

# Joint press statement following the 13th Association Council meeting between the EU and Jordan

The thirteenth meeting of the Association Council of the European Union and Jordan took place in Luxembourg on 17 June 2019.

The Association Council confirmed the strong and solid partnership between the European Union and Jordan, which has further matured in recent years. The EU and Jordan stressed that their cooperation advances the global good, multilateralism and the rules-based international order. The Association Council confirmed that the EU and Jordan share views on key regional matters, including the Middle East Peace Process, and the Syria conflict. The EU and Jordan have worked constructively together as co-presidency of the Union for the Mediterranean since 2012. Both the EU and Jordan agreed to continue working together to foster regional stability, peace, security and beyond.

The EU and Jordan reiterated that there is no viable alternative to a just and comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the two-state solution, that ends the occupation that began in June 1967, with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign, and viable State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security and mutual recognition. In this context, the EU and Jordan recalled UNSCR 478. The EU and Jordan also reiterated the importance of upholding the historic status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem, including with regards to the Hashemite Custodianship as referred to in the LAS-EU Summit Declaration in Sharm El Sheikh.

The EU and Jordan stressed the crucial role of UNRWA for security and stability in the region, in accordance with its UN mandate stipulated in relevant UN resolutions, and expressed their commitment to continue supporting the Agency politically and financially.

The EU and Jordan welcomed the outcome of the Brussels III Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region of 12-14 March 2019. The EU and Jordan reconfirmed the imperative of a credible political solution to the Syria crisis in line with the Geneva communiqué and UNSCR 2254 and the central role played by the UN in that regard. The session recognised the right of the Syrian refugees to return safely, voluntarily and in dignity to their homes. The EU recalled that the conditions for returns as stipulated by the UNHCR are not yet met.

Acknowledging Jordan's extraordinary generosity in hosting Syrian refugees over many years and the adverse impact of the Syria crisis on the country, the EU reaffirmed its commitment to continuing to provide assistance to the local Jordanian communities and the Syrians; as such, Jordan confirmed its commitment to maintain the protection of refugees, widen their possibilities

for self-sufficiency and, while doing so, contribute to the country's economic development. The EU indicated that it has mobilized over EUR 2.1 billion to Jordan since 2011, across different instruments, including the EU Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis. The support includes bilateral assistance as well as aid addressing the impact of the Syrian crisis, benefiting both the local host communities and the refugee population. This includes humanitarian assistance, together with longer-term resilience and development support in areas such as education, livelihoods, water, sanitation and health, plus Macro-financial assistance. Further significant funding is foreseen for 2019 and 2020.

The EU and Jordan expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved in the implementation of the EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities and confirmed their commitment to further deepen dialogue on issues of mutual interest starting with bolstering security, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, integrated border management to knowledge-based and inclusive growth, job creation, innovation, employability, strengthening the rule of law, human rights and democratic governance.

The meeting provided an opportunity to identify areas where the EU and Jordan could enhance cooperation. The EU and Jordan agreed on the importance for Jordan to pursue its ambitious economic reform agenda and to proceed with a long-term strategy on political reforms. The EU and Jordan acknowledged the contribution of the Jordan Conference held in London on 28 February 2019, and looked forward to the joint High-Level Mission to Amman to be led by Commissioner Hahn on 25 June 2019 with European and International financial institutions. The EU stressed that it will continue to use the range of political, security and financial instruments in its toolbox in support of Jordan's efforts on its comprehensive reforms pathway.

The EU welcomed Jordan's compliance with the conditions for the second and final disbursement under its second programme of macro-financial assistance (MFA) for Jordan. The EU reiterated the commitment to consider a third MFA package to Jordan. The EU valued the efforts made by Jordan to implement and maximise the benefits from the revised rules of origin scheme and encouraged Jordan to further intensify endeavours towards this end, including publicising and promoting the scheme benefits to potential investors in the private sector.

The EU and Jordan agreed on the importance of policies and programmes designed to improve the quality of education and vocational education and training, to enhance employment opportunities for young people and to bring women into the workforce.

The EU welcomed progress in Jordan's implementation of its Monitoring, Reporting and Verification obligations under Article 13 of the Paris Agreement on climate change. The EU and Jordan also reiterated support to the implementation of the Red Sea/Dead Sea project that also benefits the Palestinian side in the spirit of fostering regional cooperation.

The EU and Jordan exchanged views on human rights and agreed to continue their regular dialogue. The EU commended Jordan's efforts to improve

the general human rights situation in the country, as well as its efforts on the rule of law. The EU encouraged Jordan to continue making progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment and on women's rights.

The meeting was co-chaired by Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission, and by Ayman Safadi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan, in the presence of Johannes Hahn, the Commissioner of European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations.

