

# CALENDRIER du 15 mai au 21 mai 2017

*(Susceptible de modifications en cours de semaine)*

## **Déplacements et visites**

### **Lundi 15 mai 2017**

Foreign Affairs Council

EU-Tajikistan Cooperation Council

15-18/05 European Parliament Plenary Session

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** in Hannover, Germany: delivers a speech at an event for the 70th anniversary of the constituent meeting of the *Landtag* of Lower Saxony.

Mr Frans **Timmermans** in The Hague, the Netherlands: delivers a keynote speech at the Council of State (Raad van State).

Mr Frans **Timmermans** in Eindhoven, the Netherlands: visits VDL Enabling Technologies Group (VDL ETG).

Mr Andrus **Ansip** receives members of the Commercial Broadcasters Association (COBA).

Mr Maroš **Šefčovič** and Ms Violeta **Bulc** receive cross-sectorial Social Partners (BusinessEurope, CEEP, UEAPME (European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises); and ETUC (Confederation of European Trade Union) on the Mobility Package.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** in Beijing, China: participates in the "[Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation](#)"; meets Mr Ma Kai, Vice-Premier of the State Council of China; and representatives of the business community.

Mr Günther H. **Oettinger** in Luxemburg: delivers a speech at a reception of the Conference of Presidents of the European Court of Auditors (ECA).

Mr Miguel **Arias Cañete** in Madrid, Spain: meets the CEOs of leading gas companies in Europe, members of GD4S group – Gas Distributors for Sustainability: GRDF, France; Italgas, Italy; DGSR, Romania; Gas Natural, Spain; Galp Gás Natural Distribuição, Portugal.

Mr Karmenu **Vella** signs a declaration to proclaim the 21 May 2017 as the "European Natura 2000 Day" together with Ms Adina Ioana Vălean, Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and Chair of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety of the European Parliament; Mr Karl-Heinz Lambertz, First Vice-President of the European Committee of the Regions

(CoR); and Mr Neil Kerr, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Representation of Malta to the EU during a [dedicated event](#), in Brussels.

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** in Saarbrücken, Germany: visits the Helmholtz Institute for Pharmaceutical Research Saarland.

M. Pierre **Moscovici** participe dans un déjeuner de travail avec M. Jean-Pierre Clamadieu, Président du Comité Exécutif et PDG de Solvay, à Bruxelles.

M. Pierre **Moscovici** reçoit M. José Carlos Díez, chercheur d'économie à l'université d'Alcala et à l'école de commerce ICADE.

Ms Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** in Sulisław, Poland: meets entrepreneurs and local authorities of Opole region.

Mr Tibor **Navracsics** in Turku, Finland: participates in and delivers a speech at the [EU Prize for Cultural Heritage Awards Ceremony](#), together with Mr Plácido Domingo, tenor and conductor.

Ms Margrethe **Vestager** in Copenhagen, Denmark: delivers a keynote speech at the "Publicist prize" event organised by the Danish Publicistklubben.

Mr Carlos **Moedas** delivers a keynote speech at the event ["Open Innovation, Open Science and Open to the World: RISE group publication on the future of EU research and innovation policy"](#), in Brussels.

Mr Carlos **Moedas** receives Ms Mariana Mazzucato, Professor in the Economics of Innovation and Public Value, University College London (UCL).

Mr Julian **King** participates in a debate on the present and future security priorities and needs in the context of the comprehensive assessment of EU Security Policy, organised by the European Organisation for Security (EOS), in Brussels.

## **Mardi 16 mai 2017**

College meeting

General Affairs Council

European Economic Area Council

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** in Strasbourg, France (until 17/05): receives Ms Mariya Gabriel, candidate for Commissioner; together with Mr Neven **Mimica** receives Mr Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission; and meets the Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left in the European Parliament.

Mr Maroš **Šefčovič** in Strasbourg, France: exchanges views on the Energy Union Strategy with the Conference of Committee Chairs (CCC) of the European Parliament.

Mr Günther H. **Oettinger** in Speyer, Germany: delivers a speech on the EU budget at the German University of Administrative Sciences Speyer.

Mr Carlos **Moedas** in Amman, Jordan: delivers a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of SESAME (Synchrotron-Light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East) – first major international research centre in the Middle East, in the presence of King Abdullah II of Jordan.

