


International drug trafficking network disrupted

Joint Eurojust/Europol press release

1 February 2019

Today, in a joint operation, the German Public Prosecutor's Office (PP0) in Münster, the German Customs' Investigation Office, the Dutch Specialised Prosecution Office for Fraud and Environmental Crime in Zwolle and the Dutch Fiscal Intelligence and Investigation Service (FIOD) dismantled an organised crime group (OCG) involved in international drug trafficking and money laundering.

The national investigations that culminated in the common action day were supported by Eurojust and Europol. A joint investigation team (JIT) was established in November 2018, which allowed the national authorities to quickly gather and safely exchange information and evidence. Eurojust provided financial support to the JIT and facilitated judicial and operational cooperation between the national authorities. Europol deployed a mobile office during the action and provided forensic support on the spot.

 The national investigations into the OCG were initiated in September 2018. The OCG was composed of 13 members, including some of Afghan and Dutch origin. The suspects in the Netherlands prepared parcels or envelopes with drugs, which were mailed to Germany. The perpetrators in Germany used various mailboxes and post offices to ship the packages on to recipients around the world. The orders were made online through the darknet, using cryptocurrency, such as bitcoin and paysafecards, given the anonymity it offers. Members of the OCG are also suspected of being involved in money laundering activities related to their profits.

Prior to today's action, amphetamines, MDMA, cocaine, heroin and ecstasy, with a total street value of more than € 400 000, were seized. Today, 10 private residences and business premises were searched at the German-Dutch border. Large amounts of drugs, including 40 kg of amphetamine and 1 kg of ecstasy pills, as well as mobile phones, computers, documents and € 10 000 in cash, were seized. Twelve suspects were arrested, 4 under European Arrest Warrants.

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Main topics and media events 4 – 17 February 2019

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ESMA and EU securities regulators agree no-deal Brexit MoUs with FCA

The MoUs form part of authorities' preparations should the UK leave the EU without a withdrawal agreement, the no-deal Brexit scenario. The MoUs will therefore only take effect in the event of a no-deal Brexit scenario. The MoUs are similar to those already concluded on the exchange of information with many third country supervisory authorities.

The MoUs are:

1. an MoU between ESMA and the FCA concerning the exchange of information in relation to the supervision of credit rating agencies (CRAs) and trade repositories (TRs). The MoU will allow ESMA to continue to discharge its mission and meet its mandate regarding investor protection, orderly markets and financial stability in the EU; and
2. a multilateral MoU (MMoU) between EU/EEA securities regulators and the FCA covering supervisory cooperation, enforcement and information exchange between individual regulators and the FCA, and will allow them to share information relating to, amongst others, market surveillance, investment services and asset management activities. This, in turn, will allow certain

activities, such as fund manager outsourcing and delegation, to continue to be carried out by UK based entities on behalf of counterparties based in the EEA.

Daily News 01 / 02 / 2019

Plan Juncker: un nouveau tram pour la ville de Liège et un soutien au secteur de la construction en Espagne

Le Plan d'Investissement pour l'Europe, ou Plan Juncker, apporte son soutien à deux projets en Belgique et en Espagne. Dans la ville belge de Liège, un prêt de près de 200 millions d'euros de la Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI) soutenu par le Plan Juncker va financer la construction d'une ligne de tramway de 11,5 km desservant le centre-ville. Les Liégeois bénéficieront ainsi d'un moyen de transport urbain rapide et moderne et pourront mieux respirer dans le centre-ville. Ce projet, qui promeut une mobilité urbaine propre, contribue directement aux objectifs de la stratégie pour une [Europe "zéro émission nette" d'ici 2050](#). Ensuite, le Plan Juncker soutient un prêt de la BEI de 26 millions d'euros pour financer la stratégie d'innovation de l'entreprise espagnole Ulma, spécialisée dans la construction. Ce prêt permettra à l'entreprise d'investir dans des processus industriels plus sûrs et innovants dans ses sites espagnols et polonais, créant ainsi 300 emplois et contribuant au développement des régions concernées. Des communiqués de presse sont disponible [ici](#). A la fin de 2018, le Plan Juncker avait mobilisé plus 375,5 milliards d'euros supplémentaires en Europe, avec 858 000 entreprises bénéficiant d'un meilleur accès au financement. En Belgique et en Espagne, le Plan Juncker a déjà mobilisé respectivement plus de 8 milliards d'euros et plus de 46 milliards d'investissements supplémentaires depuis son lancement. *(Pour plus d'informations: Annika Breidhardt – Tél.: +32 229-56153; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tél.: +32 229 56169)*

Commission imposes definitive safeguard measures on imports of steel products

Today, the European Commission published a regulation imposing definitive safeguard measures on imports of steel products. The measures will take effect tomorrow, 2 February, and will replace the provisional ones of July 2018 put in place as part of the European Union's response to the decision by the United States to impose tariffs on steel products, a measure that causes a diversion of trade flows into the EU. The Commission investigation showed that imports of steel products into the EU have been increasing sharply, which seriously threatens EU steelmakers. The definitive safeguard measures published today have been carefully shaped to preserve a continued flow of imports that guarantees effective competition in the European steel market and sufficient choice for the numerous EU users of steel. They are also in full compliance with the WTO rules. The measures concern 26 steel product categories and consist of tariff-rate quotas above which a duty of 25% will

apply. The main supplying countries will benefit from individual quotas based on their own historical imports. For more information please see the full [press release](#) and the text of the [regulation](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)

