

Commission welcomes European Parliament's position on InvestEU

The vote marks an important step towards the creation of the programme, which will bring together under one roof the EU's financial instruments for investment in the European Union and should trigger at least €650 billion of investment. The Commission now calls on Member States to swiftly agree their position to be able to start the discussions between the three institutions.

Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, said: *"Europe needs more investments to boost jobs, innovation and skills. With InvestEU we are taking the game-changing model of the Investment Plan one step further, expanding it to the whole range of EU funding programmes, making financing easier to access and placing a greater focus on climate action, social inclusion and cohesion. After the Parliament's vote it is important to keep up the momentum. Member States should follow suit quickly."*

The [Commission's proposal for InvestEU](#) builds on the success of the Investment Plan for Europe – [the Juncker Plan](#) – which has already mobilised over €371 billion of investments since its launch. By providing an €38 billion EU budget guarantee to support investment, the InvestEU Fund will crowd in public and private resources to boost investment across the EU in the 2021-2027 budget period.

The InvestEU Fund is policy-driven and will support four main areas: sustainable infrastructure; research, innovation and digitisation; small and medium businesses; and social investment and skills. .

Creating jobs, boosting investment and achieving sustainable economic growth has been President Jean-Claude **Juncker**'s number one priority since the Commission took office in November 2014. InvestEU will bring together under one roof and with a single brand all EU financial instruments currently available to support investment. This will make EU funding for investment projects simpler to access and more efficient.

Besides the InvestEU Fund, the programme will also consist of the InvestEU Advisory Hub and of the InvestEU Portal, to continue providing tailored support to project promoters as well as an easily accessible pipeline of mature projects for potential investors.

For more information

Press release: [InvestEU Programme to support jobs, growth and innovation in Europe](#)

Memo: [InvestEU Programme – questions and answers](#)

[InvestEU policy package](#)

Factsheet: [What is InvestEU?](#)

Factsheet: [InvestEU – what will it finance?](#)

[Proposal for a Regulation establishing the InvestEU Programme](#)

[EU budget for the future](#)

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[EU imposes safeguard measures on rice from Cambodia and Myanmar](#)

The European Commission has therefore decided today to re-introduce import duties that will be steadily reduced over a period of three years.

According to the Commission's decision, to be published in tomorrow's Official Journal, as of 18 January the European Union will reinstate the normal customs duty on this product of €175 per tonne in year one, progressively reducing it to €150 per tonne in year two, and €125 per tonne in year three.

During the investigation launched in March 2018, the Commission found that imports of Indica rice from both countries combined have increased by 89% in the past five rice-growing seasons. At the same time, the investigation found that the prices were substantially lower than those on the EU market and had actually decreased over the same period. This surge in low-price imports has caused serious difficulties for EU rice producers to the extent that their market share in the EU dropped substantially from 61% to 29%.

Cambodia and Myanmar are beneficiaries of the EU's Everything But Arms (EBA) trade scheme, which unilaterally grants duty- and quota-free access to the world's least developed countries (apart from arms and ammunition). This is one pillar of the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) tariff-reduction scheme for developing countries. Today's action is being taken using the safeguards mechanism of the GSP Regulation.

Background

The initial request for trade safeguards on rice imports was tabled by the Italian government in February 2018 and supported by all other EU rice growing Member States (Spain, France, Portugal, Greece, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria). The Commission opened a formal investigation on 16 March 2018. The measures will be in place for three years.

The decision will be published in the EU's Official Journal on 17 January and will enter into force the following day.

For More Information

[EU trade relation with Cambodia](#)

[EU trade relations with Myanmar](#)

[Generalised scheme of preferences](#)

EU to help boost exports of generic pharmaceuticals

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The EU has come a step closer to adopting new rules that will boost the export of generic medicines and biosimilar products to third countries. EU ambassadors meeting today in Coreper agreed on the Council's position on a draft regulation which introduces an exception for manufacturing for export purposes (manufacturing waiver) to the protection granted to an original medicine by a supplementary protection certificate (SPC).