### **Mercredi 17 mai 2017**

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** in Strasbourg, France: addresses the Plenary of the European Parliament on the conclusions of the 29 April European Council (Article 50); and attends the speech of Mr António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the European Parliament.

Mr Maroš **Šefčovič** in Vienna, Austria (until 18/05): on Energy Union Tour: visits smart city project “Smarter Together”; delivers a keynote speech at the 40th anniversary of the Austrian Energy Agency conference on “Energy 2027”; meets CEOs of leading Austrian energy companies; meets Mr Andrä Rupprechter, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of Austria; Austrian Social Partners (Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ), Austrian Chamber of Labour (Austrian AK), Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) ); delivers a lecture and exchanges views on energy and climate change with students at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences.

Mr Günther H. **Oettinger** in Wismar, Germany: delivers a speech at the annual meeting of Ministers for European Affairs of the German *Länder*.

Mr Günther H. **Oettinger** in Berlin, Germany: meets representatives of the Working Group on Europe and on Budget of the CDU/CSU *Bundestag* Fraction.

Mr Neven **Mimica** receives Ms Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Ms Marianne **Thyssen** in Bad Neuenahr, Germany (until 19/05): attends the G20 labour and employment ministers meeting.

Mr Phil **Hogan** attends the presidium of the European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA) for the handover of their paper on the Future of CAP, in Brussels.

Mr Phil **Hogan** receives Mr Kevin O’Connor, Associate professor at University College Dublin Conway Institute of Biomolecular and Biomedical Research.

Ms Violeta **Bulc** receives Mr Jean-Claude Kihn, President of Goodyear & Rubber Company, Europe, Middle East and Africa business unit.

Mr Tibor **Navracsics** in Cluj-Napoca, Romania (until 18/05): participates in a [Citizens’ Dialogue](#).

Ms Margrethe **Vestager** receives Mr Euclid Tsakalotos, Minister for Finance of

Greece; and Mr Panagiotis Kouroumplis, Minister for Maritime Affairs and the Islands of Greece.

Mr Carlos **Moedas** in Israel: meets Mr Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel; Mr Eli Cohen, Minister for Economy and Industry; visits cyber tech park and pilot smart city within Digital Israel initiative; delivers a lecture at the Centre for European Studies Ben Gurion University; visits a lab funded by EU research and innovation funding programmes; and participates in the European Research Council (ERC) 10th Anniversary Event.

Mr Julian **King** in Berlin, Germany: meets Mr Thomas de Maizière, Minister for the Interior of Germany; and Mr Heiko Maas, Minister for Justice and Consumer Protection; participates in a meeting with the *Bundestag* Committee on Internal Affairs; and participates in a [Citizens' Dialogue](#) on the Security Union and internal security.

## **Jeudi 18 mai 2017**

Justice and Home Affairs Council

18-19/05 Foreign Affairs Council

18-19/05 Informal meeting of energy ministers

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** in Luxembourg: attends an event for the 80th birthday of Jacques Santer, former President of the European Commission and former Prime Minister of Luxembourg, organised by the Christian Social People's Party (CSV).

Mr Andrus **Ansip** in Tallin, Estonia (until 19/05): meets the members of the Economic Affairs Committee of the Estonian Parliament.

Mr Maroš **Šefčovič** in Vienna, Austria: on Energy Union Tour: exchanges views at the Permanent Council of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) meeting; and meets Ms Ulli Sima, City Councillor in charge of Environment and Animal Protection in Vienna.

Mr Valdis **Dombrovskis** in Riga, Latvia: meets Mr Māris Kučinskis, Prime Minister of Latvia; participates at a launch event of the book "*Latvijas tautsaimniecības vēsture*", on the economic history of Latvia.

Ms Cecilia **Malmström** in Stockholm, Sweden: meets members of the parliamentary committee for foreign affairs to discuss the White Paper on the Future of Europe.

Mr Neven **Mimica** receives Mr Claver Gatete, Minister for Finance and Economic Planning of Rwanda.

Mr Miguel **Arias Cañete** in Valetta, Malta: participates in the Informal meeting of energy ministers; in the [Informal High-Level Meeting on Energy Efficiency in the Mediterranean](#); and in signature ceremony of the political

declaration on 'Clean Energy for EU islands'.

