

Daily News 17 / 10 / 2019

Brexit: European Commission recommends the European Council (Article 50) to endorse the agreement reached on the revised Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland and revised Political Declaration

The European Commission [has today recommended](#) the European Council (Article 50) to endorse the agreement reached at negotiator level on the Withdrawal Agreement, including a [revised Protocol](#) on Ireland / Northern Ireland, and approve a [revised Political Declaration](#) on the framework of the future EU-UK relationship. The Commission also recommends that the European Parliament give its consent to this agreement. This follows a series of intensive negotiations between the European Commission and UK negotiators over the past few days. Jean-Claude **Juncker**, President of the European Commission, said: *"This agreement is a fair compromise between the EU and the UK. It is testament to the commitment and willingness of both sides to do what is best for EU and UK citizens. We now have a newly agreed Protocol that protects peace and stability on the island of Ireland and fully protects our Single Market. I hope that we can now bring this over the line and provide the certainty our citizens and businesses so deserve."* Michel Barnier, the European Commission's Chief Negotiator, said: *"We had difficult discussions over the past days. We have managed to find solutions that fully respect the integrity of the Single Market. We created a new and legally operative solution to avoid a hard border, and protect peace and stability on the island of Ireland. It is a solution that works for the EU, for the UK and for people and businesses in Northern Ireland."* The revised Protocol provides a legally operational solution that avoids a hard border on the island of Ireland, protects the all-island economy and the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement in all its dimensions and safeguards the integrity of the Single Market. This solution responds to the unique circumstances on the island of Ireland with the aim of protecting peace and stability. All other elements of the Withdrawal Agreement remain unchanged in substance, as per the agreement reached on 14 November 2018. Before attending the European Council Summit, President **Juncker** and Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, gave a press statement. The President's opening remarks are available [here](#). The [letter from President Juncker to President of the European Council](#), [Donald Tusk](#), a [press release](#) and [Questions & Answers](#) are available online. (For more information: Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382; Daniel Ferrie – Tel.: +32 2 299 86500)

Les citoyens de l'UE peuvent enregistrer un nom de domaine .eu partout dans le monde

À partir de ce samedi, le droit d'enregistrer un nom de domaine .eu est étendu à tous les citoyens de l'Union européenne, et ce où qu'ils se trouvent dans le monde. Les nouvelles règles faciliteront l'accès au [marché unique numérique](#) pour les personnes vivant en dehors de l'Europe et leur permettront d'exprimer leur identité européenne en ligne depuis l'étranger. Ce changement

découle de la récente mise à jour du Règlement sur le [domaine de premier niveau .eu](#), jusqu'alors limité aux résidents des pays de l'UE et de l'Espace économique européen, alors que, par exemple, près de 12 millions d'Européens vivent aux États-Unis, au Canada et en Australie. Le nom de domaine .eu est actuellement la septième plus grande extension de code de pays sur internet. Près de 3,7 millions de citoyens et d'entreprises de l'UE utilisent déjà le nom de domaine .eu, qui est fiable, digne de confiance et sécurisé. Ces nouvelles règles sont entrées en vigueur en avril 2019 et permettent des services de meilleure qualité et plus innovants sur .eu, dans un environnement numérique en constante évolution. L'ensemble de ces règles s'appliquera pleinement à compter du 13 octobre 2022 et offrira une flexibilité juridique permettant au domaine .eu de s'adapter aux évolutions du marché tout en modernisant sa structure de gouvernance. Le nom de domaine est déjà disponible au format .eu en caractères cyrilliques et le sera au format .eu en caractères grecs à partir de novembre 2019, afin de créer une présence multilingue en ligne pour tous les Européens. Plus de détails sont disponibles [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tél. : +32 229 67 083; Johannes Bahrke – Tél.: +32 229 58615; Inga Höglund – Tél.: +32 229 50698)

European Commission and the OECD strengthen cooperation to advance structural reforms in EU Member States

The European Commission's [Structural Reform Support Service](#) (SRSS) and the Office of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are stepping up their cooperation in providing support to EU Member States. Under the agreement signed yesterday, the SRSS and the OECD will work together on 34 reform projects in 18 EU Member States under the umbrella of the [Structural Reform Support Programme](#). They will provide expertise to Member States' authorities in various policy areas, including education, labour markets, tax management, governance, environment and transport infrastructure. Commenting on the cooperation, Vice-President **Dombrovskis** said: *"Structural reforms contribute to unlocking economic growth potential, which is especially important in the current context of global economic slowdown. Our common goal is to support the implementation of such reforms and deliver the most suitable expertise to Member States."* The Structural Reform Support Service offers tailor-made expertise 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. (For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Annikky Lamp – Tel.: +32 229 56151)

And the winners of the 2019 EU Health Award for cities, NGOs and schools are...

Today, the Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis **Andriukaitis** announced the winners of the [2019 EU Health Award for cities, NGOs and schools](#) on the theme of preventing and reducing obesity in children and young people. The winner in each category was awarded a prize of €100,000 to further their work, as well as a certificate. Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said: *"At European level we take action to reverse the rising trends in the proportion of the population who*

