

EESC reiterates its call for a stronger architecture of the European Monetary Union



Cooperation and partnership between governments and civil society will be crucial for completing ambitious reforms needed for the deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union. Taking into account economic, social and environmental aspects is equally important for strengthening the social role of the European semester, concluded a high-level panel of top EU officials and experts at the plenary session of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC).

On 26 September, the **EESC** held a debate on the completion of the Economic and Monetary Union and the European Semester. The debate saw the participation of Vice-President of the European Commission **Valdis Dombrovskis**, former Greek Minister of the Economy **Louka Katseli**, **Christian Ebeke** of the International Monetary Fund and **Tuomas Saarenheimo** of the Finnish Ministry of Finance.

EESC President **Luca Jahier**, chairing the debate, stressed the important role and work of the EESC and its two relevant bodies, the **European Semester Group** and the **Study Group on Economic and Fiscal Governance of the Euro Area**.

The speakers agreed the debate was taking place at a decisive moment for the European economy, faced with a slowdown in growth, persistently low inflation and investment as well as rising domestic and international uncertainties.

Mr Dombrovskis announced that deepening the European and Monetary Union would be high on the next Commission's agenda. In his keynote speech at the plenary, the Vice-President Designate emphasised the important role of civil society in this regard:

In order to make real progress on difficult reforms, governments, social partners and civil society have to work hand in hand. This dialogue is especially important now, in light of the urgent challenges we face for the climate, digitalisation, globalisation – but also demographic challenges in our societies. We have to work together to turn these challenges into opportunities. For me, this is exactly the spirit of the European Economic and Social Committee.

Praising the work of the EESC, **Mr Dombrovskis** said, *You have demonstrated how effective this approach is: it was this Committee that drafted the text of the Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers, and more recently led the consultation process on shaping the final text of the European Pillar of Social Rights. And you continue to inform the debate on the future of Economic and Monetary Union.*

Mr Saarenheimo, representing the Finnish Presidency of the Council, said that

competitiveness, climate and security were the key priorities for European economy under his country's Presidency. He also highlighted the importance of [taxation](#) and Banking Union and of mainstreaming climate aspects into economic and financial policy.

Mr Ebeke offered a more positive view of the European economy and the eurozone, describing the situation as *not bad as we are coming from a period of a high growth rate* **Mr Ebeke** put forward the IMF recommendations to strengthen the eurozone by insisting on structural reforms and the Banking Union.

It is time for the EU to defy gravity and fly high; we just need the political will to implement this. The challenges on the horizon do not leave any other alternative than to grow in a more inclusive way, **Mr Ebeke** concluded.

Mr Katseli presented the conclusions from the report [Sustainable Equality](#), which lists the reform of governance and of the European Semester among its main proposals.

We need to implement the 2030 strategy in European policies. Another Europe is necessary, another Europe is feasible, stressed **Mr Katseli**.

Gonçalo Lobo Xavier, President of the European Semester Group, presented the Group's initiatives and actions carried out as part of its visits to Member States. In his view, involving external actors in the European Semester gave added value to the process as European civil society had an important role to play.

Stefano Palmieri, President of the EESC Section for Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion, called upon the European institutions and national governments to take more ambitious action towards deepening EMU in order to achieve a more integrated, more democratic and socially more developed/advanced Union.

The success of European economic governance will depend on the involvement of European society in the process, **Mr Palmieri** warned.

Concluding the debate, the **EESC President** said, *We support a strengthened EMU, because we know that in the globalised, highly competitive and rapidly changing economy of today, no individual EU state can thrive on its own.*

Background info:

The EESC has been urging EU leaders to strengthen the architecture of the EMU for a long time, including in its recent opinions on [Euro area economic policy \(2019\)](#) and [Economic and Monetary Union Package](#).

The [opinion on "Towards a stronger international role of the euro"](#) comes as a response to a specific Commission initiative in this field launched in December 2018. In July 2019, the EESC views expressed in this opinion will be complemented by two own-initiative opinions – one on [Towards a more resilient and sustainable European economy](#) and another one on [A new vision for](#)

[completing the Economic and Monetary Union](#). All three opinions have been drawn up in a bid to outline a comprehensive vision for the European economic agenda over the next EU legislative term and to feed into the forthcoming EU leaders' discussions on this.

CALENDRIER du 30 septembre au 6 octobre 2019

(Susceptible de modifications en cours de semaine)

Déplacements et visites

Lundi 30 septembre 2019

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** in Paris, France: attends the commemoration ceremony in remembrance of Mr Jacques Chirac, former President of France.

Mr Frans **Timmermans** receives Mr Werner Hoyer, President of the European Investment Bank.

Ms Federica **Mogherini** participates in the EU-Moldova Association Council, in Brussels.

Mr Valdis **Dombrovskis** in Riga, Latvia: meets Mr Egils Levits, President of Latvia; and delivers a keynote speech at the International Symposium 'University and Society: Renewed Focus on National Growth and Values', organised on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the University of Latvia.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** in Helsinki, Finland (until 1/10): delivers a keynote speech at the [Arctic Forum](#); meets Ms Auli Hänninen, CEO, and Mr Philip Aminoff, Chairman of the Board of the Family Business Network Finland; and addresses the EPP Family meeting of the [Inter-parliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance](#).

Ms Cecilia **Malmström** hosts the ['Trade for Her: Empowering Women through International Trade'](#), in Brussels.

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** hosts the Health Programme Conference co-organised by the European Commission and Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency, in Brussels.

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** participates in the event on 'EU Food Safety Talks: a regional perspective' at the Delegation of the office of Italian region Emilia-Romagna to the EU, in Brussels.

