

# 22-23 May: European Business Summit

## The news:

The 2017 European Business Summit will take place in Brussels [from 22 to 23 May](#), bringing decision makers and business together on a number of topical issues. The Commission will contribute to this debate by presenting and explaining its priorities and policy actions in areas like economic affairs, migration, security, social affairs, and energy. Nine members of the College of Commissioners (Vice-Presidents **Šefčovič**, **Dombrovskis** and **Katainen**, and Commissioners **Oettinger**, **Malmström**, **Avramopoulos**, **Thyssen**, **Moscovici**, and **King**) will be participating in a range of sessions and attending meetings with leaders from politics, business and civil society from across Europe.

## Background:

The **European Business Summit** is a conference of business leaders and policy makers taking place every year in Brussels and organised by the Federation of Enterprises in Belgium and BUSINESSEUROPE.

## The event:

2017 European Business Summit, [from 22 to 23 May](#) in Brussels. Participation of members of the College: a detailed schedule has been published in the [Commissioners' weekly calendar of activities](#) (release date: Friday 19 May 2017).

[On Tuesday 23 May](#), Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** and Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen** will host the second meeting of the European Dialogue on Skills and Migration. The Commissioners will officially launch the "[Employers together for integration](#)" initiative.

The European Dialogue on Skills and Migration will be broadcast on [EBS](#).

## Sources:

Detailed programme and a list of speakers: <http://www.ebsummit.eu/PDF/programme2.pdf>

European Business Summit: <http://www.ebsummit.eu/index>

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## Remarks at Community BBQ

### PRIME MINISTER:

I am delighted to be here with Tim Nicholls, the next premier of Queensland and his shadow cabinet, and also with the Mayor. I have a very keen appreciation, your worship, of the importance of local government. You're on the front line, to all the mayors, I'm delighted to be here with you. My only achievement in local government I have to say, was to be the first man to be the lady mayoress of Sydney. I've learned from Lucy how important it is. You are the front line, that's why we're always ready to work with you and support you as the national government.

I'll just say a little bit about the budget and I look forward to having a discussion with you all.

As you know, we have a determined commitment to regional Australia. We know that Australia does not end at the outskirts of the capital cities, just like Queensland doesn't end at the outskirts of the south-east corner. This is a big state and a big nation and every part of Australia needs to succeed.

My commitment as your Prime Minister is to ensure that the great opportunities that we are securing for all Australians, particularly young ones like this, our children and grandchildren, will be available right across Australia.

That's why we're doing everything we can to invest in the infrastructure of the 21st century – whether it is road, rail, water, energy – setting it up for you young ones to achieve even greater things than your parents and grandparents could do.

Ken talked about the exports from this region. Can I say to you that we are determined to continue to open up export opportunities for our miners, for our farmers, for our professional services people, for all of the creativity and productivity of Australia. We want to open more doors into bigger markets around the world.

We've done that during our time in government. We've opened up big new trade deals, as you know, with Korea, with Japan, with China – the biggest of them all, and of course with Singapore, expanded that. We will continue to work on new opportunities because we have the best produce in the world. Australians can do anything and everything. We want to have the biggest, broadest field for our great products, our great people, our great ideas to run onto because that is the lifeblood of our economy – more opportunities and that is what we're securing.

Now, in the budget, we have to do a lot of things in a budget. The first thing we have got to do is live within our means and balance the books. We don't want you young people to be burdened with a mountain of debt, because your parents and grandparents couldn't live within their means. So we are bringing the budget back into balance and in a few years' time by 2020/21 we will have a \$7.4 billion surplus.

Now we are having to raise some additional revenue to do that, because we couldn't get the Senate to agree to all of savings we wanted. But in the end, we have to live with the Senate the people elected, we have to live with the

Parliament that the people elected.

So while our senators – Matt Canavan, Senator, who is based in Rockhampton, as you know, and is Minister for Northern Australia and Resources – while Matt and our senate team have done an outstanding job in negotiating a lot through the senate, much more than anyone expected, we haven't been able to achieve all of the savings.

That's why we are imposing the levy on the major banks, and that's why we're asking Australians to contribute an extra 0.5 per cent on the Medicare levy to fully fund the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

And that's the other big part of the budget, is security. National security, of course, is our primary duty and no government has put more resources into national security – whether it is the capabilities of the Australian Defence Force or whether it is national security in terms of counter-terrorism, in terms of intelligence, in terms of keeping us safe at home and abroad – no-one has put more money into that and more resources into that in peace-time than my government.

But we also need to secure for Australians those essential services. So we've guaranteed Medicare. We are guaranteeing Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme with the Medicare Guarantee Fund. We're unfreezing progressively the indexation freeze that the Labor Party first imposed – so we are securing that, those vital health services, now and into the future.

And we're reforming the way school education is funded. We are putting more resources into school education. So all the schools in this electorate, in this State, in this part of the state and indeed all but one school in all of Queensland will be receiving substantially more money over the next decade, but the funding is going to be needs-based, transparent, consistent, just as David Gonski recommended.

