

EUROPARL



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IAN HUDGHTON

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Pictured above at the European Parliament in Brussels are Scottish Self Government College members who had an opportunity to observe EP Committees in session.

BRUSSELS – INSIDE OUT!

This was the title of a guided tour of Brussels which students of the Scottish Self-Government College, who visited the “Capital of Europe” earlier in November, enjoyed. The tour’s aim was to encourage visitors to look behind the famous facades and beyond the tourist attractions to capture something of the real Brussels. The Inside Out tour provided a thought-provoking and sometimes controversial introduction to the city, highlighting as it did both the social and cultural history of the Belgian capital and thereby providing a challenging start to their study programme for the 30 plus delegates of the College.

The visit comprising of a packed four-day programme was sponsored by SNP MEPs Ian Hudghton and Neil MacCormick and co-ordinated by College Bursar Jim Adens.

Flemish Member of Parliament, Ferdie Willems MP introduced delegates to the Belgian Federal Parliament and explained the roles of its two chambers and its relationship with Belgium’s three powerful devolved regional Parliaments. Later that day, the group had a chance to put questions to a chief official of the Flemish Ministry of Culture.

A meeting with the Deputy Head of the Norwegian Mission to the EU (Elisabeth Walaas) highlighted some of the pluses and minuses of being a small, oil rich and fisheries-dependent country which, although a member of the European Free Trade Association and NATO, is not a member of the European Union.

An informal debate, chaired by the College’s Provost, Dr Alasdair Allan, on Scotland’s role in Europe, gave delegates a chance to quiz their MEPs on key issues like enlargement, the single currency and the relationship of “sub-national” parliaments to the European Union.

ANIMAL TESTING OPPOSED

Ian Hudghton has said animal welfare cannot be ignored in a Europe-wide review of chemical testing debated in the European Parliament in November.

At its plenary session in Strasbourg, the European Parliament addressed issues relating to the safety of chemicals in the European Union. While welcoming proposals on human safety and the environment, the MEP said he had “received numerous letters from constituents across Scotland expressing their fear and anger that mass trials of chemicals on animals might become necessary.”

Mr Hudghton, who is a supporter of moves to minimise animal testing said:

“Many individuals and animal rights groups, including the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, fear that millions of animals could die or be severely harmed as a result of carrying out mass testing of chemicals across Europe.

“The European Commission has a stated commitment to reducing tests on animals where at all possible. This means using alternative methods in preference to living creatures, thus preventing animal suffering.”



During Scotland Week in Brussels SNP MEP Ian Hudghton met with Youth Parliament representatives (above) from the Highlands and Islands.

HUDGHTON LEADS ON COD REPORT

SNP MEP Ian Hudghton has been chosen to lead the EP Fisheries Committee deliberations on proposals to restore cod and hake stocks. The report is regarded as highly significant in pinpointing many of the broader problems confronting us in the current review of the Common Fisheries Policy.

Commenting, the SNP member said:

“I welcome the European Commission’s undertaking to consult widely – most notably with members of the fishing industry itself.

“It is up to all of us who care deeply for the future of the Scottish fishing industry to ensure that stock recovery proposals achieve a sustainable future for our fishing and processing industries.”

ALLAN MACARTNEY LECTURE

The Scottish Self Government College inaugural Allan Macartney Lecture, in keeping with Allan’s lifelong involvement and passion, will focus on an international theme relevant to Scotland today.

John Swinney will introduce Jesus Maestro, International Political Secretary of the Catalan Republican Left to deliver his address “Catalonia and Caledonia - from Devolution to Independence”.

Date/Venue: Wednesday 28 Nov, 6.30pm, Committee Room 2 at the Scottish Parliament, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh.



The Gordon Schools at Huntly recently staged a successful day focussing on language learning. Speakers included Ian Hudghton MEP pictured above during the workshop session where students were asked to design publicity materials in French, German and Spanish versions.



MEP Ian Hudghton recently met with the Director of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction for an informative briefing. The Lisbon-based agency works closely with relevant bodies in each of the European Union Member States, and collates statistics and information on health and law enforcement issues.

Ian Hudghton

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This newsletter is published by Ian Hudghton and distributed free of charge to keep constituents in touch with developments in the European Parliament and the work of the SNP Euro-MP.



New Guide to EU Funding

The European Commission has issued its latest guide on European Union funding in Scotland. A "must have" for all individuals and organisations seeking EU finance, the booklet gives a summary of the main grants available and details of who to contact for further information. Booklets can be obtained from The European Commission, 9 Alva Street, Edinburgh, or by contacting Ian Hudghton MEP, 8 Old Glamis Road, Dundee, DD3 8HP

"GOOD RIDDANCE" TO £500 FEE

Ian Hudghton MEP has welcomed news that an up-front £500 fee on applicants for European funding is to be scrapped. The MEP was delighted to receive confirmation from the Highlands and Islands Partnership Programme, which administers European Social Fund payments in the north of Scotland, that they have decided to ditch the fee.

Earlier this year, Mr Hudghton highlighted the potential problems small voluntary organisations might face in raising this up-front levy, and wrote to the Scottish Executive and to Commissioner Anna Diamantopoulou asking for their views on the matter.

While the Scottish Executive confirmed that Edinburgh had sanctioned the charge, the European Commission took a very different stance.

Commissioner Diamantopoulou, who was clearly unaware of the £500 hurdle ESF applicants faced, thanked the MEP for bringing the matter to her notice and triggered an investigation into the way the funds were being handled.

Mr Hudghton said:

"I am delighted with this outcome. Organisations in the Highlands and Islands have been worrying about raising this money up-front. They can at last join me in saying "Good Riddance" to this £500 fee and concentrate all their energies on providing essential services to local communities."

IAN HUDGHTON'S DIARY

18 NOVEMBER
SNP North East Regional Assoc
Executive, Dundee

19-20 NOVEMBER
Fisheries Cttee, Brussels

20 NOVEMBER
Shetland Fisheries seminar, Brussels

21-22 NOVEMBER
Economic & Monetary Affairs
Cttee, Brussels

23 NOVEMBER
P7 EU project, Hayshead School,
Arbroath

P6/7 Scotland in Europe project,
Canongate School, St Andrews

26-27 NOVEMBER
Fisheries Cttee, Brussels

28-29 NOVEMBER
EP Plenary session, Brussels

30 NOVEMBER
P7 EU project, Greenbrae School,
Bridge of Don

1 DECEMBER
SNP National Council, Perth

SNP St Andrews Dinner, Perth

4 DECEMBER
SNP Branch meeting, Ellon

5-6 DECEMBER
Group meetings, Brussels

8 DECEMBER
SNP National Executive, Edinburgh

10-13 DECEMBER
EP Plenary session, Strasbourg

17 DECEMBER
EP Plenary, Laeken Summit
session, Brussels

18-20 DECEMBER
Fisheries Cttee, Brussels

7-10 JANUARY 2002
Group meetings, Brussels

12 JANUARY
SNP National Executive, Edinburgh