Antitrust: Commission sends Statement of Objections in European government bonds cartel

The European Commission has informed eight banks of its preliminary view that they have breached EU antitrust rules by colluding, in periods from 2007 to 2012, to distort competition when acquiring and trading European government bonds. The Commission has concerns that, at different periods between 2007 and 2012, the eight banks participated in a collusive scheme that aimed at distorting competition when acquiring and trading European government bonds (“EGBs”). Traders employed by the banks exchanged commercially sensitive information and coordinated on trading strategies. These contacts would have taken place mainly – but not exclusively – through online chatrooms. EGBs are sovereign bonds issued in Euro by the central governments of the Eurozone Member States. If the Commission’s preliminary view were confirmed, such behaviour would violate EU rules that prohibit anticompetitive business practices such as collusion on prices ([Article 101](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 53 of the EEA Agreement). The Commission’s investigation relates to certain traders at eight banks and does not imply that the alleged anti-competitive conduct was a general practice in the EGBs sector. The sending of a Statement of Objections does not prejudice the outcome of an investigation. The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of sole control of Veja Mate offshore wind park by Siemens

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control over Veja Mate Offshore Project GmbH by Siemens Project Ventures GmbH, belonging to the Siemens group, all of Germany. Veja Mate operates an offshore wind farm with a capacity of 402 megawatts (MW) in the German North Sea. Siemens is a global technology group, active – among others – in the development and financing of projects, in particular with regard to energy, health care and infrastructure. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given that Siemens already jointly controlled Veja Mate prior to the transaction. 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.9240](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Eurostat: Le taux d’inflation annuel de la zone euro estimé à 1,4%

Le taux d’inflation annuel de la zone euro est estimé à 1,4% en janvier 2019, selon une estimation rapide publiée par Eurostat, l’office statistique de l’Union européenne. S’agissant des principales composantes de l’inflation de la zone euro, l’énergie devrait connaître le taux annuel le plus élevé en

janvier (2,6%), suivie de l'alimentation, alcool et tabac (1,8%), des services (1,6%) et des biens industriels hors énergie (0,3%). Un communiqué de presse complet est à votre disposition [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Annika Breidhardt – Tél.: +32 229-56153; Enda McNamara – Tél.: +32 229 64976; Annikky Lamp – Tél.: +32 229 56151)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A stronger and more competitive EU industry: President Juncker to open 2019 EU Industry Days

[On Tuesday 5 February](#), President Jean-Claude **Juncker** will officially open the 3rd annual edition of EU Industry Days ([5-6 February](#), Brussels). The event is the Commission's annual flagship conference on industrial policy that brings together key industry representatives, public authorities and civil society to discuss the future of EU industry against the backdrop of the Commission's 2017 [Industrial Policy Strategy](#). Jyrki **Katainen**, Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness; Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; and Margrethe **Vestager**, Commissioner for Competition, participate in the event, which will also welcome Kristalina Georgieva, interim President of the World Bank, and Li Yong, Director General of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The Juncker Commission is helping Europe's industries stay global leaders in innovation, digitisation and decarbonisation. The Investment Plan has already triggered over €370 billion in investments across the EU. Thanks to the [Single Market](#), EU companies have access to more diverse, higher quality and cheaper inputs and are therefore more competitive globally. The [High Level Industrial Roundtable](#) will discuss trends and challenges facing European industries by 2030. The Commission will unveil preliminary recommendations of the expert group on strategic value chains. Vice-President **Katainen** will open the first meeting of the [Circular Plastics Alliance](#) – an initiative launched by the Commission in [December 2018](#) which brings together the producers and users of recycled plastics with the aim of recycling at least 10 million tons of plastic into new products by 2025. To engage young people in this debate, the [Young Leaders of Industry Forum](#) will meet for the first time. In parallel, a series of events will be held across 18 EU countries as part of the EU Industry Week. More information on 2019 EU Industry Days can be found [here](#). Press can register for the event [here](#). Speeches will be broadcast live by [EBS](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278)

Commissioner Stylianides participates in the Warwick Economics Summit to present rescEU: the EU's response to natural disasters

This evening Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos

Stylianides will speak at the [Warwick Economics Summit](#) about [rescEU](#) – the Commission’s new policy to upgrade the European system of civil protection. The Commissioner will present how rescEU can protect people facing natural and man-made disasters and save lives. He will outline the main features of rescEU and will speak about its political and economic significance underlying the comparative advantage of rescEU in economic terms. *(For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)*

[CALENDAR](#)– Commissioner’s weekly activities

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

[ESMA and EU securities regulators agree no-deal Brexit MoUs with FCA](#)

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