In the margins of the Association Council, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the Commission Federica MOGHERINI and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan Ayman SAFADI signed a Framework Participation Agreement (FPA) on the participation of Jordan in EU Crisis Management Operations. This is the 19<sup>th</sup> FPA with a third country and the first FPA in the MENA region. This further deepens the EU and Jordan cooperation in the field of common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) allowing the secondment of Jordanian personnel to CSDP missions and operations.

[Visit the meeting page](#)

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## [ESMA issues positive opinions on product intervention measures by Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal](#)

The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) has today issued eight positive opinions on product intervention measures taken by the National Competent Authorities (NCAs) of Italy, Portugal, Ireland and Luxembourg. ESMA's opinion finds that the proposed measures are justified and proportionate and that it is necessary for NCAs of other Member States to take product intervention measures that are at least as stringent as ESMA's measures.

ESMA has issued opinions on national product intervention measures from:

### **Background**

NCAs may take product intervention measures in accordance with Article 42 of Regulation (EU) No 600/2014. At least one month before a measure is intended to take effect, an NCA must notify all other NCAs and ESMA of the details of its proposed measure and the related evidence, unless there is an exceptional

case where it is necessary to take urgent action.

In accordance with Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 600/2014, ESMA performs a facilitation and coordination role in relation to such product intervention measures taken by NCAs. After receiving notification from an NCA of its proposed measure, ESMA must adopt an opinion on whether the proposed measure is justified and proportionate. If ESMA considers that the taking of a measure by other NCAs is necessary, it must state this in its opinion.

The opinions that ESMA previously issued on proposed national product intervention measures are published on its [website](#).

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## [Sustainable Development Agenda could be basis for social contract of 21st century, say Europe's Economic and Social Councils to new EU leaders](#)



**On the eve of key decisions which will shape the Union's new leadership and strategic agenda for the next five years, the national Economic and Social Councils and the European Economic and Social Council met in Rome on 13-14 June to discuss their role in the sustainable development of Europe and the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.**

The debate was part of the Annual Meeting of the Presidents and Secretaries-general of the EESC and the Economic and Social Councils of the UE's Member States, co-organised by the EESC and Italy's Economic and Social Council ([CNEL](#)). The EESC was represented by **President Luca Jahier**, Secretary-general **Gianluca Brunetti** and member **Peter Schmidt**.

Key speakers in the opening session, attended by Italian President **Sergio Mattarella**, included Italy's Foreign Minister **Enzo Moavero Milanesi**, CNEL President **Tiziano Treu**.

*Their conclusions, which will be sent to the EU's main institutions on 17 June, were as follows:*

- the UN's 2030 Agenda has to be the undisputed and overarching priority of the European Union for the next decade, as it can provide responses to the five fundamental transitions that we have to address, namely:
  - an economic transformation,
  - an energy and ecological transformation,
  - an extensive social transformation,
  - a democratic and participatory transformation and

- a geopolitical transition in international relations.
- The 2030 Agenda is the win-win strategy for all:
  - for employers because the competitiveness battle will take place at global level in the sectors linked to the Sustainable Development Agenda: green mobility, electric cars, renewable energies, plastic processing and batteries.
  - for workers, as several SDGs are linked to the social dimension of Europe: ending poverty (SDG 1); zero hunger (SDG2); good health and well-being (SDG3); quality education (SDG4); gender equality (SDG 5); decent work and economic growth (SDG 8); and reducing inequalities (SDG 10). The 2030 Agenda is therefore a solid firewall against social inequalities and could be the basis for the social contract of the 21st century.
  - for civil society, provided it is fully involved in the governance process. Civil society could prove to be decisive in the proper monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs.
- Significant parts of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) remain largely unaddressed, such as the chapter on Social protection and inclusion. A roadmap needs to be drawn up to boost implementation.
- The European Semester process should be adapted to the 2030 Agenda
- The next Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 should establish sustainable development as its core objective, with 40 % of the overall budget devoted to it. Adequate resources must also be allocated at national level, aligning national fiscal systems with the new sustainable development strategy.
- If the EU is to provide decisive political leadership, the incoming Commission should include a vice-president in charge of making the SDGs part of all EU policies;
- The President of the European Commission should present the progress made and outline further action to implement the SDGs in the annual State of the Union speech.
- The launch of a collective EU journey towards a Sustainable Europe will mobilise civil society and European citizens – young people in particular. This is a project of hope and resilience that has the potential to consolidate unity and solidarity within the EU.
- Economic and Social Councils need to be fully engaged as they could, with their valuable know-how and political weight, help shape sustainable transitions. These intermediary bodies could become councils for civic participation, entrusted with the organisation of public consultations on new sustainable development models.
- Lastly, as the largest economy in the world, the EU must, through its trade policy, play a fundamental role in promoting the sustainable development agenda on a global level.

The full conclusions of the meeting are available [here](#).