Mr Dimitris **Avramopoulos** in Athens, Greece: meets Prokopis Pavlopoulos, President of Greece.

M. Pierre **Moscovici** à Paris, France : est auditionné par la Cour des Comptes, Formation Interchambres dans le cadre d'un rapport sur la lutte contre la fraude et l'évasion fiscales.

Mr Christos **Stylianides** receives Mr Abdallah Al Rabeeah, Supervisor General of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre.

Ms Violeta **Bulc** in Cologne, Germany: visits the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA); addresses the EASA staff; and attends a working lunch with Mr Patrick Ky, Executive Director of the EASA.

Mr Tibor **Navracsics** in Riga, Latvia: speaks at and participates in the International Symposium 'University and Society: Renewed Focus on National Growth and Values' organised on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the University of Latvia.

Ms Margrethe **Vestager** receives representatives of the European roundtable of industrialists: Mr Rrank Heemskerk, secretary general; Mr Carl-Henric Svanberg, chairman; Mr Jacob Wallenberg, Chairman, Mr Jean-François van Boxmeer, CEO of Heineken International; Mr Frans van Houten, CEO of dutch company royal Philips electronics; Mr José María Álvarez-Pallete, CEO of telefónica s.a.

Mr Julian **King** in Washington, United States: meets with Nazak Nikakhtar, Assistant Secretary for Industry and Analysis of the United States; David Pekoske, Acting Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security of the United States; Nathan Sales, Acting Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights for the United States and Rear Admiral Peter Brown, Homeland Security Adviser Rear for the United States.

Mardi 1 octobre 2019

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** in Strasbourg, France: participates in an exchange with the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; participates in a working lunch hosted by the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; and delivers a speech at a high-level event on the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe.

Mr Frans **Timmermans** receives the Directors of Green 10.

Mr Valdis **Dombrovskis** receives Mr Beyrer, Director General of Business Europe.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** in Helsinki, Finland: delivers a keynote address on 'How to trigger public and private investments in the EU?' at the [Inter-parliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union](#); attends a hearing at the Defence Committee of the Finnish Parliament;

participates in a working lunch with Mr Kare Halonen, state secretary for EU Affairs of Finland, and Mr Jori Arvonon, state under-secretary for EU Affairs of Finland, meets Mr Ilkka Salmi, permanent secretary of the ministry of the Interior of Finland; delivers a keynote speech on 'The Role of Science, Manufacturing and Innovation in Boosting Jobs, Growth and Competitiveness – A Sustainable Way for the EU' at the [Closing session of European Days for Sustainable Circular Economy](#), and meets Ms Emilia Kallas, Director of the Finnish Business and Policy Forum EVA.

Ms Cecilia **Malmström** receives Ms Anna Hallberg, Minister for Foreign Trade of Sweden; attends the informal Foreign Affairs Council-Trade meeting; and meets the 'Advisory Group on EU Trade Agreements', in Brussels.

Mr Miguel **Arias Cañete** participates in a hearing organised by the Committee for Energy, Environment and Climate of the Belgian House of Representatives, in Brussels.

Mr Karmenu **Vella** in Valletta, Malta: meets with Mr George Vella, President of Malta.

Mr Dimitris **Avramopoulos** in Warsaw, Poland: visits the European Border and Coastguard Agency and meets with Fabrice Leggeri, Executive Director of the European Border and Coastguard Agency.

M. Pierre **Moscovici** à Paris, France : s'adresse aux participants du séminaire de haut niveau de l'Université d'automne de la Confédération Européenne des Syndicats (CES) sur le thème : « Priorité 1 : Politiques et Actions pour l'avenir de l'Europe » ; rencontre M. Luca Visentini, Secrétaire confédéral de la Confédération Européenne des Syndicats; et rencontre M. Enrico Letta, Président de l'Institut Jacques Delors.

Mr Christos **Stylianides** in Athens, Greece: meets civil protection authorities of Greece; and receives the 'Andreas Yannopoulos' Award by the organisation 'Smile of the Child'.

Ms Věra **Jourová** speaks at the Workshop [on future policies for Roma](#), in Brussels.

Ms Margrethe **Vestager** receives Ms Annalena Baerbock and Mr Robert Habeck, co-leaders of the Green Party of Germany.

Ms Margrethe **Vestager** receives Mr Ralph Brinkhaus, MP, Chairman of the CDU/CSU-Parliamentary Group of the German Bundestag; and addresses the network's Defenders of Democracy monthly gathering, in Brussels.

Mr Julian **King** in Washington, the United States: delivers a speech at the Atlantic Council Roundtable: 'Security of Digital Infrastructures'; and delivers a speech at the Wilson Center event: ['A State of Un-Peace: the EU's Response to Asymmetric Threats'](#)

Mercredi 2 octobre 2019

College Meeting

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** receives the Bridge-Builder Award presented by the American Chamber of Commerce.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** receives Mr Janis Saarts, Director and a delegation of the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** receives Mr Marco Viren, President of Energy Solutions of Wärtsilä and Mr Kari Hietanen, Executive Vice-President Corporate and Legal Affairs, of Wärtsilä.

Mr Dimitris **Avramopoulos** visits Europol; meets with Catherine De Bolle, Executive Director of Europol; and attends the European Police Chiefs Convention.

M. Pierre **Moscovici** reçoit M. Guntram B. Wolff, Economiste et Directeur de l'Institut Bruegel.

Mr Christos **Stylianides** in Athens, Greece: meets Mr Costas Simitis, former Prime Minister of Greece; and meets Mr Kóstas Bakoyánnis, Mayor of Athens.