Of course, it's not enough just to put more money in – while, it is a lot of money, \$18 billion over the next decade – but we are also going to ensure that we get the right educational outcomes. And so we are doing a Gonski 2.0 review to ensure that we get support for the best teachers, great teachers. All of us have had great teachers, many of us have had our lives transformed by great teachers. Lucy and I are parents of a great teacher. We have got a great commitment to teaching and to school education, so we are going to ensure that we do the best, the right thing by our kids and we look forward to working with Tim's government after the next election here in Queensland to make it so.

I mentioned the National Disability Insurance Scheme – again, vital priority – that must be fully funded and we are going to do that.

But then, when we look at business and this is Small Business Week in Queensland, we are backing business and enterprise right up to the hilt.

We were just talking today with Jess and Rebecca from the Central Queensland News and we were talking about what we are doing for small business here,

right here.

So we have brought down company tax on businesses with turnovers up to \$50 million a year.

Again, people said we would never get that through the Senate – we have.

We want those small and medium businesses to be competitive, and to do that we've got to give them a competitive tax rate. When they have more left after tax, they have got more to invest, they'll invest more, employ more, greater opportunities.

And also, of course, small business, when they are investing, buy new plant, we want to be able to give them that incentive to do so, and so we have the instant asset write-off – \$20,000 – we are extending for another year. And I think, Ken, this electorate has had one of the highest take-ups of that instant asset write-off. That shows it is a very enterprising community, a lot of small businesses that are investing to get ahead.

So right across the board – whether it's in the infrastructure, the \$75 billion program of infrastructure across the decade, whether it is in business incentives, whether it is securing those vital services – we are ensuring and delivering a budget that is fair, that delivers opportunity and security, and above all, every element of it is focused on the futures of these young men and women sitting here in front of us here today. Because our duty is to ensure that you can realise your dreams and that you have even greater opportunities and greater chances to do what you want to do and realise the better days ahead for you and your ambitions than your parents and grandparents had.

So that's what we're doing – working hard to set the stage for you to do great things.

It is wonderful to be here in Emerald. Thank you very much and I look forward to having a chat to as many people as we can today.

Thank you all very much.

**[ENDS]**

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## [China's Sichuan Province reports new H7N9 case](#)

A new H7N9 virus infection was confirmed in southwest China's Sichuan Province, local authorities said on Sunday.

The 44-year-old patient, surnamed Wang, is a seller of live poultry in a

market in the city of Zigong, according to the government of the Ziliujing District of the city on Saturday.

The patient is being treated in a local hospital and is in stable condition.

All the live poultry markets in the city will be suspended for one month from May 22.

H7N9 is a bird flu strain first reported to have infected humans in China in March 2013. Infections are most likely to occur in winter and spring.

Disease control and prevention experts have said that the H7N9 virus is not transmitted from person to person.

Experts recommend avoiding contact with birds, and only buying certified poultry.

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## **Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogheri**

Today we celebrate the international day of cultural diversity. Since the very start, cultural diversity has been at the core of the European project. Unity in diversity is the motto of our Union, because Europe has never been just one but many. It is thanks to our cultural diversity and our commitment to dialogue that for the last 60 years we have been able successfully to face new challenges and obstacles, to change and progress. The European Union has an enormous amount to offer to the world in terms of diversity of cultural expressions, thriving artistic creation and creative industry precisely because our cultures and languages have made of Europe a permanent laboratory of change and innovation.

Today more than ever the European Union is committed to protecting and supporting cultural diversity, at home and throughout the world. The integration of a once war-torn continent cannot mean the unification of culture – on the contrary. This is why the European Union has developed strategies and programmes to ensure that unique cultures thrive and evolve in a globalised world. We have the Creative Europe Programme and its many strands, the MEDIA programme, the European Heritage Label, the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage and the Culture Programme also giving support to literary translation.

The EU also supports linguistic diversity with its multilingualism policy for all European citizens. The simple fact that Europe speaks many different languages is a powerful asset, it helps us to look at the world in multiple ways. There are 54 cultural minorities in the EU, representing 105 million people, all protected by legislation, together with their languages.

The protection of cultural diversity is part of the European way to build a global order based on peace, the rule of law, freedom of expression, mutual understanding and respect for fundamental rights. Promoting diversity through international cultural relations is an important part of the EU's role as a global actor. Diversity must not be feared, but embraced. That's why today we celebrate cultural diversity.

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## [Damian Green has let the cat out the bag, the Tories are offering no new money for the NHS at this election – Jonathan Ashworth](#)

**Jonathan Ashworth, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary**, responding to Damian Green's comments on the Andrew Marr Show that the Tories £8bn NHS manifesto pledge involves reallocating existing budgets, said:

"Damian Green has let the cat out the bag. The Tories are offering no new money for the NHS at this election, but instead their offer involves reallocating existing budgets. In 2015 they said they'd give the NHS £10bn and it turned out to be untrue. They're up to the same tricks again.

"As part of Labour's fully costed manifesto, we are offering the NHS a cash boost of £8bn this year, including money for urgently needed capital works, and we've said how we will pay for it. Only Labour will give the NHS the funding it needs to deliver a truly modern, 21<sup>st</sup> Century service for Britain's patients. Under the Tories the NHS will continue to be underfunded and overstretched and it is patients who will pay the price."