For more information about the event see: <https://bit.ly/2KV0EVh>

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# Chronic hepatitis B infections on the rise since 2008



There is evidence of on-going transmission of hepatitis B and continued importation of cases to many European countries according to the available surveillance data for countries of the European Union and the European Economic Area (EU/EEA) for 2017. Incomplete data as well as varying national surveillance systems and practices however impair more detailed epidemiological analysis of reported data.

The majority of EU/EEA countries consistently reporting experienced a steady decline in newly reported acute hepatitis B infections from 1.1 per 100 000 population in 2008 to 0.6 in 2017. This reflects overall global trends and is most likely a result of successful national vaccination programmes: in these countries, the proportion of acute hepatitis B infections among people below 25 years of age declined from 20% in 2008 to 12% in 2017. The proportion of chronic cases under 25 declined from 21% in 2008 to 10% in 2017.

However, during the same time period notifications of chronic hepatitis B overall increased from 6.7 per 100 000 population to 10.2 in 2017 with the highest rates reported among the 25–34-year-olds. Overall, the reported data on chronic hepatitis B seems to mirror the intensity of local testing and screening policies – thus countries with comprehensive testing programmes in place appear to have the highest notification rates. The high number of chronic infections from northern Europe has a strong influence on trends with e.g. 62% of chronic hepatitis B cases in 2017 notified by the United Kingdom.

## **Incomplete data affects interpretation**

Transmission data are key to understanding the epidemiology of hepatitis B. However, information on the transmission mode was only complete for roughly a third (29%) of the reported acute cases in 2017 and only 13% of the notified chronic cases. Hence, data are unlikely to be fully representative, and observed trends and differences between countries are hard to interpret.

For the 718 acute cases with complete information, heterosexual transmission was most commonly reported (27%), followed by nosocomial transmission (16%), sex between men (13%), non-occupational injuries (10%) and injecting drug use (10%). Italy, Poland and Romania accounted for 74% of the acute cases attributed to healthcare-associated hepatitis B infections in 2017.

Where this information was available, transmission from mother to child and in healthcare settings were the most commonly reported routes for chronic hepatitis B infection (41% and 28% respectively). Poland reported 90% of chronic cases related to nosocomial transmission.

Of the 12 018 cases (45%) with information on importation status, 3 778 (31%) were reported as imported. The influence of migration on hepatitis B

epidemiology highlights the need for countries to develop evidence-based screening interventions that target the most affected migrant communities. It also highlights the importance of monitoring routine surveillance indicators of migration, such as importation status.

The relatively high number of 26 907 reported hepatitis B infections in 2017 and especially chronic cases, in combination with the diversity in reported transmission routes across Europe suggest that countries need to maintain and strengthen local hepatitis prevention and control programmes.

The World Health Organization's European Action plan for the health sector response to viral hepatitis outlines ways to do this. Based on the information from the ECDC prevalence database, authorities can identify the key population groups and areas of high hepatitis prevalence for targeted efforts.

ECDC rolled out a monitoring framework to support EU/EEA countries in their efforts to implement hepatitis B and C control programmes. This system will provide a comprehensive and much needed overview of the progress in tackling these infections and allows for a clearer picture of the actual burden of disease.

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## [Nina Gregori takes up duties as Executive Director of EASO](#)

***New Executive Director committed to a forward-looking approach and to sustaining the progress made by the Agency over the past year.***

On 16 June 2019, Ms. Nina Gregori took up her duties as the new Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), based in Malta. Ms. Gregori, a Slovenian national, most recently served as Director-General responsible for the area of asylum, migration, integration, internal administrative affairs and naturalization, within the Slovenian Ministry of the Interior.

Ms. Gregori was selected to be the new Executive Director at the 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of the EASO Management Board, on 18 February 2019. Her appointment was subsequently confirmed by the Management Board following a positive opinion by the European Parliament. Ms. Gregori takes over from Mr. Jamil Addou, who has served as EASO's Executive Director *ad interim* since 6 June 2018.

Commenting on her new duties, **Ms. Gregori** stated: *"I am honoured to be entrusted to lead EASO over the coming years. The Agency has a unique mandate, which, at its core, stands for upholding the very best of the EU's principles in protecting those in need. EASO has gone through a challenging period, but is now turning the corner. I am committed to sustaining the*

*progress that has been made over the past year in improving the Agency's governance. By supporting this momentum and through a forward-looking approach we will continue delivering on the increasing demands for EASO's support."*

Ms. Gregori, whose first working day coincided with the 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the EASO Management Board, also paid tribute to the hard work carried out by Mr. Addou over the past year, most notably in relation to strengthening good governance and consolidating trust.

[embedded content]

The new Executive Director will be presenting the EASO Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU on Monday, 24 June 2019, in Brussels. More information can be found [here](#).

***Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office on the following email address: [press@easo.europa.eu](mailto:press@easo.europa.eu)***