Mr Tibor **Navracsics** speaks at the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile Event 'European Young Women Programme' followed by a working lunch, in Brussels.

Mr Tibor **Navracsics** speaks at and participates in the European Union Prize for Literature Awards Ceremony, co-organised by the Federation of European Publishers, in Brussels.

Ms Margrethe **Vestager** and Ms Violeta **Bulc** are meeting representatives of the European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA), The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) and other stakeholders on the future of smart and clean mobility in Europe.

Ms Mariya **Gabriel** receives Princess Stéphanie of Monaco, Countess of Polignac.

Jeudi 3 octobre 2019

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** attends a working lunch with the members of the Committee of the Permanent Representatives of the Member States to the European Union (Coreper).

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** receives Mr Anders Fogh Rasmussen, former Prime Minister of Denmark.

Ms Cecilia **Malmström** in Stockholm, Sweden: participates in the '[EU in a new world order](#)' event.

Mr Miguel **Arias Cañete** gives a keynote speech at Repsol's annual conference

'[Energy for Europe](#)', in Brussels.

Mr Karmenu **Vella** in Umea, Sweden: delivers a speech at the [EU Arctic Forum](#).

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** in Salzburg-Bad Hofgastein, Austria: meets representatives on Non-Governmental Organisations active in Health policy, at the Gastein Health Forum.

M. Pierre **Moscovici** à Paris, France : participe au Salon [Investir Day](#).

Ms Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** is in Helsinki, Finland- attends the Conference on the European Defence Fund

Vendredi 4 octobre 2019

Environment Council

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** in Helsinki, Finland: meets Ms Anna-Maja Henriksson, Minister for Justice of Finland, and Ms Hanna Kosonen, Minister for Science and Culture of Finland; delivers a closing speech 'The Way Forward' at the High-Level Conference on European Defence '[How to Make the Most Out of the EDF?](#)'; participates in a working lunch with Ms Merja Ylä-Anttila, CEO of the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE; and meets Mr Mikkel Näkkäläjärvi, leader of the Social Democratic Youth organisation of Finland.

Mr Günther H. **Oettinger** in Madrid, Spain: holds a series of meetings to discuss the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2028, the EU's next long-term budget.

Mr Neven **Mimica** in Dakar, Senegal: meets Mr Macky Sall, President of Senegal.

Mr Karmenu **Vella** in Luxembourg, Luxembourg: meets with Mr Neno Dimov, Minister for the Environment of Bulgaria; meets with Ms Isabella Lövin, Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden.

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** in Salzburg-Bad Hofgastein, Austria: participates in the session on Shortage of essential medicines hosted by the European Commission; delivers a speech at the Closing Plenary: the Global Climate Crisis – a Public Health Emergency; and meets the Young Forum Gasteiners, at the Gastein Health Forum:

Mr Christos **Stylianides** in Bonn, Germany: gives a keynote speech to open the Master course on European Disaster Management at the University of Bonn.

Ms Violeta **Bulc** in Lisbon, Portugal: visits the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA); attends a working lunch with Ms Maja Markovčić Kostelac, Executive Director of EMSA; and visits the Lisbon Oceanarium.

Ms Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** is in Wałbrzych, Poland: meets with Mr. Roman

Szełemej, Mayor of Wałbrzych and attends the opening of the Kamieniecka street.

Mr Tibor **Navracsics** in Budapest, Hungary: meets Mr Csaba Kael, Chief Executive Officer of Múpa Budapest Museum.

Samedi 5 octobre 2019

Mr Neven **Mimica** in Praia, Cabo Verde (until 6/10): meets Mr Ulisses Correia e Silva, Prime Minister of Cabo Verde; meets Mr Olavo Avelino Garcia Correia, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Finance of Cabo Verde; and visits EU-funded projects.

Dimanche 6 octobre 2019

Mr Neven **Mimica** in Praia, Cabo Verde: visits EU-funded projects.

Prévisions du mois d'octobre 2019 :

07-08/10 Justice and Home Affairs Council

09/10 Eurogroup

10/10 Economic and Financial Affairs Council

14/10 Foreign Affairs Council

14 – 15/10 Agriculture and Fisheries Council

15/10 Foreign Affairs Council

17-18/10 European Council

24/10 Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council
(Employment and social policy)

Permanence SPP le WE du 5 et 6 octobre 2019 :

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EU @ UNGA74 on Friday

A week full of events and high-level meetings at the 74th session of the UN General Assembly is coming to an end. Over the past few days, the European Union has showcased its ambitious approach to climate change and sustainable development, its ongoing work to uphold human rights and its support to peace and security across the world. The EU has confirmed that it remains the most reliable partner for those who want to work collectively on joint responses to global challenges. As the High Representative/Vice-President **Federica Mogherini** said during her speech at the launch of the Alliance for Multilateralism: *"Multilateral solutions are much more effective, because only by joining forces we can tackle the complex crises of our times."* Today, Commissioner Julian **King** will represent the EU at a high-level meeting reviewing the progress made in addressing the priorities of Small Island developing States (SIDS), also known as the SAMOA pathway. On Saturday, Commissioner Neven **Mimica** will take part in the post-Cotonou chief negotiators' meeting on a new partnership agreement with 79 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The future agreement will succeed the Cotonou Agreement. Audio-visual coverage of the events and bilateral meetings will be available on [EbS](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Xavier Cifre Quatresols – Tel.: +32 229 73582)

Le premier Forum de la Connectivité discute des liens entre l'UE-Asie et renforce les relations UE-Japon

