 2012 and 46.3 billion in the second quarter of 2013. In comparison with the second quarter of 2013 the goods account surplus based on data adjusted to seasonal variations decreased (from +9.7 billion euro to +0.1 billion) likewise the revenues account (from +16.4 billion euro to +9.4 billion euro)... [Read more](#)

In 2012 the EU held an FDI stock of 5,207 billion euro



On 23rd January 2014 Eurostat indicated that at the end of 2012, the European Union held Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stocks of 5,207 billion euro in the rest of the world, while stocks held by the rest of the world in the European Union amounted to 3,947 billion. Investments increased between 2009 and 2012 by nearly 40%. Eurostat recalls that the FDI stock data helps quantify the impact of globalisation and to measure long term economic links between States. The main partners with whom the Union held FDI stocks were the US (1,655 billion euro, ie 32%), Switzerland (679 billion, ie 13%), Canada (258 billion ie 5%) and Brazil (247 billion ie 5%)... [Read more](#)

EU-Russia Trade



On the occasion of the 32nd EU-Russia Summit that will be taking place on 28th January 2014 in Brussels Eurostat has published statistics on trade between the EU and Russia. According to figures published on 24th January 2014 exports and imports rose constantly until 2008, then fell in 2009 before recovering to reach new heights in 2012. From 2002 to 2012 EU exports to Russia increased, rising from 34.5 billion euro to 123.4 billion whilst imports rose from 65.2 billion euro in 2002 to 215.0 billion in 2012... [Read more](#)

Publications :

Understanding the European Debate



Le Cercle Points publishing has just released a book by Michel Dévoluy, professor emeritus at the University of Strasbourg entitled "Comprendre le débat européen." This book is a warning and a citizen's act. He explains why Europe is heading for disaster and why it lacks identity and democracy. To move forward and rewrite the European project the author calls for an active effort on the part of the citizens, as he offers the tools to understand and the means to act... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Risk of poverty for working age population



On 21st January 2014 the European Commission presented the 2013 report on the development of employment and the social situation in Europe. One of the main conclusions indicates that following the economic crisis it is easier to emerge from poverty with a job but it depends on what kind of job as well as the composition of the household and the labour market situation. A progressive decrease in unemployment levels might not be enough to reduce poverty because of the polarisation of salaries and the increase in part time work... [Read more](#)

Human Rights Watch presents its annual report



Human Rights Watch presented its annual report on 21st January 2014 in Berlin. In its 667 page report on practices in terms of Human Rights observed in the world, the NGO summarises the main problems encountered in more than 90 countries. It is extremely concerned about the situation in Syria and regarding Edward Snowden's revelations about the American surveillance programme. From a general point of view there have been some notable improvements in 2013 regarding international mechanisms which help towards the defence of Human Rights... [Read more](#)

The Council of Europe (GRECO) invites France to step up reform



In a report published on 27th January 2014 the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) welcomed the various recent reforms to prevent corruption in France but notes that there are still major gaps in regulations and the status of MPs, judges and prosecutors. GRECO concludes that MPs and Senators are still not subject to adequate rules concerning conflict of interest, gifts, and other advantages... [Read more](#)

"A new procedure to appoint the president of the European Commission"



The Trans European Policy Study Association (TEPSA), a European affairs research centre, recently published a study on the new procedure to appoint the President of the European Commission. Author, Gianni Bonvicini explains that European political groups will each appoint their own candidate for the post of President of the European Commission. In this change they see a major stake in the next elections. This new procedure should bring citizens and European institutions closer together and create a new balance within the institutions. The study defines the advantages and disadvantages of this procedure... [Read more](#)

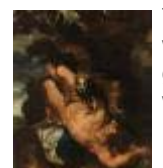
NATO Annual Report 2013



NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen presented the organisation's annual report 2013 on 27th January 2014. He reviewed the results of NATO's work in 2013 and presented the stakes facing NATO in 2014 and for the next few years. Hence investing in good infrastructures, maintaining the capabilities of the armed forces, deepening and extending NATO's relations with its partners will enable NATO to rise to future challenges. "In September we shall meet in Wales to define the NATO of the future: a strong, rebalanced alliance that is ready to guarantee the security of the upcoming generations," he notably declared... [Read more](#)

Culture :

"Furias. From Titien to Ribera: a political allegory and artistic challenge."



The Prado Museum is running an exhibition devoted to the "Furias" in works of art from Titien to Ribera until 4th May 2014. The Furias are gods from Greek mythology who were responsible for punishing those who defied the gods. They owe their name to the fury they express... [Read more](#)

Zurbaran - master of the Spanish Golden Age

For the very first time in Belgium the Palace for Fine Arts in Brussels is running an exhibition on the work of Francisco de Zurbaran, one of the main Baroque painters in Spain, in the ilk of Velazquez and Murillo. His work (mainly religious subjects) is typified by pure naturalism and



modern poetic sensitivity. As a "painter of the Counter-Reformation", he created works that expressed the new attitudes that became dominant after the Council of Trent (1545-1563) and led to a cultural revival in Spain in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not only in the visual arts but also in theatre, literature, and music... [Read more](#)

La Folle Journée à Nantes



The 20th "La Journée Folle", a classical music festival, will take place in Nantes from 30th January to 2nd February 2014. The aim of the festival is to help visitors discover classical music in a different way via a series of low-cost concerts that are short and follow each other in quick succession. People can move about choosing which show they would like to see. The 20th editions called "Des canyons aux étoiles, un siècle de musiques américaines" bringing together several American artists as well as some from Europeans, who were hosted by the new continent in the 20th century... [Read more](#)

41st International Comic Strip Festival in Angouleme



From 30th January to 2nd February 2014 the town of Angouleme will be hosting the 41st International Comic Strip Festival. Given the many changes that are to affect the comic strip over the next decade the festival's organisers decided to focus on the relationship of then comic strip with the world. Visitors will be able to see exhibitions that bring together the work of Tardi, Quino, Willem and many other artists...

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Memory found



The Quirinale Palace in Rome, the seat of the Presidency of the Republic is paying tribute to the "Carabinieri" for their action in defence of Italian cultural heritage, particularly affected by the illegal theft and sale of works of art. The exhibition organised in two parts presents the public with works of art from the 6th century BC to the 18th century... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



27th January
Brussels
Eurogroup Meeting



27th-28th January
Athens
Meeting of leaders of the countries on the shores of the Mediterranean



28th January
Brussels
Economic and Financial Affairs Council

Brussels
EU-Russia Summit



31st January-2nd February
Munich
50th Security Conference - Munich



3rd to 6th February
Strasbourg
European Parliament Plenary Session

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