

# Daily News 27 / 06 / 2017

## **Antitrust: Commission fines Google €2.42 billion for abusing dominance as search engine by giving illegal advantage to own comparison shopping service**

The European Commission has fined Google €2.42 billion for breaching EU antitrust rules. Google has abused its market dominance as a search engine by giving an illegal advantage to another Google product, its comparison shopping service. The company must now end the conduct within 90 days or face penalty payments of up to 5% of the average daily worldwide turnover of Alphabet, Google's parent company. Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *"Google has come up with many innovative products and services that have made a difference to our lives. That's a good thing. But Google's strategy for its comparison shopping service wasn't just about attracting customers by making its product better than those of its rivals. Instead, Google abused its market dominance as a search engine by promoting its own comparison shopping service in its search results, and demoting those of competitors. What Google has done is illegal under EU antitrust rules. It denied other companies the chance to compete on the merits and to innovate. And most importantly, it denied European consumers a genuine choice of services and the full benefits of innovation."* A full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#) and [DE](#) and all other EU languages. Please also see Factsheet in [EN](#), [FR](#) and [DE](#). Commissioner **Vestager** will be in the press room at 12 pm CET to present the case – follow live on EbS. (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

## **The EU invests €95 million in the upgrade of Dubrovnik airport**

€95 million from the [Cohesion Fund](#) is invested in the airport of Dubrovnik in Croatia, to build a new terminal. Currently operating close to its maximum capacity, the Dubrovnik airport is one of the main entry points for tourists in Croatia. As tourism is a major source of revenue in the country, upgrading the Dubrovnik airport will greatly benefit the real economy. Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu** said: *"The EU invests significantly for better connectivity in Croatia, from the Dubrovnik airport to the [Pelješac Bridge](#). I had the opportunity to see the works in the airport last year and I'm glad that EU funds support a project that will bring concrete benefits to Croats and tourists alike, in terms of travel comfort and waiting times."* The new, energy efficient terminal will handle more travellers, from 2 million yearly today to 2.4 million in 2020 and 4 million in 2032. More information on the European Structural and Investment Funds in Croatia is available [here](#) and on the [Open Data Platform](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

## **Croatia becomes part of the Schengen Information System (SIS)**

As of today, Croatia is connected to the Schengen Information System (SIS), the most widely used information sharingsystem for security and border

management in Europe. Croatia will now be able to exchange information with other Member States through SIS on persons wanted in relation to terrorism and other serious crimes, missing persons and certain objects such as stolen vehicles, firearms and identity documents. This will further enhance information exchange between Member States and will contribute to the security of all European citizens. Croatia's integration into SIS will also help reduce waiting time at land borders between Croatia and Slovenia – with both Member States having access to SIS, there will no longer be a need for checks against databases on both sides of the border. The Commission had [proposed](#) the gradual integration of Croatia into the SIS on 18 January 2017, with the Council adopting the Commission proposal on 25 April 2017 and setting the date for the entry into operation for 27 June 2017. In December 2016, the Commission presented a [legislative proposal](#) to further strengthen the operational effectiveness of the Schengen Information System by improving the security and accessibility of the system and including new alert categories as well as the obligation for Member States to create SIS alerts in cases related to terrorist offences. (For more information: Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 299 63444)

### **The European Union and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights launch new project supporting democratic elections in the Western Balkans**

The Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes **Hahn** and the Director of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Michael Georg Link will later today launch a new project to support democratic elections in the Western Balkans. The new project, to be implemented over a three-year period by the ODIHR, will support Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Kosovo in their efforts to follow-up on election observation recommendations. A full press release will be available [here](#) after the signing ceremony has taken place, foreseen for 15:30. Photos will be available on [Ebs](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Adam Kaznowski – Tel.: +32 229 89359)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **First Vice-President Timmermans holds Citizens' Dialogue with high school students in Rotterdam**

This evening, at 19:30, First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** will discuss the future of Europe with 80 high school students from the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Hungary and Turkey at the Lebanon Lyceum in Rotterdam. This innovative dialogue is the first time the [Future of Europe debate](#) launched by the Commission's White Paper has been taken into a highschool, targeting

young Europeans. The Citizens' Dialogue is part of a two-year project of students aged between 14 and 17 from schools in Rotterdam (Netherlands), Gliwice (Poland), Budapest (Hungary), Munich (Germany) and Istanbul (Turkey) about their common values and heritage. The project has been carried out via email, Skype, Facetime, Facebook and eTwinning, and this evening's Citizens' Dialogue is part of an exchange week which runs from 26 to 30 June. The debate, in English, can be followed live on the [YouTube channel](#) of the Commission's Representation in The Hague, and on the [Facebook page](#) of First Vice-President **Timmermans**. *(For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tim McPhie – Tel.: +32 229 58602)*

### **Tax Fairness Conference: Putting fairness and taxation hand-in-hand**

The European Commission will host a high-level Conference on Tax Fairness in Brussels on Wednesday and Thursday this week, as part of its wider agenda for fairer and more effective taxation in the EU. The conference will bring together a wide range of EU and international policy-makers, academics, NGOs, trade unions, businesses and tax administrations. Through a series of panel discussions, the event will focus on the role that taxation can play in ensuring social fairness. Over 300 participants from the EU and beyond are expected to engage in an active discussion on the fight against tax fraud, evasion and avoidance, but also the role of taxation in reducing inequalities and supporting social mobility. The discussions will feed into and further develop the Commission's ongoing agenda to make taxation fairer and more effective. The Commission has already taken various actions taken so far to fight tax fraud, evasion and avoidance, such as the [Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive](#), as well as proposals for the [CCCTB](#) and [new transparency rules for tax intermediaries](#). The conference will provide insights on the multiple dimensions of tax fairness and views from a wide range of stakeholders. Pierre **Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs will deliver a keynote speech on the first day. While registration is now closed, the event will be web streamed live via [EBS](#). More information on the programme is also available [here](#). *(Pour plus d'informations: Vanessa Mock – Tel.: [+32 229 56194](#); Patrick McCullough – Tel.: [+32 229 87183](#))*

### **Security Union: EU Internet Forum senior officials to address radicalisation online**

Today, EU and Member State senior officials are meeting at the EU Internet Forum to discuss the issue of radicalisation online. In particular, the participants will focus on ways to reduce the accessibility of terrorist material online as well as on how to empower civil society to increase alternative narratives online. The meeting was opened by Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos**, who said: *"Radicalisation and terrorism do not stop at national or EU borders. The challenge is global. [...] Our discussions here, will continue to feed into a more global effort to remove terrorist content from the internet, and to create positive alternative narratives. I urge you all to make the most of the impact this Forum brings to bear and I encourage you to use today's*

*meeting to be as open and concrete as possible on the way forward.”* Launched by the European Commission in 2015, the [EU Internet Forum](#) provides a framework for efficient cooperation with the internet industry on the detection and removal of online terrorist content. Building on the work of the EU Internet Forum, the [European Council Conclusions](#) of 22-23 June called for internet platforms to step up their efforts to combat terrorism and crime online. The full speech by Commissioner **Avramopoulos** is available [here](#). More information available in the factsheet '[A Europe that protects](#)'. *(For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; +32 229 67456; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Kasia Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444)*

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