

Agenda of the European Commission ***23 – 29 June 2014***

**Background notes from the Spokespersons' service for journalists.
The European Commission reserves the right to make changes.**

Thursday-Friday, 26-27 June:

Commissioner Hahn joins Annual Danube Strategy Forum in Vienna to discuss key initiatives to boost green and inclusive growth

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The news:

EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn will be joining high-level politicians and representatives from the 14 member countries of Europe's Danube "Macro-Region" for their 3rd Annual Forum in Vienna on 26-27 June. Jointly organised by the European Commission, the Republic of Austria and the City of Vienna, the Forum will be opened by Austrian Foreign Affairs Minister, Sebastian Kurz and Mayor and Governor of the capital region, Michael Häupl.

Following recommendations in the Commission's recent report of governance of the EU's existing and future Macro-Regions, the Danube countries' Foreign Affairs Ministers will meet alongside the Forum to propose concrete arrangements for more strategic leadership to drive forward growth in the Region.

The background:

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) was launched in April 2011 and brings together 9 EU countries (Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia) and 5 non-EU countries (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Ukraine and Moldova). The Strategy sees challenges common to the countries, whether environmental, economic or security related – being tackled collectively with shared solutions.

By involving EU neighbouring countries at an equal level, the Danube Strategy also brings the Western Balkans, Moldova and the regions of the Ukraine closer to the Union.

The event:

- A special focus of this year's Forum and side meetings will be on regional competitiveness and social inclusion according to the slogan 'We Grow Together – Together We Grow'.
- 'Greening the River' and renewing its fleet will also be high on the agenda. Several meetings will have a special focus on cleaner navigation, including the roundtable "Policy meets industry". This will bring together high-level business representatives and political decision-makers in order to formulate concrete measures to improve the current infrastructure and navigability situation along the Danube.
- This year's Forum also comes as 'Partnership Agreements' for the European Structural and Investment Funds for 2014-2020 are being adopted. The EU Member States involved must now ensure that the Danube Strategy is firmly embedded in these investment plans, and that the future programmes translate Danube Region priorities into concrete goals.

The sources:

- An IP will be available on Thursday, 26 June
- [European Union Strategy for the Danube Region](#)
- [3rd Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, Vienna](#)
- [Report on the Governance of Macro-Regional Strategies \(May 2014\)](#)
- Twitter: [@EU_Regional](#) [@JHahnEU](#) #EUSDR #Danube
- Footage of the Commissioner's participation in the Forum will be available on EbS <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices>
- EU Strategy for the Danube Region <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I067095>
- Don't lose Europe's unique biodiversity backbone (long version) <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I069891>
- Don't lose Europe's unique biodiversity backbone (b-roll) <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=I069917>

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