Le premier [Forum européen de la connectivité](#) a débuté ce matin à Bruxelles avec des [discours](#) du président de la Commission européenne, Jean-Claude **Juncker**, et de son invité spécial, le Premier ministre japonais, Shinzō Abe. Cette première édition du Forum a pour thématique la « Connectivité entre l'Union européenne et l'Asie – Construire des liens pour un avenir durable » et rassemble des participants de plus de 52 pays. Le président **Juncker** [a déclaré](#) : « La connectivité est inscrite dans notre ADN européen. La connectivité au sein de l'Union européenne et entre l'Union européenne et le reste du monde est d'autant plus nécessaire que nous vivons dans un monde où l'interdépendance économique entre les différentes régions du monde est de plus en plus étroite et que nous faisons tous face aux mêmes défis, qu'il s'agisse du climat, du numérique ou des changements technologiques. L'Europe renforce sa coopération avec d'autres régions du monde et en particulier avec des partenaires partageant les mêmes engagements en matière de démocratie, de respect de l'Etat de droit, de liberté et de dignité humaine. Et il ne pourrait y avoir de meilleure illustration de cette approche que la relation entre le Japon et l'Europe ». Le président **Juncker** et le Premier ministre Abe ont ensuite signé un [partenariat pour une connectivité durable et des](#)

[infrastructures de qualité entre l'Union européenne et le Japon](#), qui souligne encore davantage l'importance stratégique du partenariat entre l'Union européenne et le Japon que les deux parties se sont engagées à renforcer ces dernières années. Cette étape importante dans l'Union européenne et le Japon est également marquée par [la recommandation de la Commission](#) d'ouvrir les négociations pour un accord bilatéral avec le Japon sur le transfert des données des dossier de passagers. *« Cet accord viendra renforcer notre nouveau partenariat sur la connectivité durable, notamment en améliorant la sûreté du transport aérien, et j'espère qu'il pourra entrer en vigueur avant les Jeux olympiques de Tokyo, »* [a déclaré](#) le président **Juncker**. Le Forum se déroule toute la journée avec différents panels composés de membres de gouvernements, d'institutions financières européennes et internationales, et d'acteurs du secteur privé en provenance d'Europe et ailleurs. Les Premiers ministres de la Finlande et de la Croatie, Antti Rinne et Andrej Plenković, participeront à la session de clôture, modérée par le président émérite du Conseil européen, Herman Van Rompuy. Pour suivre le forum en direct, cliquez [ici](#). Le [communiqué de presse](#) complet et une [fiche technique](#) sur la connectivité UE-Asie sont en ligne. Le discours du président **Juncker** est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations : Mina Andreeva – Tél.: +32 229 91382; Maja Kocijancic – Tél.: +32 229 86570; Adam Kaznowski – Tél.: +32 229 89359)

Security Union: The Commission recommends opening negotiations with Japan on the transfer of Passenger Name Record (PNR) data

As announced today by President Jean-Claude **Juncker** at the [Europa Connectivity Forum: EU-Asia Connectivity](#), the European Commission has recommended that the Council authorise the start of negotiations for an EU-Japan Agreement to allow the transfer and use of Passenger Name Record (PNR) data in order to prevent and combat terrorism and serious transnational crime. The Agreement will set out the framework and conditions for the exchange of PNR data, in full respect of data protection safeguards and fundamental rights, in accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said: *"Japan is a strategic partner in the fight against terrorism and organised crime. Today we are taking this cooperation one step further – it is only by working together that we can enhance global security."* Commissioner for the Security Union Julian **King** said: *"Passenger Name Record (PNR) data helps us to identify suspicious travel patterns and track down dangerous criminals and terrorists. It is important that we share this data with close partners like Japan, strengthening our security cooperation, and that we do so in full respect of data protection standards."* The EU and Japan are long standing strategic partners, including in the fight against terrorism and serious crime, as reaffirmed in the [EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement](#) signed in July 2018. The opening of negotiations for an EU-Japan PNR Agreement further highlights the key strategic partnership between the EU and Japan. The full [press release](#) is available online. (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444).

Steel imports: Commission adopts adjustments to the existing safeguards

The European Commission today [published adjustments to the existing steel safeguard measures](#). The adjustments – effective as of 1 October – will make the existing steel safeguard measures more effective and will ensure that they better reflect the current situation in the steel sector. They include improvements in the functioning of the quota, among others for hot-rolled flat steel and steel intended for the automotive sector, an updated list of exclusions for developing countries based on more recent imports statistics, and a slower progressive increase of the import quotas (reduction of liberalisation pace from 5% to 3%). The changes will take effect as of 1 October 2019. The Commission's proposal to proceed with the adjustments to the existing steel safeguard measures received earlier this month a wide support from EU Member States and was also subject earlier in the process to consultations with WTO Members concerned. The safeguard measures were provisionally put in place in July 2018 and have been introduced in their definitive form in February 2019. The aim has been to prevent serious injury for the EU steel industry following the increased imports and trade diversions caused by the U.S. unilateral decision to impose tariffs on steel products last year. *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)*

L'Union européenne investit 117 millions d'euros dans les infrastructures de transport durables en Europe