Thanks to the waiver, EU-based makers of generics and biosimilars will be entitled to manufacture a generic or biosimilar version of an SPC-protected medicine during the term of the SPC if done exclusively for the purpose of exporting to a non-EU market where protection has expired or never existed.

The draft regulation is expected to remove the competitive disadvantages faced by EU-based manufacturers of generics and biosimilars vis-à-vis manufacturers established outside the EU in global markets, but also in day-1 EU markets by building up production capacity.

The exception will operate only where :

- generics or biosimilars are produced exclusively for export to third countries where protection of the original medicine does not exist or has expired;
- the maker has provided the information required by the regulation to

both the authorities of the member state of production and to the holder of the SPC at least three months in advance;

- the maker has duly informed all those involved in the commercialisation of the product covered by the exception that the product can be put on the market only outside the EU;
- the maker has affixed to the packaging of the product the specific logo provided for by the regulation indicating clearly that it is only for export.

Until a set date (three years from the entry into force of the regulation), the regulation will affect only SPCs that are applied for on or after the date of entry into force of the regulation. From then on, the regulation will also affect SPCs applied for before the entry into force of the regulation, but which have become effective after the entry into force of the regulation.

Next steps

Once the European Parliament agrees on a negotiating mandate, the Romanian presidency will start negotiations with the European Parliament with the aim of adopting the regulation at first reading.

Background

The EU harmonised SPC system was introduced in 1992. It sought to compensate for the loss of effective patent protection due to the time required in order to obtain marketing authorisation (including research and clinical trials).

Global demand for medicines has increased massively (reaching €1.1 trillion in 2017). Alongside this, there is a shift towards an ever-greater market share for generics and biosimilars. Assuming an annual growth rate of 6.9%, by 2020 generics and biosimilars will represent 80% of all medicines by volume, and about 28% by value.

With the expiry of industrial property protection, over €90 billion of the first generation of blockbuster biologics will become open to biosimilar competition by 2020.

The draft regulation should contribute to Europe's competitiveness as a hub for pharmaceutical R&D and manufacturing. It will help new pharmaceutical companies start up and scale up in high growth areas, and is projected to generate, over the next 10 years, additional net annual export sales of well in excess of EUR 1 billion, which could translate into 20 000 to 25 000 new jobs over that period.

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Daily News 16 / 01 / 2019

EU increases its humanitarian assistance – record budget adopted for 2019

As more and more people face humanitarian crises worldwide, the EU has adopted its highest ever initial annual humanitarian budget of €1.6 billion for 2019. From long-lasting conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, to the growing impact of climate change worldwide, humanitarian crises are worsening and conflict threatens aid delivery to those most in need. *“With this new budget, the EU remains a leading humanitarian donor in the face of crises such as Syria and Yemen. Humanitarian aid alone cannot solve all problems but we must do everything in our power to help the most vulnerable. This is our humanitarian duty. We must also think about the impact of these many crises on children, on the next generation. That’s why a record 10% of the new budget, 10 times more than in 2015, is dedicated to education in emergencies, so we can give children the tools to build a better future,”* said Christos **Stylianides**, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management. The biggest bulk of the budget will address the crisis in Syria, refugees in neighbouring countries and the extremely critical situation in Yemen. Further funding will address needs in Africa, Latin America, Asia as well as in Ukraine. The Commission closely monitors the use of EU funds via its global network of humanitarian experts and has strict rules in place to ensure funding is well spent. The full press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

Faster, more comfortable commutes in Budapest thanks to Cohesion Policy funds

Passengers will soon enjoy better travel conditions from and to the Hungarian capital thanks to a €166 million EU investment. This will allow the purchase of 11 high capacity double decker carriages to run on railway lines 30, 30a, 80 and 100. Commissioner for Regional policy Corina **Crețu** said: *“Cohesion Policy is investing to make railways services in Hungary faster and more reliable, while significantly improving passenger comfort. This is how the EU is concretely changing our daily lives, for the better.”* The trains, with a 600-seat capacity, will have dedicated space for wheelchairs and bicycles. They will be equipped with on-board Wi-Fi, audio-visual systems, security cameras and power sockets. (For more information: Christian Spahr – Tel.: +32 2 295 00 55; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