Mr Karmenu **Vella** in Poole, the United Kingdom: delivers a speech at the [European Maritime Day: "The Future of our Seas"](#); meets Mr Jean D'Amour, Minister for Maritime Affairs in the Executive Council of Quebec; and Mr Pierre Erwes, Chairman of BioMarine International Clusters Association (BICA).

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** in Berlin, Germany (until 20/05): delivers a keynote speech at the ["REFRESH Food Waste 2017 Conference"](#).

Mr Dimitris **Avramopoulos** receives Mr Eimutis Misiūnas, Minister for the Interior of Lithuania.

Ms Marianne **Thyssen** in Bad Neuenahr, Germany: attends the G20 labour and employment ministers meeting.

Mr Christos **Stylianides** in Ioannina, Greece: participates in a [Citizens' dialogue](#).

Ms Věra **Jourová** in Prague, the Czech Republic (until 20/05): delivers a keynote speech at the Conference on General Data Protection Regulation organised by the Office of the Government; a keynote speech at the plenary meeting of the Lower Chamber of Parliament of the Czech Republic; exchanges views at a roundtable with stakeholders on Country Specific Recommendations; and meets representatives of the Committee on EU Affairs of the Senate of the Parliament.

Mr Tibor **Navracsics** in Cluj-Napoca, Romania: visits Bonțida Bánffy Castle, a project supported by Creative Europe; meets representatives of Transylvania Trust Foundation; and participates in a panel debate and delivers a speech at the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) congress on "The Contribution of the Autochthonous Minorities to the European Cultural Heritage".

Ms Margrethe **Vestager** in Bucharest, Romania: meets Mr Klaus Iohannis, President of Romania; attends the Romanian Competition Council Anniversary Conference; participates in a joint meeting with selected members of the national Parliament; meets Mr Sorin Mihai Grindeanu, Prime Minister of Romania; Mr Toma-Florin Petcu, Minister for Energy; Mr Mihai Tudose, Minister for the Economy; Mr Alexandru-Răzvan Cuc, Minister for Transport; and Mr Augustin Jianu, Minister for Communication and Information Society.

Mr Carlos **Moedas** receives a group of Finnish editors-in-chief.

## **Vendredi 19 mai 2017**

Foreign Affairs Council

Informal meeting of energy ministers

Ms Federica **Mogherini**, Mr Christos **Stylianides** and Ms Violeta **Bulc** at the Dead Sea, Jordan: attend the [World Economic Forum on the Middle East and](#)

## North Africa.

Mr Andrus **Ansip** in Tallinn, Estonia: meets the members of the European Affairs Committee of the Estonian Parliament.

Mr Valdis **Dombrovskis** delivers the keynote address at the conference "[Completing Banking Union and developing Capital Market Union](#)", organised by the European Commission and European Central Bank, in Brussels.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** receives Mr Aditya Mittal, Group CFO and CEO of ArcelorMittal Europe.

Mr Jyrki **Katainen** receives representatives of the Association of Finnish Editors.

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** in Berlin, Germany: participates in G20 health ministers meeting.

Ms Marianne **Thyssen** in Bad Neuenahr, Germany: attends the G20 labour and employment ministers meeting; participates in a working breakfast on Youth Employment/Quality Apprenticeship; and visits the ThyssenKrupp Rasselstein GmbH to discuss Youth and Quality Apprenticeship upon invitation of Ms Andrea Nahles, Minister for Labour and Social Affairs of Germany.

Ms Věra **Jourová** in Prague, the Czech Republic: delivers a keynote speech at a colloquium on "Causes, consequences and possible outcome of the current crisis of the European Union" organised by the European Movement in the Czech Republic.

Mr Tibor **Navracsics** in Budapest, Hungary: participates in a [Citizens' Dialogue](#).

Ms Margrethe **Vestager** in Copenhagen, Denmark: meets the members of the European Affairs Committee of the Parliament of Denmark; delivers a keynote speech in front of the trade unions HK and Akademikerne on EU competition rules; meets Mr Kristian Thulesen Dahl, leader of the Danish Peoples' party; and participates in a policy forum organised by the students' organisation of Copenhagen University.

