



Europe Direct Information Centre Outer Hebrides

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Issue 12

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The Eurozone



€1=£0.78
€1=\$1.25

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EDIC opening hours are from 9.00am to 1.00pm Monday to Friday



INFORMATION EVENT AT LEWS CASTLE COLLEGE (UHI)

The Europe Direct Information Centre held an information event recently at the Lews Castle College in Stornoway, which is one of the local campuses of the University of the Highlands and Islands network.

The main aim of the event was to provide information relating to studying, working, training, apprenticeships, or volunteering in the EU.

Working, training, and studying abroad are seen as attractive to employers, as these create a greater sense of global identity.

Information was provided on the new [ERASMUS+](#) Programme, (€14.7 billion budget over 7 years, 2014-2020), [EURES](#) (the EU job mobility portal), [ESF](#) (European Social Fund) which aims to support people into getting jobs, and [Youth on the Move](#) which is a comprehensive package of policy initiatives on education and employment for young people in Europe, and the [Youth Employment Package](#) (set of measures to help EU countries tackle youth unemployment and social exclusion).

Resources regarding generic EU rights in accordance with the [European Year of Citizens 2014](#) were also available.

Alongside our stand the Development Department of the Comhairle also hosted an information stand with regard to the [Lews Castle Grounds Regeneration project](#) which is being progressed in partnership with the Stornoway Trust, having received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. They are currently undertaking a recruitment drive for volunteers to assist with tasks to further the project.

This project ties in with the current refurbishment of the Lews Castle and erection of a new Museum and Archive centre annexed to the Castle, which have received [ERDF funding in the sum of £1.8 million](#) toward the overall £14 million total project cost.



Top picture shows Modern Apprentice and EDIC Manager at information stand, centre picture shows EDIC Manager after talk to some students and volunteers, bottom picture shows Lews Castle Grounds Regeneration Project stand with volunteers and Development Department staff in front

EU BOOKSHOP PUBLICATION

Did you know that you can order your own free copy of the [Eurostat regional yearbook 2014](#) from the EU Bookshop?

Statistical information is important for quantifying the impact of political decisions in a specific territory or region. The yearbook gives a detailed picture relating to a broad range of statistical topics across the regions of the Member States of the EU, and the regions of EFTA and candidate countries.

Co-funded by
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EUROPEAN COMMISSION ASKED TO INTERVENE IN ISLAND RENEWABLES IMPASSE



**Comhairle Convenor,
Councillor Angus Campbell**

Comhairle Convenor, Cllr Angus Campbell, has written to Mr Dominique Ristori, Director General of DG Energy at the European Commission regarding the impasse surrounding Grid connection for the Outer Hebrides.

European Commission Directive [2009/28/EC](#) states that electricity producers in the peripheral regions of the Community, in particular island regions and regions of low population density, should not be unfairly disadvantaged in comparison with producers in more densely populated areas.

With forecast electricity transmission charges for the Outer Hebrides at seven times the North of Scotland mainland and with generators in the South East of England being subsidised to transmit their product, Cllr Campbell wants Mr Ristori to consider whether this may represent discrimination against a peripheral region in terms of the Directive.

There is 550MW of renewable electricity generation – enough to power 550,000 homes and offset 1.5 million tonnes of Carbon Dioxide production – already consented and contracted to Grid in the Outer Hebrides.

Despite this level of demand, Scottish Hydro Electric (Transmission), the Transmission Owner for the North of Scotland, is citing excessive transmission charges as a reason why it is unable to progress longstanding plans for a 450MW Radial Connector for the Outer Hebrides.

This issue is important in the European context because, once the Outer Hebrides renewable energy resource is unlocked, it will contribute significantly to [European Carbon reduction targets](#) and European security of energy supply objectives.



**Director General of DG
Energy, Mr Dominique Ris-**

STUDY IN EUROPE - PORTABILITY PILOT

For the first time, as part of a pilot initiative encourage more Scottish students to study abroad, Scottish domiciled students studying at eligible European universities can apply for the same bursary and loan support from the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS), as students attending university in Scotland.

The pilot will run over two years and the first intake of students will be in academic year 2014-15 with the final intake in academic year 2015-16. Students interested in this opportunity should note that the support will not end after academic year 2015-16, as students will be supported for the duration of their undergraduate course.

When considering which universities could take part, the focus was on publicly funded universities that delivered a wide variety of undergraduate courses that were completely taught in English.

The eligible universities are:

- Groningen University (pictured), Netherlands – Tuition fees approx. €1,850 (tuition fee loans available from Dutch government)
- Maastricht University, Netherlands – Tuition fees approx. €1,850 (tuition fee loans available from Dutch government)
- Malmo University, Sweden – No tuition fees
- Rhine Waal University, Germany – No tuition fees (semester fee of approx. €239.62 which the student will have to self-fund)
- Southern Denmark University, Denmark - No tuition fees

Students can apply to the SAAS for bursary and loan support based on household income. However, students should not apply to SAAS for payment of their tuition fees as the tuition fee arrangements will depend on which country you study in. Please visit the [information section about each university](#) to find out the tuition fee arrangements. Once the pilot is evaluated, consideration of an extension to other EU countries will be undertaken.



THE EU IS ALL AROUND YOU

The single market of over 500 million people across 28 member states allows us to benefit in many ways. Regarding keeping our food safe, there is harmonisation of high standards in hygiene and packaging material, and food labelling informs you on exact contents. In the workplace we have health and safety standards, and discrimination protection. At home we can choose our heating energy provider, and we can switch provider. EU wide competition reduced national call costs by 2/3 and mobile costs by 1/3. Our binmen were chosen by the price and quality of their service, and we drive on roads built with EU funding support. If your trip by plane, boat, bus, or train is delayed or cancelled you are entitled to a refund, rerouting or other help. EU law allows you 14 days to change your mind re online European purchases.

[More information](#)