Commission welcomes agreement on stricter rules on European political party funding

Today, the European Parliament and the Member States reached provisional agreement to tighten the rules on European political party funding. The amendment to [the Regulation](#) on funding of European political parties was part of a [series of measures](#) proposed by President Juncker in his 2018 State of the Union speech to secure free and fair European elections. First Vice-

President Frans **Timmermans** said: *“This agreement is good news. It will contribute to bolstering our democratic resilience just in time for the European elections”* Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Věra **Jourová** added: *“We have seen how personal data can be misused for manipulation in election times. Strong data protection rules are crucial to protect the upcoming European elections. We expect European political parties to fully respect them, so that Europeans can cast their vote being fully and fairly informed during the campaign.”* The amendment will make it possible to impose financial sanctions for breaching data protection rules in order to deliberately influence the outcome of the European elections. Sanctions would amount to 5% of the annual budget of the European political party or foundation concerned. The sanction will be enforced by the Authority for European political parties and European political foundations. In addition, those found to be in breach would not be able to apply for funding from the general budget of the European Union in the year in which the sanction is imposed. The text must now be quickly formally adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU in the coming weeks, so that the rules are in place for the 2019 European elections. All information on the election package is available [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

Eurostat: Commerce international de services: l'excédent de l'UE en hausse à plus de 190 milliards d'euros en 2017, les États-Unis restent le 1er partenaire des exportations et importations

L'excédent du commerce international de services de l'Union européenne (UE), qui avait diminué entre 2013 et 2016, a augmenté pour s'établir à 191,8 milliards d'euros en 2017. Cela s'explique par la hausse de 5% des exportations de services de l'UE vers le reste du monde, passant de 870,5 milliards d'euros en 2016 à 912,4 milliards en 2017, tandis que les importations de l'UE ont diminué de 2%, passant de 732,3 milliards à 720,7 milliards. Un communiqué de presse Eurostat est à votre disposition [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Daniel Rosario – Tél.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tél.: +32 229 51383)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Le commissaire Moscovici à Athènes devant la Chambre de Commerce Franco-Hellénique

M. Pierre **Moscovici**, commissaire chargé des Affaires économiques et financières, de la Fiscalité et des Douanes, sera à Athènes aujourd'hui pour prononcer un discours devant la [Chambre de Commerce Franco-Hellénique](#). A l'occasion de cette visite, il s'entretiendra avec les autorités grecques des perspectives économiques et de la mise en œuvre des engagements pris à la conclusion du programme de soutien à la stabilité l'été dernier. Le commissaire **Moscovici** rencontrera le président Prokópis Pavlópoulos; le Premier ministre Alexis Tsipras; le ministre des Finances Euclide Tsakalotos,

ainsi que les ministres de l'Économie et du Développement, du Travail et de l'Énergie. Il rencontrera également des banquiers et des représentants du secteur privé. (Pour plus d'informations: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

Commissioner Navracsics travels to The Netherlands for European Music Awards Night

This evening, the [twelve winners](#) of the first [Music Moves Europe Talent Awards](#) will receive their trophies at a ceremony at the Eurosonic Noorderslag festival in Groningen, The Netherlands. This new EU prize for popular and contemporary music, co-funded by the [Creative Europe](#) programme, succeeds the European Border Breakers Awards which ran from 2004 to 2017. It recognises the success of emerging artists who have reached audiences outside their own countries. Ahead of the ceremonies, Commissioner Tibor **Navracsics**, in charge of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *“Tonight in Groningen we are celebrating the European sounds of today and tomorrow. This year, the talent awards have become part of a much larger EU music initiative called Music Moves Europe – an important step as we seek to provide special support to the music sector in the years ahead. I am also pleased to be presenting the Take a Stand Award that recognises the power of music and the arts to promote mutual understanding, tolerance and peace. Congratulations to all the winners on Music Awards Night!”* The twelve winners of the Music Moves Europe Talent Awards were announced in November. An international jury selected them in six categories – pop, rock, electronic, R&B/urban, hip hop/rap and singer/songwriter. During tonight's award ceremony, which will be co-hosted by TV personality and musician Jools Holland and Dutch presenter Eric Corton, a number of bands including Albin Lee Meldau, AVEC or blackwave, will perform live. The ceremony takes place back-to-back with the [10th European Festival Awards Show](#), which Commissioner **Navracsics** will also attend. (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: +32 229 56184)