L'Union européenne investit plus de 117 millions d'euros dans 39 projets clés dans le secteur des transports, qui contribueront à établir les connexions manquantes sur tout le continent, tout en mettant l'accent sur les modes de transport durables. Les projets permettront de réduire le bruit généré par les trains de marchandises, de développer et d'améliorer les liaisons ferroviaires transfrontalières et de moderniser des infrastructures portuaires essentielles. La commissaire en charge des transports, Violeta Bulc, a déclaré: « *Nous concrétisons nos engagements visant à rendre les transports plus durables, plus sûrs et plus intelligents. La décision prise aujourd'hui donne un nouvel élan à la transition vers une mobilité à faibles émissions en Europe – en commençant par nos chemins de fer et nos ports.* » Les projets seront soutenus par le [mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe \(MIE\)](#), le mécanisme financier de l'UE destiné à soutenir les infrastructures de transport. Au total, le programme a maintenant permis le soutien de 795 projets pour un montant total de 22,3 milliards d'euros, mobilisant un investissement total de 47,1 milliards d'euros dans le secteur des transports. Plus d'informations [en ligne](#). *(Pour plus d'informations : Enrico Brivio – Tél.: + 32 229 56172; Stephan Meder – Tél.: +32 229 13917)*

Juncker Plan supports Polish businesses with record European Investment Bank Group deal

PKO Leasing, the largest leasing company in Poland, launched today the

largest securitisation transaction on the Polish market with the support of the European Investment Bank Group and the Juncker Plan. The company sold PLN 2.5 billion (€575 million) of asset-backed securities to a pool of international investors, which includes the EIB Group, Citi Bank and others. The transaction will contribute to improving access to finance for Poland's micro-enterprises, SMEs and mid-cap companies across all sectors. The EIB Group is providing PLN 1.93 billion (€446 million) in total, of which PLN 640 million (€148 million) is guaranteed by the Juncker Plan's European Fund for Strategic Investments. Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, European Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, said: *"This agreement will make a big difference for thousands of emerging and growing businesses in Poland in need of financial support. Under the Juncker Plan, already more than 55,000 Polish SMEs and startups are benefitting from improved access to finance. SME employment in the EU is on the rise and we need to continue to give a helping hand so that these small companies flourish and create more jobs."* A press release is available [here](#). As of September 2019, the Juncker Plan has mobilised €433.2 billion of additional investment, including €18.7 billion in Poland. The Plan is currently supporting 972,000 small and medium businesses across Europe. (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: [+32 229 56153](#); Siobhan Millbright – Tel.: [+32 229 57361](#))

Juncker Plan: Structural Reform Support Service and European Investment Bank join forces to provide advisory services and improve investment climate

The European Commission's [Structural Reform Support Service](#) (SRSS) and the European Investment Bank's (EIB) Advisory Services Department have stepped up their cooperation in providing support to EU Member States. Following the declaration of intent signed today, the SRSS and the EIB, via the European Investment Advisory Hub, will collaborate closely to provide technical support and advice to Member States on a broad range of policy areas. The overall objective of this partnership is to continue improving Member States' business environments by removing barriers to investment, which is a crucial part of the Juncker Plan. The SRSS and the Advisory Hub will work together to provide expertise to Member States' authorities in areas such as public-private partnerships, support to national promotional banks and institutions, financial instruments and platforms, environmental and other sectoral reforms. For example, the partners can collaborate on designing support measures, providing advisory services and impact evaluation. The Structural Reform Support Service offers tailor-made support to all EU countries for the preparation, design and implementation of growth-enhancing reforms. The support is provided on the request of Member States, requires no co-financing and mobilises experts from all over Europe and beyond, from both the public and the private sector. The [European Investment Advisory Hub](#) is a joint initiative of the European Commission and the EIB which acts as a single point of access to advisory services to make projects ready for investment, using expertise of the EIB Group, the European Commission and other relevant institutions and services. (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: [+32 229 56153](#); Annikky Lamp – Tel.: [+32 229 56151](#); Siobhán Millbright – Tel.: [+32 229 57361](#))

EU beef exports to Korea resume after almost 20 years

After almost 20 years and thanks to consistent efforts undertaken jointly by the European Commission and EU Member States, the Republic of Korea lifted its import restrictions on beef and beef products from the European Union. Producers from Denmark and the Netherlands will be the first ones to be able to resume exports. Commissioner for trade, Cecilia **Malmström**, said: *"Trade isn't just about doing trade deals. After many years of hard work this announcement means that Dutch and Danish farmers gain a new market to sell their beef. Once again the EU is delivering for our agricultural sector."* Commissioner Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, in charge of health and food safety, welcomed this announcement, stressing that *"this is another sign that trade partners acknowledge that the battle against BSE has been won and that the quality of EU's beef and beef products is recognised around the world. Additional access to this important market is excellent news for EU producers!"* Commissioner for agriculture, Phil **Hogan**, said: *"This is a very welcome development and an important statement of confidence by the South Korean authorities in the safety and quality of European beef. Following confirmation of access for Danish and Dutch operators, I hope that it won't be long before operators in other EU Member States are approved for export to this important and valuable market. Securing access for other EU Member States will continue to be a priority for the European Commission in [bilateral trade relations with Korea](#)."* The removal of the trade restrictions imposed in 2001 in reaction to the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) outbreak is a sign of well-deserved trust in the EU's comprehensive, multi-layered and very efficient food safety and animal health control system. A full press release is available [online](#), along with more information on [EU agricultural exports](#) and the [EU food safety system](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.:+32 2 295 61 85 ; Kinga Malinowska – Tel.:+32 2 295 13 83)

Criminal justice: Commission evaluates Member States' efforts in making sure suspects of crime get a fair trial