are overweight or obese, yet the figures remain worryingly high both for adults and for children and young people. For the first time in the history of the EU Health Award, we extended eligibility to schools and cities as well as to NGOs. This is something I feel strongly about – because good health needs to be supported at all levels, and getting children and young people off to a good start in life is something that should concern us all. From the bottom of my heart I want to thank all contestants for their efforts to help our children and young people.” The CITY category winner is Amsterdam. The ‘Amsterdam Healthy Weight Programme’ aims to improve children’s physical activity, diet and sleep and ultimately help them achieve and maintain a healthy weight through community-supported interventions and policies throughout the city. The NGO category winner is the Society ‘Our Children’ Zabok from Croatia for its project ‘Healthy and Tasty’ which organises fun and educational workshops to encourage healthy eating and decrease consumption of unhealthy foods. The SCHOOL category winner is IES Guadalquivir from Spain for its “Be Active @IES Guadalquivir” programme. The initiative’s main goal is to create a School Health Action Plan aimed at educating and supporting pupils to incorporate healthy living habits into their everyday lives. The EU Health Policy Platform is a collaborative initiative to ease communication between European Commission services and health stakeholders. It is aimed to be inclusive and to reflect the geographical and professional diversity of the participants. The EU Health Policy Platform is a collaborative initiative to ease communication between European Commission services and health stakeholders. Please find the speech of the Commissioner [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: [+32 229 91269](#); Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: [+32 229 87624](#))

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of joint control over PT Lintas Marga Sedaya by BUS and CPPIB

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over PT Lintas Marga Sedaya of Indonesia by PT Baskhara Utama Sedaya (“BUS”) of Indonesia, belonging to the Jardines group of Bermuda, and Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (“CPPIB”) of Canada. PT Lintas Marga Sedaya is the concession holder and operator of the Cikopo-Palimanan toll road in West Java Province, Indonesia. BUS is active in the operation of toll roads in Indonesia. CPPIB is an investment management organisation, principally investing in public equities, private equities, real estate, infrastructure and fixed income investments. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because of the limited impact it would have on the market. 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.9550](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of joint control over Mercer by Oak Hill Capital and Genstar

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed acquisition of joint control over Mercer Advisors Inc. (“Mercer”) by Oak Hill Capital Management, LLC (“Oak Hill Capital”) and Genstar Capital

Partners, LLC (“Genstar”), all three of the US. Mercer, previously solely controlled by Genstar, is an independent wealth management firm. Oak Hill and Genstar are both private equity firms. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns, because Mercer has no actual or foreseen activities within the European Economic Area. 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.9577](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Greene King by CKA

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Greene King plc of the UK by CK Asset Holdings Limited (“CKA”) of the Cayman Islands. Greene King is the UK’s leading integrated pub retailer and brewer operating restaurants and hotels across England, Wales and Scotland. CKA is active in property development and investment, hotel and serviced suite operation, property and project management, investment in infrastructure and utility asset operation. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because there is no horizontal overlap or vertical link between the activities of the companies. 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.9534](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of Cypress by Infineon

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control of Cypress Semiconductor Corp. (“Cypress”) of the US by Infineon Technologies AG (“Infineon”) of Germany. Cypress is active in the manufacture and supply of embedded systems solutions for automotive, industrial, consumer and enterprise end markets. Infineon is active in the design, manufacture and distribution of a wide range of semiconductors and power semiconductors. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given the limited horizontal overlap between the activities of the companies and the existence of several credible alternative suppliers. More information is available on the Commission’s [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9466](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Vice-President Timmermans travels to the Valencian Autonomous Community, Spain

On Friday 18 October, First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** will be in Spain for a series of activities and appointments with EU and Spanish authorities and organisations. In the morning he will meet the President and members of the government of the Valencian Autonomous Community, as well as the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) management and staff, and then

deliver a speech at the agency on environmental and climatic challenges in the Mediterranean region. First Vice-President **Timmermans** will then meet with the Mayors of the Vega at Orihuela Town Hall to discuss recent floods in the region, and visit the office for victims assistance of the floods. A press point will be arranged for local media at around 13.00 after the meeting with the Mayors. Finally, the First Vice-President will attend a meeting in Elche to discuss the city's candidacy for the 2030 European Green Capital award. *(For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229-67456; Tim McPhie – Tel.: +32 229 58602; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444)*

Drones: Commission hosts an international conference on drone threats and announces support for innovative projects

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos**, Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** and Commissioner for the Security Union Julian **King** are today participating in an international conference in Brussels aimed at discussing ways to counter the threats posed by drones. While the EU is gradually introducing a [robust framework for drones](#), their misuse – whether intentional or accidental – is of growing concern for stakeholders in aviation, law enforcement and many other sectors. Today's event is organised by the European Commission and brings together national authorities, key international partners, industry, academics and civil society to exchange experiences and identify areas where further European action can be taken. This includes support in further developing viable counter-drone solutions, establishing closer ties between affected sectors and building greater public awareness. At the same time, the Commission recognises that drones have many legitimate uses that can benefit the European economy. As a reflection of this, Commissioner **Bulc** announced during the event the launch of a 'Drone Investment Advisory Platform', a joint project by the European Commission and the European Investment Bank to support innovation and improve investment in European drone projects. More information on the 'Drone Investment Advisory Platform' is available [here](#). You can also re-watch Commissioner **Avramopoulos'** and Commissioner **Bulc's** opening remarks from this morning via [EbS+](#). *(For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Stephan Meder – Tel.: +32 229 13917; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444)*

Commissioner Stylianides inaugurates the International Hellenic University's new network to mitigate European disaster risks

Today, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos **Stylianides**, delivers a keynote speech at the launch of the 'Trans-European Network for Coordination, Education and Training for Natural Disasters and Technological Risk Mitigation' and meets with representatives of the International Hellenic University in Kavala, Greece. Earlier, Commissioner **Stylianides** will visit the Integrated Research Centre of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and Innovation of Aristoteleion University of Thessaloniki. On Friday, Commissioner Stylianides

will launch the Virtual School Initiative by AETMA LAB (Augmented Reality Game for Raising Awareness at School for Natural Disaster Management). (*For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140*)

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