Commissioners Vytenis Andriukaitis and Phil Hogan attending the [International Green Week](#) in Berlin

Commissioners Vytenis **Andriukaitis** and Phil **Hogan**, respectively in charge of Health and Food safety and of Agriculture, will both be attending the [International Green Week](#) in Berlin which gathers exhibitors from the food, agriculture and gardening sectors on 17-19 January. On Thursday, Commissioner **Andriukaitis** will start his visit in Germany by holding a citizen dialogue in Potsdam on the theme of health, entitled: “Where we stand today – and how to improve Europe's health status”. Meanwhile, Commissioner **Hogan** will address the Committee on Food and Agriculture at the German Bundestag. Later on that day, at 16:00 CET, both Commissioners will attend the Green Week's premises before the event's official opening. On Friday and Saturday, both Commissioners **Andriukaitis** and **Hogan** join the [11th Global Forum for Food and Agriculture \(GFFA\)](#) organised in

the context of the Green Week. On Friday, Commissioner **Hogan** will participate in the EU High-Level Panel “Innovation and Digitalisation of Agriculture”. He will also speak on a panel entitled “EU Africa Alliance in Agriculture – the way forward”, alongside African Union Agriculture Commissioner Josepha Sacko and the [Taskforce Rural Africa](#) Chairman Tom Arnold. On Saturday, Commissioner **Andriukaitis** will also participate in a conference on “Western Balkans: Potentials of Agriculture Trade”. Also, whilst in Berlin, Commissioner **Hogan** will meet Ms Angela Merkel, Federal Chancellor of Germany, the Australian agriculture Minister David Littleproud and Japanese Agriculture Minister Takamori Yoshikawa. Ahead of his visit, Commissioner **Andriukaitis** said: *“I look forward to visiting this important event and to discussing with ministers from the EU and third-countries topics which are high on the Commission’s agenda, notably African swine fever”*. Commissioner **Hogan** added: *“Berlin Green Week and the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture are major events in the global agricultural policy calendar. This week’s events provide a big opportunity to increase our cooperation at a global level, for example with the Taskforce Rural Africa and by sharing ideas on how to mainstream digitalisation in the agriculture sector.”* The European Commission is present throughout the duration of the International Green Week 2019 with a stand on the theme of sustainable food for a healthy lifestyle. Visitors will receive information about the Common Agricultural Policy, digital innovations in agriculture and rural areas, the EU’s work on food safety and nutrition labelling and research, and measures to reduce food waste, as well as AMR. (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel: +32 229 91269; Daniel Rosario – Tel +32 229 56185; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624; Clémence Robin – Tel.: +32 229 52509)

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

[ESMA reports on accepted market practices under MAR](#)

ESMA’s report provides an overview on the establishment and application of AMPs in the EU, with particular reference to the AMPs established on the basis of the Market Abuse Directive and which were still in force when MAR became applicable, and the AMPs which have been established under MAR.

The report includes ESMA’s views on the application of AMPs together with recommendations to National Competent Authorities.

Background

MAR’s purpose is to guarantee the integrity of European financial markets and promote investor confidence. The concept of market abuse typically consists of insider dealing, unlawful disclosure of inside information, and market manipulation.

However, some exceptions apply, for example, MAR provides a defence against market manipulation if the transaction was legitimate and carried out in accordance with an AMP and MAR describes the non-exhaustive factors that a competent authority should take into account before deciding whether or not to accept a market practice.