Today, the European Commission published its implementation report on one of the six EU procedural rights directives, notably the [EU Access to a lawyer directive](#). This Directive ensures people have the right to have a lawyer from the first stage of police questioning and throughout criminal proceedings, as well as to adequate, confidential meetings with the lawyer. This is essential to guarantee that every suspect of crime gets a fair trial. The report concludes that considerable progress has been made in the protection of fair trial rights in the EU, but also that Member States still have a lot of work to do. Věra **Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality said: *"Across the EU, every year 9 million people face criminal proceedings. People may be found guilty or not guilty in the end. What matters is that they have a fair trial. Our EU procedural rights guarantee this, but Member States must ensure these agreed rights are secured in practice. Correctly applying these rules in all EU countries is also crucial to ensure tools such as the European arrest warrant can function well."* Particular points of attention concern the situations when exceptionally and temporarily suspects would not have the right to access a lawyer, and the rules on when and how citizens can waive their access to a lawyer, as well as conditions for how people can access a lawyer in the issuing Member State of a European arrest

warrant. The Commission will continue to assess Member States' compliance with the Directive and take every appropriate measure, including possible infringement proceedings, to ensure conformity with the provisions of the Directive throughout the European Union. The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights is also publishing a [report](#) today looking at the challenges defendants face in exercising some of their rights, with a focus on eight Member States. Today's Commission report, a factsheet and more information about the six procedural rights directives will be available [online](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Athina Reuter – Tel.: + 32 229 82390)

Prévenir le gaspillage alimentaire et promouvoir l'économie circulaire: la méthodologie commune de mesure au niveau de l'UE entre en vigueur

La Commission européenne a identifié la prévention du gaspillage alimentaire comme priorité essentielle dans la construction d'une économie circulaire et d'une société durable. Pour changer les habitudes, nous devons être en mesure de mesurer correctement le gaspillage alimentaire. Dès lors, grâce à la méthode commune mise en place, les États membres seront en mesure de quantifier les déchets alimentaires, de manière cohérente et à chaque étape de la chaîne d'approvisionnement alimentaire. Sur la base d'une définition commune du gaspillage alimentaire, la méthodologie garantira une surveillance cohérente dans l'ensemble de l'UE. Le commissaire Vytenis **Andriukaitis** s'est félicité de l'entrée en vigueur de la législation comme un pas décisif: « *La lutte contre le gaspillage alimentaire est un impératif moral. Il est essentiel pour la durabilité de notre planète et pour le bon fonctionnement de nos systèmes alimentaires. L'UE est attachée à l'objectif global consistant à réduire de moitié le gaspillage alimentaire d'ici à 2030. Grâce à cette nouvelle méthodologie européenne, nous pouvons maintenant mesurer où nous en sommes, évaluer l'efficacité de nos actions et suivre nos progrès. Pour le dire très simple: Ce qui est mesuré, est géré!* » La Commission suivra de près la mise en œuvre de cet acte délégué, en organisant des échanges réguliers avec les États membres afin de faciliter son déploiement et de partager les leçons apprises sur le terrain. Sur la base de cette méthodologie, les États membres doivent mettre en place un cadre de suivi avec 2020 comme première année de référence afin de fournir à la Commission les premières nouvelles données sur le gaspillage alimentaire d'ici à la mi-2022. Cette méthodologie partagée au niveau de l'UE contribuera à harmoniser la génération de données sur les niveaux de gaspillage alimentaire par les entreprises et contribuera au [l'objectif de développement durable 12.3](#). Plus d'informations [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Anca Paduraru – Tél.: + 32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tél.: + 32 229 87624)

La Commission annonce les gagnants du prix Horizon Impact 2019

La Commission européenne a annoncé les lauréats du premier [prix Horizon Impact](#), dédié aux projets financés par l'UE ayant créé un impact social en Europe et au-delà. Les projets gagnants ont permis de développer un nouveau médicament contre une maladie rare, d'aider dans la prévention des abus sexuels sur les enfants, d'accroître la sécurité sur internet, ainsi que de protéger les zones côtières des effets du changement climatique. Carlos **Moedas**, commissaire en charge de la recherche, de la science et de l'innovation, a déclaré: « *Ces projets montrent comment la recherche et*

l'innovation profitent directement aux citoyens. Leurs idées et leurs produits ont transformé positivement la vie quotidienne des personnes. Nous avons conçu Horizon Europe, notre nouveau programme de recherche et d'innovation afin d'apporter des avantages plus précieux encore et un impact encore plus grand." Un jury indépendant a sélectionné les projets primés parmi 10 finalistes. Le prix Horizon Impact Award, [lancé](#) en mars de cette année, vise à illustrer les avantages socio-économiques plus larges des investissements de l'UE dans la recherche et l'innovation mais aussi à aider les bénéficiaires des projets à gérer et à utiliser les résultats de la recherche. Le prix récompense les résultats de projet les plus influents et les plus percutants dans le cadre du programme de recherche et d'innovation de l'UE (2014-2020), [Horizon 2020](#), et de son prédécesseur, le [7ème programme-cadre](#) (2007-2013). Plus d'informations sont disponibles [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tél. +32 229 56182; Marietta Grammenou – Tél. +32 229 83583)

State aid: Commission approves prolongation of Belgian and French state guarantees on Dexia's senior debt beyond 2021