## **Samedi 20 mai 2017**

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** in Berlin, Germany: participates in the G20 Health Ministers meeting.

## **Dimanche 21 mai 2017**

Mr Vytenis **Andriukaitis** in Ballymaloe, Ireland: delivers a speech at the [Ballymaloe Food and Drinks Literacy Festival](#).

## **Prévisions du mois de mai:**

15/05 Foreign Affairs Council  
15/05 EU-Tajikistan Cooperation Council  
15-18/05 European Parliament Plenary Session  
16/05 General Affairs Council  
16/05 European Economic Area Council  
18/05 Justice and Home Affairs Council  
18-19/05 Foreign Affairs Council  
18-19/05 Informal meeting of energy ministers  
21-23/05 Informal meeting of agriculture and fisheries ministers  
22/05 Eurogroup  
22-23/05 Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council  
23/05 Economic and Financial Affairs Council  
29-30/05 Competitiveness Council  
31/05 European Parliament Plenary Session in Brussels

## **Permanence DG COMM le WE du 06 au 07 mai 2017:**

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## **[Daily News 12 / 05 / 2017](#)**

### **European Commission imposes anti-dumping duties on more Chinese steel products**

The Commission today published [definitive anti-dumping measures](#) a new type of steel products originating in China. The latest investigation confirmed the preliminary findings that the Chinese seamless pipes had been sold in Europe at dumped prices. Chinese exports will now be taxed with an extra duty

ranging from 29.2% to 54.9%. This is another clear example of how the EU is using the available toolbox of trade defence instruments to address unfair imports of steel. The EU currently has an unprecedented number of trade defence measures in place targeting unfair imports of steel products related to high levels of industrial overcapacity and subsidies in China. At the same time, the Commission is seeking Member States' and the Parliament's approval to [its proposals](#) to make the system better suited to the current reality of international trade. The Commission welcomes the progress in that context, with the Council's support yesterday to a Presidency compromise text on a new anti-dumping methodology. In addition to that, the EU is tackling the root causes of overcapacity in the global steel industry by his active involvement in the [Global Forum on Steel Excess Capacity](#) created last December. *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185 and Kinga Malinowska – Tel.: + 32 229 51383)*

### **The Commission launches the EU Platform on Animal Welfare**

The Commission is publishing today the composition of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare (the Platform) announced in January 2017. The Platform brings together 75 member organisations both from the public and private sector and relevant international intergovernmental organisations, in order to maximise the outcome of the discussions and thereby improve the welfare of animals in the EU. Following a call for applications for private sector organisations and independent experts, the Commission has selected a total of 40 members from academia, NGOs and industry. The other members of the Platform were nominated by competent authorities in the Member States and in EEA countries. Members were selected based on their experience in improving animal welfare and their capacity for stakeholder outreach. The Platform will support all players in the better application of EU rules on animal welfare through exchanges of best practices in the field of animal welfare; the development and use of voluntary commitments by businesses; and the promotion of EU animal welfare standards at global level. The inaugural meeting of the Platform is scheduled for 6 June 2017 in Brussels. For more information on the Platform see [here](#). *(For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)*

### **La Commission lance une consultation publique sur les règles encadrant le nom de domaine “.eu”**

Le domaine “.eu” a été initialement [créé en 2002](#) et officiellement lancé le 7 décembre 2005. Il est donc désormais temps de vérifier si les règles qui encadrent le nom de domaine de l'Union européenne sont toujours adaptées. Avec plus de 3,7 millions d'enregistrements au total, “.eu” se place aujourd'hui au 7<sup>ème</sup> rang des noms de domaine de premier niveau et offre un nom de domaine unique pour les organisations et les personnes résidant dans les États membres de l'UE ainsi qu'en Islande, au Liechtenstein et en Norvège. Depuis l'entrée en vigueur des règlements encadrant le “.eu”, le marché des noms de domaine a beaucoup gagné en dynamisme et en concurrence. C'est pour

cela que la Commission a ouvert aujourd'hui une [consultation publique](#) jusqu'au 4 août 2017 à laquelle toute personne intéressée est invitée à participer. Plus d'informations sont disponibles [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tél .: + 32 229 67083; Johannes Bahrke – Tél .: +32 229 58615; Inga Höglund – Tél .: +32 229 50698)