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, the prolongation of Belgian and French State guarantees on the senior debt of Dexia, which is in orderly wind-down. In 2012, [Belgium, France and Luxembourg provided state support](#) for the orderly wind-down of Dexia. The state support was approved by the Commission under EU State aid rules on the basis of a wind-down plan that included a capital increase, as well as the possibility of providing State guarantees on Dexia's senior debt until 31 December 2021. In June 2019, Belgium and France notified to the Commission their plan to extend the possibility to provide State guarantees on Dexia's senior debt until 31 December 2031, to continue winding-down the group. Based on the notified plan, the remuneration fees to be paid by Dexia to the Belgian and French States for the prolonged State guarantees (after 2021) will fully ensure that burden-sharing requirements for subordinated creditors are met. On this basis, the Commission has approved the prolongation of Dexia's senior debt State guarantees beyond 2021 under EU State aid rules. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#), under the case numbers SA.53554 and SA.53592. (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of joint control over Omnicare by Equistone and Mr. Olivier TAMIMI

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Omnicare Beteiligungen GmbH ("Omnicare") of Germany by Equistone Partners Europe Limited ("Equistone") of the UK and by Mr. Olivier TAMIMI, through Omnicare Holding GmbH & Co. KG ("OCH") of Germany. Omnicare is currently exclusively controlled, through OCH, by Mr. Olivier TAMIMI. Omnicare is mainly active in the distribution of oncological pharmaceutical products and the provision of services to pharmacies. Equistone is a private equity investment firm active in the UK, France,

Germany and Switzerland. Mr. Oliver TAMIMI controls several economic undertakings, including notably my Pharmacy GmbH (provider of services to pharmacies), Sovelio (home care provider), and MP Immobilien (real estate). The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns given the absence of overlaps between the activities of Omnicare and Equistone. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#) under the case number [M.9525](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of Legal and General Insurance by Allianz

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed acquisition of Legal and General Insurance Limited (“L&G Insurance”) of the UK by Allianz Holdings plc (“Allianz”), which is a UK subsidiary of the Allianz group of Germany. Both L&G Insurance and Allianz offer various kinds of non-life insurance in the UK. Allianz is also active in life insurance, reinsurance and asset management. The proposed transaction gives rise to a limited number of horizontal and vertical overlaps in relation to the provision of pet insurance in the UK. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns because of its limited impact on the markets concerned. The transaction was examined under the normal merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's competition website, in the public case register under the case number [M.9432](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of Advanced Computer Software by BC Partners and Vista Equity Partners

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of Advanced Computer Software Group Ltd. (“Advanced Computer Software”) of the UK by BC Partners LLP of the UK and Vista Equity Partners Management LLC (“Vista Equity Partners”) of the US. Advanced Computer Software is a provider of software, cloud and managed IT services to public and private sector clients. BC Partners is a private equity firm providing investment management advice to financial investors. Vista Equity Partners is an investment firm focusing on software, data and technology-enabled businesses. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given the companies' moderate combined market position resulting from the proposed transaction. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9529](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Currenta by the Macquarie Group

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Currenta Geschäftsführung-GmbH (“Currenta”) of Germany by

Macquarie Infrastructure and Real Assets (Europe) Limited ("MIRA"), belonging to Macquarie Group Limited ("the Macquarie Group") of Australia. Currenta manages and operates integrated chemical parks at sites in Leverkusen, Dormagen and Krefeld-Uerdingen in Germany. MIRA focuses on the management of infrastructure and other real assets, including real estate, energy and agriculture. The Macquarie Group is a financial group that provides asset management and finance, banking, advisory and risk and capital solutions. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because none of the companies are active in the same or in related markets. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9528](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

STATEMENTS

Criminal justice: Joint statement on the launch of EU-US negotiations to facilitate access to electronic evidence

European Commission and U.S. Department of Justice officials met yesterday to begin formal negotiations on an EU-U.S. agreement to facilitate access to electronic evidence in criminal investigations. European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Věra **Jourová** said: *"I welcome the start of formal negotiations. Criminals use fast, modern technologies to organise their crimes and cover up their evidence. We need to work together with our American partners to speed up the access of our law enforcement authorities to this evidence. This will strengthen our security, while protecting the data privacy and procedural safeguards of our citizens. The launch of negotiations marks an important step towards achieving this."* U.S. Attorney General, William Barr said: *"We are pleased that the Council adopted a mandate to authorise the Commission to negotiate an agreement with the United States on facilitating access to certain e-evidence, and that we have obtained authorisation to negotiate with the European Union. This type of agreement can enhance public safety and national security by providing an improved and more rapid ability to identify and respond to criminal threats on both sides of the Atlantic, in a manner that assures respect for the rule of law, privacy, and civil liberties. The U.S. is committed to working with the E.U. on this important issue."* After a productive first discussion, there was agreement to regular negotiating rounds with the view to concluding an agreement as quickly as possible. Progress will be reviewed at the next EU-U.S. Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial in December. More information [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Athina Reuter – Tel.: + 32 229 82390)

"My heart, your heart": Statement ahead of World Heart Day by Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis

On the occasion of the World Heart Day taking place on 29 September Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis **Andriukaitis** said: *"'Your heart and my heart, Are very, very old friends', wrote 14th century poet Hafez. The poem honours human soul connection. It is therefore no surprise*

that the theme of this year's [World Heart Day](#) that aims to create a global community of 'Heart Heroes', echoes the invisible links between people all over the world acting now to live better, longer, heart-healthy lives. I invite each of us to connect to our hearts and those of others and take care of them: by eating healthier food, exercising more, consuming less alcohol, saying no to smoking, and helping our loved ones to quit. In the European Union, almost 49 million people live with cardiovascular disease, meaning almost every tenth person! In addition to the devastating consequences on the lives of individuals, cardiovascular diseases also pose a staggering economic burden to society – almost 210 billion euros a year. Throughout my mandate I advocated for lifestyle choices by encouraging healthy nutrition through food reformulation, better protection of children and adolescents from too much exposure to marketing of foods high in energy, saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, sugars and/or salt, promoting public procurement of healthy food in schools. I know this work will continue. (...) Still, more can be done: I call upon Member States to intensify their efforts on risk factors since many cardiovascular diseases are preventable. And, I also call upon each one of us individually: connect with your heart, keep it healthy." Full statement is available [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Stylianides speaks at Harvard University about the EU's role in addressing global challenges