### **Winner of 2017 EU Prize for Contemporary Architecture – Mies van der Rohe Award announced**

The European Commission and the Mies van der Rohe Foundation announced today the winner of the 2017 [EU Prize for Contemporary Architecture](#): the prize will be given to the innovative renovation of Kleiburg, a 1960s apartment building in Amsterdam, by NL Architects and XVW architectuur. The project, which was among five finalists from 356 projects nominated, was rewarded for the renovation of one of the biggest apartment buildings in the Netherlands by a consortium involving the owner, the neighbours, the Bijlmer Museum, which is dedicated to the history of the district where Kleiburg is located, and the architects. The 2017 Emerging Architect Special Mention is awarded to Belgian architects MSA and V+ for the NAVEZ project, five social units in northern Brussels, designed as a landmark at the entrance of the city and providing exemplary passive apartments for large families. Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics**, said: *"I congratulate the winners of the European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture – Mies van der Rohe Award, who demonstrate the high quality of European architecture, its creative potential and its ability to address the social, economic and environmental challenges of our time. The Commission is committed to sustainable urban development and supports the values of contemporary architecture and its contribution to the well-being of our citizens. Moreover, the European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018 will be an excellent opportunity to strengthen the role of architecture in saving and enhancing heritage sites and buildings."* The award ceremony will take place on 26 May at the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion in Barcelona. The €60,000 biennial [Prize](#), which is the most prestigious in European architecture, was launched in 1987 to highlight the contribution of European architects to the development of new ideas and technologies in contemporary urban development. It is co-funded by the [Creative Europe Programme](#) and the [Fundació Mies van der Rohe](#). For further information, please see [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.:+32 2 29 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

### **EUROSTAT: Mars 2017 comparé à février 2017 – La production industrielle en baisse de 0,1% dans la zone euro – Stable dans l'UE28**

En mars 2017 par rapport à février 2017, la production industrielle corrigée des variations saisonnières a diminué de 0,1% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et est restée stable dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En février 2017, la production industrielle avait également baissé de 0,1% dans la zone euro et était demeurée stable dans l'UE28. En mars 2017 par rapport à mars 2016, la production industrielle a progressé de 1,9% dans la zone euro et de 2,4% dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278; Maud Noyon – Tel.: +32 229 80379)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini to attend the Plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean**

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini**, in her role as Co-President of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), will participate in the annual Plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean tomorrow in Rome. The Assembly brings together 280 elected representatives from the national parliaments of all members of the UfM, equally distributed between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. The plenary session will be dedicated to Sustainable Development and New Job Opportunities in the Mediterranean area, which are issues crucial for the sustainable development and stabilisation of the region. The discussions are expected to focus on the creation of quality jobs and viable socio-economic development opportunities. Audio-visual coverage will be available on [EbS](#). (*Pour plus d'informations: Catherine Ray – Tel.: +32 229 69921; Lauranne Devillé – Tel.: +32 229 80833*)

### **Vice-President Katainen visits Beijing, China, to attend the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation**

Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, will be in Beijing, China, on 14-15 May to represent the European Union in the "[Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation](#)". The "Belt and Road Initiative" is China's major economic diplomacy project to upgrade infrastructure which contributes to sustainable growth in the Euro-Asian region. The Forum, focusing for example on connectivity, is one of the biggest international events China hosts this year. Vice-President **Katainen** will meet Vice-Premier Ma Kai to discuss EU-China economic, trade and investment relations. More broadly, the European Union advocates for a level-playing field and reciprocity in its global trade and investment relations. Vice-President **Katainen** will also participate in a series of meetings with representatives of the business community. (*For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182*)

### **Commissioner Thyssen in Madrid on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Disability Forum**

Tomorrow, 13 May, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**, will be in Madrid, Spain, where she will attend the [Annual General Assembly of the European Disability Forum](#). On the occasion of the Forum's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Commissioner **Thyssen** will give a keynote speech, reaffirming the Commission's commitment to make the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) a reality. The speech will be published [here](#). The Commissioner will also benefit from the occasion

to visit [European Social Fund](#) projects. She will first visit a [fair](#) organised in light of this year's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fund, where she will get a first-hand look at projects co-financed by the European Social Fund and the [Once Foundation](#). There she will meet with entrepreneurs with disabilities to discuss about their experiences and businesses, as well as with representatives of companies that have employed people with disabilities. Furthermore, Commissioner **Thyssen** will visit a [smart, accessible and sustainable house](#) that manages to adapt itself to the needs and circumstances of the people who inhabit it. (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094)

### **Commissioner Stylianides begins visit to Myanmar/Burma, announces new EU humanitarian funding**

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** has today started his official visit to Myanmar/Burma from 12-14 May to meet with government officials and assess the humanitarian situation on the ground. His visit follows the meeting on 2 May in Brussels of HR/VP Federica **Mogherini** and Commissioner **Stylianides** with State Counsellor and Foreign Minister, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and marks the first ever of a European Commissioner to Northern Rakhine State. Arriving in the country today he announced new EU humanitarian assistance to the country and the region. *"The European Union has not forgotten Myanmar/Burma. This is why we have mobilized over €12 million for direct humanitarian assistance and disaster risk reduction activities in the country. Our new funding will help deliver life-saving aid to the most vulnerable, and it will make communities stronger in the face of natural disasters. Humanitarian organisations need full access to all affected communities, so that help can reach those who need it the most,"* said Commissioner **Stylianides**. Over €9 million will be allocated for direct humanitarian assistance to communities living in the conflict-afflicted areas of the country, including Rakhine, Shan, and Kachin States. Some €3 million will fund disaster-risk-reduction activities to reduce the impact of natural disasters and strengthen the resilience of communities at risk in Myanmar/Burma. This new funding is part of a bigger package for South and East Asia and Pacific amounting to over €27 million. During his mission, the Commissioner is meeting with Union Ministers in Nay Pyi Taw before visiting projects financed by EU humanitarian aid in Northern Rakhine State. More details on his visit as well as audio-visual material will be made available at the end of the visit. (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

### **Commissioner Jourová visits Eurojust in The Hague**

Commissioner for Justice, Vera **Jourová**, is visiting today Eurojust, the agency of the European Union dealing with judicial co-operation in criminal matters. She will meet with the president of Eurojust, Ms. Coninx and speak to the College of Eurojust. She will present her priorities in the field of criminal justice, including the setting up of the European Public

Prosecutor's Office, which will investigate and prosecute on EU budget fraud and important cross-border VAT fraud. A press release will be available this afternoon on Eurojust's [website](#). *(For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)*

### **The Commission extends the mandate of Jan Figel, Special Envoy for the promotion of Freedom of Religion or Belief outside the European Union**

The Commission has decided to extend by an additional year the mandate of Jan Figel as Special Envoy for the promotion of Freedom of Religion or Belief outside the European Union. Since his appointment in May 2016 Mr Figel visited a number of third countries, including Iraq, Jordan, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates, and participated in many international events and processes. He has engaged very actively in dialogue with governments and civil society representatives, including religious and non-governmental actors. At the heart of Mr Figel's work lie the EU Guidelines on Freedom and Religion of Belief, adopted in 2013. Such new function has been well received within and outside the EU. "The EU is and must remain a credible promoter of human dignity for all and everywhere. Freedom of conscience and religion is a universal right and an essential value" commented Jan Figel. Mr Figel performs his duties in close cooperation with various Commission services and the European External Action Service. The Special Envoy will continue to serve as Special Advisor to Commissioner Neven **Mimica**, who is responsible for International Cooperation and Development, with the objective to foster greater awareness on freedom of religion or belief within the development cooperation agenda. *(For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)*

### [Calendar](#)

The Commissioners' weekly activities

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

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## **[Article – Open day: visit the European Parliament in Strasbourg](#)**

**This Sunday you enjoy the opportunity to discover that the European Parliament is about more than procedures and documents when it opens its doors to the public in Strasbourg. You will have the chance to ask MEPs questions, join a debate on issues affecting Europe, and even learn some salsa. Every year the European institutions welcome guests to celebrate the 1950 speech by then French Foreign minister Robert Schuman which led to the creation of the EU.**

Visitors can start their exploration of the Parliament in Strasbourg at 10.00 CET. Arte's Annette Gerlach will moderate a debate between MEP's and members

of the public in the plenary chamber from 11.00 to 14.00. It will be up to the public, not politicians, to select the topics.