Today, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** is in Boston, the United States where he will deliver a speech about Europe's strategic role in tackling global challenges at the Center for European Studies (CES) at Harvard University. His speech will be the first of the [new 'Europe in the World Seminar'](#) at CES. Commissioner **Stylianides** will speak about the EU as a global actor. He will elaborate on its key role in humanitarian and development aid, in combating climate change, negotiating international agreements and protecting and deepening multilateralism. He will also underline the importance of the EU-US partnership in today's volatile international system. The event is part of the 'Europe in the World Seminar' and will be chaired by Dr Ekiert, Laurence A. Tisch Professor of Government and Director of the Centre for European Studies at Harvard University. Commissioner **Stylianides** will also meet representatives of Harvard University, students and researchers. (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

[CALENDAR](#) – Commissioner's weekly activities

[Upcoming events](#) of the European Commission (ex-Top News)

EU beef exports to Korea resume after almost 20 years

After almost 20 years, the Republic of Korea lifted its import restrictions on beef and beef products from some European Union Member States. Producers from Denmark and the Netherlands are the first ones to be able to resume exports.

Commissioner for trade, Cecilia **Malmström**, said: *"Trade isn't just about doing trade deals. After many years of hard work this announcement means that Dutch and Danish farmers gain a new market to sell their beef. Once again the EU is delivering for our agricultural sector."*

Commissioner Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, in charge of health and food safety, welcomed this announcement, stressing that *"this is another sign that trade partners acknowledge that the battle against BSE has been won and that the quality of EU's beef and beef products is recognised around the world. Additional access to this important market is excellent news for EU producers!"*

Commissioner for agriculture, Phil **Hogan**, said: *"This is a very welcome development and an important statement of confidence by the South Korean authorities in the safety and quality of European beef. Following confirmation of access for Danish and Dutch operators, I hope that it won't be long before operators in other EU Member States are approved for export to this important and valuable market. Securing access for other EU Member States will continue to be a priority for the European Commission in bilateral trade relations with Korea."*

The opening of the Korean market has been possible thanks to consistent efforts undertaken jointly by the European Commission and EU Member States. The removal of the trade restrictions imposed in 2001 in reaction to the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) outbreak is a sign of well-deserved trust in the EU's comprehensive, multi-layered and very efficient food safety and animal health control system. The Commission will continue to work closely with the Korean authorities to secure market access for the remaining Member States that are still awaiting export approval for beef and beef products. During a meeting held on 4 September 2019 on sanitary and phytosanitary issues, Korean authorities provided assurances that the pending applications from EU Member States (others than Denmark and the Netherlands) would be processed in due time.

The EU and Korea are since 2011 linked by a trade agreement and the European Commission looks forward to ensuring that both parties are able to realise the full potential of this agreement.

The EU-Korea trade agreement has helped intensify exchanges, resolve numerous trade impediments on both sides and increase bilateral agri-food trade by 10% per year. Now, that the sanitary restrictions on Danish and Dutch beef are

lifted, producers from those countries will finally be able to enjoy the tariff reductions available under the agreement.

For More Information

[EU-Korea trade relations](#)

[EU food safety system](#)

[EU agricultural exports](#)

“My heart, your heart”: Statement ahead of World Heart Day by Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis

“Your heart and my heart, Are very, very old friends”, wrote 14th century poet Hafez. The poem honours human soul connection. It is therefore no surprise that the theme of this year’s [World Heart Day](#) that aims to create a global community of “Heart Heroes”, echoes the invisible links between people all over the world acting now to live better, longer, heart-healthy lives. I invite each of us to connect to our hearts and those of others and take care of them: by eating healthier food, exercising more, consuming less alcohol, saying no to smoking, and helping our loved ones to quit.

In the European Union, almost 49 million people live with cardiovascular disease, meaning almost every tenth person! In addition to the devastating consequences on the lives of individuals, cardiovascular diseases also pose a staggering economic burden to society – almost 210 billion euros a year.

Throughout my mandate I advocated for lifestyle choices by encouraging healthy nutrition through food reformulation, better protection of children and adolescents from too much exposure to marketing of foods high in energy, saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, sugars and/or salt, promoting public procurement of healthy food in schools. I know this work will continue.

In the [Tartu Call for a Healthy Lifestyle](#), together with Commissioners Navracsics and Hogan we’ve made 15 commitments to promote healthy lifestyles through sport, food, innovation or research. Two years later, the first results clearly show that the Commission is using more funds, raises more awareness and gathers more knowledge to tackle unhealthy diets, obesity or physical inactivity.

The Commission also works with the Member States to support them in reaching

the targets of the World Health Organisation and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), with an overall aim to reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases. To meet these targets, we need much more focus on promotion and prevention, and we need to work across sectors and create stronger synergies between different EU programmes and policies.

As result of our discussions with country health representatives, large-scale projects to increase healthier lifestyle practices are being rolled out in different countries: for example, there are projects related to heart health screening for general practitioners prescribing physical activity instead of pills.

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Still, more can be done: I call upon Member States to intensify their efforts on risk factors since many cardiovascular diseases are preventable. And, I also call upon each one of us individually: connect with your heart, keep it healthy.