After the debate participants can go to to the nearby Council of Europe, which is joining the event for the first time. Although separate from the EU, it also aims to promote European values and uphold human rights. Many international and local institutions and non-governmental organisations will also participate including representatives from the city of Strasbourg, Amnesty International, and others.

Further down the road, guests can visit *Lieu d'Europe*, a centre for European civic education, which will host several workshops, dance classes and concerts. There will be more Europe-themed, cultural, musical and sports events along the way.

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## [John McDonnell at Fire Brigades Union conference](#)

**John McDonnell, Labour's Shadow Chancellor**, speaking at the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) conference today in Blackpool, will say:

"I'm delighted to be speaking here today after the FBU took the historic decision to re-affiliate to the Labour Party after Jeremy Corbyn became Labour leader.

"Over the next four weeks of campaigning in this General Election, Labour candidates will proudly stand shoulder to shoulder with our firefighters who dedicate their lives to keeping the British public safe.

"It is also 'National nurses day' today, and we know how little Theresa May appreciates them, along with other public sector workers. When she is not reducing their numbers, she is holding down their pay as prices rise.

"The situation has got so bad in our country under the Tories that nurses, and I am sure some of your members, are reliant on foodbanks.

"And what is Theresa May's response when asked about this?"

"She dismisses it as a 'complex' issue, and refuses to do anything about it.

"That is the difference between a Labour Prime Minister and a Tory Prime Minister.

"We know it is not a 'complex' issue for why people use foodbanks, it's because they cannot afford to buy food.

"It's because the Tories are letting public sector pay fall behind prices.

"That is why I can give you this promise today, if a Labour Government is elected next month, then we will end the public sector pay freeze, and we will protect our fire and rescue services by ending the reckless and dangerous Tory cuts, which are a risk to communities up and down this country.

"The Conservatives have cut fire services' budgets in England by 17 per cent since 2010. These reckless cuts are putting the British public and our firefighters in danger.

"On the economy there is no hiding from the truth. The Conservatives' failed economic plan is holding Britain back, undermining our economy and threatening working people's living standards.

"This week we've seen that only Greece, Italy and Austria are forecast to suffer bigger falls in real wages by the end of 2018, according to the TUC. And the Bank of England says that the economy is falling back, and wages will not keep up with prices.

"Real wages haven't risen since the Tories came to power in 2010. And the UK is the only country which has had GDP growing but wages falling in the last decade.

"After seven years of Tory economic failure, it is working people in our country who are being made to pay the price as the Tories handout billions in tax giveaways to the super-rich and big business.

"This General Election is a choice between a Labour Party that will stand up for the many and a Tory Party that only looks after the privileged few."

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# The unregulated cannabis market is harming our young people. Something must be done.

The Liberal Democrats plan to break the grip of criminal gangs and protect young people by introducing a legal, regulated market for cannabis.

## **Why are we doing this?**

Because the current approach to cannabis has been a catastrophic failure.

Unregulated cannabis is freely available and widely used, generating significant mental and psychical health problems – especially for young people – who are being harmed by increasingly potent products.

And because organised criminals are making huge profits at the expense of people's health, in an illegal industry with no age checks, and no controls on quality or strength. The UK cannabis economy is worth an estimated £7bn a year. We could put that money to better use.

Every British government so far has passed the buck of responsibility for this problem, thereby giving total control to the illegal rings who benefit from it. This is irresponsible and dangerous.

It's time for an honest and pragmatic response. Only the Lib Dems can do this.

We propose a series of strict regulations, such as limiting sales of cannabis to over-18s, making cannabis safer by limiting its psychoactive chemical content, and taxing all cannabis sales (generating up to £1bn for investment in drug education and treatment).

## **How do we know it will work?**

We've rigorously consulted a panel of experts, including senior police officers, drugs policy analysts and public health experts. They considered evidence from countries who've successfully legalised cannabis.

When a country as eminently sensible as Canada has come to the conclusion that regulation is better than prohibition, you know that the tide has turned. The question is now how to regulate responsibly and effectively. We can do it.

If you believe Britain's young people deserve a sensible, progressive policy on cannabis, support us today: