

# EU Report: increased EU-Lebanon cooperation

This encouraging acknowledgment is made in the [report](#) issued today on the partnership between the EU and Lebanon for the period from May 2017 to May 2018. It highlights key developments in EU-Lebanon cooperation with a particular focus on achieving the objectives set under the [Partnership Priorities and Compact](#) mutually agreed in November 2016.

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: *“The European Union is a longstanding friend of Lebanon. Our priority has always been and will always be to preserve and continue to build Lebanon’s strength, independence, economic development and security. It is our objective to support the Lebanese institutions so that they can deliver on what the Lebanese citizens wants, and to plan the future work that we can continue to do together.”*

*“Attracting investments into Lebanon to stimulate jobs and growth will remain the priority for our cooperation with Lebanon”,* added Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes **Hahn**. *“Our aim is to support economic prosperity, stability and security of Lebanon as well as progress in democracy, while helping Lebanon maintains its outstanding efforts to host refugees fleeing from the Syrian war.”*

Reaffirming its political support and following the request of the Lebanese government, the EU supported the preparations of Lebanon’s first parliamentary elections in 9 years held on 6 May 2018, which marked a significant step forward for democracy and provided the Lebanese parliament with renewed legitimacy.

Work during the reporting period confirmed how intertwined economic prosperity, stability and security are with democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. The EU showed continued support to Lebanon in all these fields. This was notably testified by a number of high-level meetings between the EU and Lebanese authorities, as well as the holding within the EU (in Rome, Paris and Brussels) of three international conferences within a five-week period (March to April 2018), with the first two being solely dedicated to Lebanon.

During [the Rome II Conference](#) in March, the EU welcomed the reforms proposed by Lebanon for the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Forces and announced €50 million to strengthen their capacities in compliance with human rights. Intensive work on the implementation of the 2016 counterterrorism roadmap continued.

In the run-up to the CEDRE Conference in Paris in April – an international donor meeting in support of Lebanon’s economy – the EU presented its [External Investment Plan \(EIP\) in Beirut](#) and held a three-day policy dialogue in Brussels on economic affairs including bilateral trade and investment.

Lebanon presented its strategic economic vision, a Capital Investment Plan and a detailed reform agenda including anti-corruption measures, while the [EU announced up to €150 million in support](#) over the next three years that can generate up to €1.5 billion in loans.

At both conferences, the EU and Lebanon agreed to set up follow-up mechanisms to track progress of the implementation of political and financial commitments and, importantly, of the reform agenda. This will be the basis for more cooperation in the years to come.

The EU and Lebanon undertook the above work while Lebanon's hosting of over one million Syrian refugees remains a challenge in the political, economic, and social sphere. As reaffirmed at the [Second Brussels Conference on Supporting the future of Syria and the Region](#) at the end of April, the EU maintained its financial support for Lebanon over the reporting period. Since 2011, the EU has allocated over €1.6 billion out of which €1.3 billion to assist the country in coping with the consequences of the Syria crisis. This includes humanitarian assistance as well as longer-term resilience and development support for both Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities with a primary focus on health and education.

The report outlined that the EU-Lebanon Partnership Priorities and Compact provide a solid framework for further strategic development of EU-Lebanon cooperation. While the EU will continue to support measures that contribute to a more stable, democratic and prosperous Lebanon, the prioritisation and sequencing of reforms by Lebanon are crucial to optimise future EU cooperation. The EU remains strongly committed to supporting Lebanon to address the most pressing needs while promoting longer-term economic development of the country and the benefit of its people.

#### **For More Information**

[Report on EU-Lebanon relations in the framework of the revised ENP \(2017-2018\)](#)

[EU-Lebanon Partnership Priorities and Compact](#)

[EU support to Lebanon](#)

[Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon](#)

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## **[Daily News 29 / 11 / 2018](#)**

**DiscoverEU: 12,000 travel passes available for 18-year-olds to explore Europe in 2019**

The European Commission is launching a second DiscoverEU competition. From

today (12:00 CET) until Tuesday, 11 December (12:00 CET), young people aged 18 can [apply](#) for a travel pass to discover Europe next summer. This follows the successful first round which gave 15,000 young people the opportunity to travel around Europe between July and September 2018. Many of them participated in the events taking place during the [European Year of Cultural Heritage](#). Commissioner Tibor **Navracsics**, responsible for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *“It is great to see that young people are embracing this new opportunity to explore European cultures and traditions, feel what European diversity means and to make friends they would have not met otherwise. The first round showed that young people gain self-confidence and skills, such as taking initiative and speaking other languages. DiscoverEU is about much more than travelling, it is about learning for life.”* For this round the Commission encourages particularly people who have special needs or face social challenges to apply. For people with special needs, the Commission will put information and tips at their disposal and cover the necessary costs of special assistance (for example an accompanying person or a guide dog for visually impaired participants). More information is available on the [European Youth Portal](#) as well as on the [European Youth Facebook page](#) and the [European Youth Twitter account](#). A [press release](#) and a [memo](#) are available online. (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: +32 229 56184)

### **Commission welcomes adoption of its proposal to help dismissed workers in the Greek media sector with €2.3 million from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund**

The Commission welcomes today’s decision of the European Parliament and the Council to approve €2.3 million from the [European Globalisation Adjustment Fund \(EGF\)](#) to help 550 displaced workers of three media companies in the Greek region Attica find new jobs, [as proposed by the Commission in October 2018](#). Marianne **Thyssen**, the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, said: *“The Greek people have made tremendous efforts to find their way out of the financial and economic crisis. While we see meanwhile good progress, there is still a way ahead of us. Also the publishing sector in Attica suffered heavily under the crisis due to substantial drops in sales and advertising revenues. The financial support from the EGF helps to make sure that journalists and other workers dismissed will be able to improve their chances on the labour market.”* The actions supported with this money will provide the workers with career guidance, retraining and vocational training, targeted advice towards entrepreneurship, contributions to business start-up and a variety of allowances. The total amount of this package is about €3.8 million, of which the EU will provide 60%. The Commission will make the funding available still this year. (For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094)

### **EU provides humanitarian aid for refugees and migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The Commission has allocated an additional €500,000 to continue assisting the most vulnerable refugees and migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This additional funding brings EU humanitarian assistance in the Western Balkans to €31 million since the start of the refugee crisis in 2015, including €2 million for Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2018. *“Refugees and migrants continue to arrive in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU is committed to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need, supporting the efforts of national and local authorities. Our humanitarian aid will provide food, water, emergency shelter, sanitation, health care and warm clothing”* said Christos **Stylianides**, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management. EU’s humanitarian assistance is provided in locations such as Bihac, Velika Kladusa and Sarajevo. Read the full press release [here](#). (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

### **Commission awards €573 million to support established researchers**

Today, the Commission is awarding 291 excellent researchers with around €2 million each in funding to support them in building their teams and further developing their research. These projects, supported through the European Research Council (ERC) Consolidator Grants, will cover a wide range of areas from engineering and physical sciences, to social sciences and humanities. They will study diverse and exciting topics such as new metasurfaces for augmented reality, government policy impact on wage inequality or improving movements of robots. On this occasion, Carlos **Moedas**, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: *“This EU grant provides a real boost to research and innovation in Europe because it gives top scientists the chance to take risks and pursue their best and maybe wildest ideas. I am pleased to see these ERC grants will support such a diverse group of people of forty nationalities working in over twenty countries and that the list of grantees also reflects that we have many excellent women scientists in Europe.”* Funding for these researchers is part of the EU’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. A press release, more information on research project examples and details of grant winners are available [here](#). (For more information: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278)

### **Commission welcomes agreement on horizontal safeguard regulation**

The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission reached yesterday afternoon a political agreement on an EU horizontal safeguard regulation. The agreed regulation will make it easier for the EU to react in case of a sudden surge of imports under bilateral trade agreements, thus preventing possible negative economic effects. Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** said: *“The objective of trade agreements is to increase trade flows between partners. With this regulation, the EU will now be well equipped to remedy more efficiently situations where imports increase to the extent that they cause serious economic damage to EU companies. I count on the European Parliament and Member States to swiftly approve the regulation agreed today.”* Following the agreement reached today, the process will now become more

efficient, but also more coherent, as the same rules will be applied under all future EU trade agreements. In the past, the EU adopted separate regulations for the implementation of the bilateral safeguard clauses for each individual trade agreement, even if the rules put in place for each agreement were very similar. It is now up to the European Parliament and the Member States to confirm the political agreement reached today and give the final greenlight to the proposal before it can enter into force. For more information, see the [news item](#) online. (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)

## **Council swiftly adopted its mandate for negotiating new rules for online platforms**

Today, the Council of the EU adopted its mandate to negotiate the Commission's proposal to make online platforms not only fairer but also more transparent for business users. On 26 April 2018, the Commission proposed an [EU Regulation on fairness and transparency in online platform trading](#) together with the creation of an EU Observatory to monitor current as well as emerging issues and opportunities in the digital economy. Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus **Ansip**, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, Mariya **Gabriel**, and Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, welcomed this positive step: *"This swift Council adoption is good news. Now is the time to provide ground rules for fairness, transparency, and better access to dispute resolution for business users of online platforms. The Platform-to-Business Regulation proposes a targeted and proportionate approach to promote trust, predictability and legal certainty in the online platform economy. Businesses such as hotels, traders selling online, app developers, and other similar companies that rely on search engines for attracting internet traffic to their websites are amongst those who will benefit from the new rules."* As next steps, the European Parliament will adopt its position before negotiations can start between co-legislators and pave the way for the regulation to be adopted in early 2019. This initiative delivers on the commitment made in [President Juncker's 2017 State of the Union address](#) to safeguard a fair, predictable, sustainable and trusted business environment in the online economy. More information on the Commission's proposal is available in this [memo](#) and [factsheet](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: [+32 229 67083](#); Lucia Caudet – Tel.: + 32 229 56182; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: [+32 229 56184](#), ; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278)

## **Rapport de l'Union européenne: une coopération UE-Liban renforcée**

L'UE et le [Liban](#) sont parvenus à d'importants progrès dans leur coopération, qui a été marquée par un soutien politique et économique très important de la part de l'UE et de la communauté internationale envers le Liban. Ce constat encourageant est établi dans le [rapport](#) publié aujourd'hui sur le partenariat entre l'UE et le Liban, pour la période entre mai 2017 et mai 2018. Le rapport expose les points-clés des progrès de la coopération UE-Liban avec

une attention particulière sur la mise en œuvre des objectifs définis par les [priorités de partenariat et le pacte](#), agréés mutuellement en novembre 2016. La haute représentante/vice-présidente Federica **Mogherini** a dit: «L'Union européenne et le Liban sont liés par une amitié de longue date. Notre priorité a toujours été et sera toujours de préserver et de continuer à consolider la force, l'indépendance, le développement économique et la sécurité du Liban. Notre objectif consiste à soutenir les institutions du pays afin qu'elles soient en mesure de répondre aux attentes des citoyens libanais et à prévoir dans quels domaines nous pourrions continuer à travailler ensemble à l'avenir.» «Notre coopération avec le Liban a pour objectif prioritaire d'attirer les investissements dans le pays pour stimuler l'emploi et la croissance» a ajouté le commissaire chargé de la politique européenne de voisinage et des négociations d'élargissement, Johannes **Hahn**. «Notre but est de soutenir la prospérité économique, la stabilité et la sécurité du Liban et de faire en sorte que la démocratie progresse tout en aidant le pays à continuer de déployer des efforts remarquables pour accueillir les réfugiés qui fuient la guerre en Syrie.» Le communiqué de presse complet est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Maja Kocijancic – Tél.: +32 229 86570; Lauranne Devillé – Tél.: +32 229 80833; Alceo Smerilli – Tél.: +32 229 64887)

#### **EU Report: reinforcing the strong and solid EU-Jordan partnership**

The EU and [Jordan](#) built and consolidated a strong and solid partnership via broad and intensive cooperation on multilateral, regional and bilateral issues. This is the conclusion drawn by a [report](#) released today on the partnership between the EU and Jordan for the period from May 2017 to May 2018. High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: "Jordan is a strong partner for the EU, bilaterally and on the regional scene. It plays a vital role in the region and we value enormously the unique wisdom and balance the country and its people show. We have always been supporting them, including their internal, domestic work, with all possible means at our disposal, including economic and financial means. And we will continue to be at their side." Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes **Hahn** added: "This report shows how strong our relations are. The EU financial support to Jordan since 2011 has surpassed €2 billion and I can confirm that the EU will keep working with Jordan to strengthen its resilience by creating opportunities, promoting entrepreneurship, to generate economic growth and attracting foreign investors. We commend Jordan making an incredible contribution in hosting so many Syrian refugees; our support will continue." The EU report highlights common efforts undertaken in the framework of the [Partnership Priorities and the Compact](#) adopted in 2016, such as promoting stability and security, countering terrorism, fostering macroeconomic stability and knowledge-based growth, job creation, trade, education, strengthening democratic governance, the rule of law and human rights. Read the full press release [here](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Lauranne Devillé – Tel.: +32 229 80833; Alceo Smerilli – Tel.: +32 229 64887)

#### **EU steps up its international cooperation to tackle Holocaust Denial and**

## Antisemitism

Today, the European Commission is becoming a permanent international partner to the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance \(IHRA\)](#). The participation of the EU to this international body provides will allow for closer cooperation on combating Holocaust denial and preventing racism, xenophobia and Antisemitism. This is a direct follow-up to President Juncker's call for closer international cooperation in his [statement](#) on Holocaust Remembrance Day, this 27 January, as well as the [European Parliament's resolution on combating Antisemitism](#) of June 2017. First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: *"With a decreasing number of Holocaust survivors and at a time when Antisemitism is on the rise, we need to foster the memory of the darkest chapter in our history. The EU joining the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance will help promote understanding so that future generations will heed the lessons of our past."* Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Vera **Jourová** added: *"This commitment is part of our wider effort to fight against Antisemitism. Our involvement in the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance has special importance at a time when Holocaust denial is spreading."* Today, at the plenary meeting of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, the EU Coordinator on Combatting Antisemitism will officially accept the role. As a result, the Commission will represent the EU in this body, which provides expertise on Holocaust denial, distortion or Antisemitism. It will give the Commission access to the expertise of International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Working Groups on education, particularly on key challenges like multi-cultural and multi-religious classrooms and inclusive remembrance. More information on the Commission's work on combatting Antisemitism can be found online [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

### **Mergers: Commission opens in-depth investigation into Nidec's proposed acquisition of Whirlpool's refrigeration compressor business**

The European Commission has opened an in-depth investigation to assess Nidec's proposed acquisition of Embraco, the compressor business of Whirlpool, under the EU Merger Regulation. Nidec and Embraco are among the leading suppliers worldwide and in the European Economic Area (EEA) for variable speed compressors used in household compressors. They are also the two leading suppliers of fixed and variable speed compressors for light commercial applications, at both global and EEA level. The Commission's initial market investigation identified the following main concerns: (a) for variable speed compressors used in household applications, the elimination of competition between Nidec and Embraco could lead to higher prices and less choice; (b) for both fixed and variable speed compressors used in light commercial applications, the elimination of competition between Nidec and Embraco could lead to higher prices and less choice. Nidec submitted commitments in order to address the competition concerns identified by the Commission. Having tested these commitments with market players, the Commission concluded that they were insufficient to remove the concerns raised. The Commission will now carry out an in-depth investigation into the effects of this transaction to determine whether its preliminary competition

concerns are confirmed. Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *“Refrigeration compressors are used not only in commercial applications but also in our homes, in fridges and freezers. This industry is already highly concentrated, therefore the Commission will closely analyse the impact on competition of Nidec’s proposed acquisition of Embraco, to ensure their customers and final consumers are not harmed due to higher prices or less choice.”* The full press release is available in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of a Mexican toll road concessionaire by CPPIB, OTPP and IDEAL**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of Concesionaria Autopista Guadalajara-Tepic, S.A. de C.V. (CAGT), of Mexico by Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) and Ontario Teachers’ Pension Plan Board (OTPP), both of Canada, together with its current parent Promotora del Desarrollo de América Latina, S.A. de C.V. (IDEAL), of Mexico. CAGT holds the concession for the development, maintenance, operation and exploitation of toll roads in Mexico. CPPIB and OTTP both manage and invest pension plan assets, while IDEAL manages and operates a portfolio of infrastructure assets in Mexico and in Panama. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns in the European Economic Area, because CAGT is only active in Mexico. 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.9165](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

### **Drones: Commission puts forward safe and smart mobility solutions for tomorrow**

The European Commission, European and national authorities together with the industry adopted the [“Drones Amsterdam Declaration”](#) to advance safe, secure and green drone operations in Europe. The Declaration stresses that Europe should come up with concrete smart mobility solutions that integrate aviation in wider transport policy. These solutions should also support automated drone operations over longer distances. The Commission and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) reiterated their readiness to help Member States to implement the [drone regulation](#). Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** said: *“I am delighted to see that smart mobility solutions are becoming reality. All partners are on board to ensure safe, secure, green and quiet drone operations. Our U-space system will connect all drones flying in the air, which in turn makes them visible for authorities and citizens. The EU’s U-space Demonstrator Network will be instrumental in the development process.”* You can find more information on the European Network of U-space Demonstrators [here](#). If you want to know more about what the Commission is doing on drone operations in Europe, you can visit [here](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Stephan Meder – Tel.: +32 229 1 39 17)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **Commissioner Avramopoulos holds Citizen's Dialogue in Komotini, Greece**

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship, Dimitris **Avramopoulos** is in Komotini, Greece today to take part in a Citizen's Dialogue. Discussions will focus on EU migration, borders and security policy as well as on questions relating to the future of Europe. More information on today's event in Komotini is available [here](#). (For more information: *Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Markus Lammert – Tel.: +32 229 80423*)

### **Commissioner Moscovici attends G20 meeting of Finance Ministers in Buenos Aires, Argentina**

Pierre **Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, will attend today's [G20 meeting of Finance Ministers](#) in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This is the fourth meeting of the G20 Finance Ministers in 2018 and will be used to prepare the G20 Leaders' Summit, which will begin tomorrow, Friday, 1 December 2018. Commissioner Moscovici will participate in a forum on "The European Union's contribution to long term sustainable investing". (For more information: *Annika Breidhardt – +32 229 56153; Johannes Bahrke – +32 229 58615; Patrick McCullough – Tel.: +32 229 87183; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976*)

### **Commissioner Stylianides in Geneva on 29/30 November**

Today Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** speaks at the [109<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Organisation for Migration \(IOM\) Council](#) in Geneva, to underline the EU's commitment to help internally displaced people globally. The Commissioner will also open a photo exhibition on Syria showcasing the EU's assistance to more than 5.5 million Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries and in Europe. The Commissioner meets with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr Filippo Grandi; Director General of the International Organisation for Migration, Mr António Vitorino; the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr Peter Maurer; and the Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Mr As Sy. The Commissioner also meets the President of the World Economic Forum, Mr Børge Brende, to discuss digital solutions for humanitarian aid delivery. The Commissioner will also raise awareness on Education in Emergencies during a [dedicated event at the Geneva Graduate Institute](#) together with Mr Grandi; Chief Executive Officer Mrs Shireen Yacoub of Edraak, an online learning platform of the Queen Rania Foundation; Chief Executive Officer of Save the Children UK, Mr Kevin Watkins; and Director of UNICEF's Geneva Office of Emergency Programmes, Mr Sikander Khan. (For more information: *Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140*)

## Commissioner Jourová to open High-Level Conference on Effective Justice Systems in Vienna, Austria

Tomorrow, Věra **Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, and Dr. Josef Moser, Federal Minister of Constitutional Affairs, Reforms, Deregulation and Justice, will open the Conference on the effectiveness of justice systems in Vienna, Austria, co-organised by the Commission and the Austrian Presidency. In order to ensure that the reforms of the justice systems comply with EU law, European standards on rule of law and judicial independence, the conference looks in particular at two very topical issues: the quality of justice systems and their economic benefits, as well as the digitalisation of the judiciary. Participants, among them the President of the European Court of Justice, Koen Lenaerts and representatives of the Venice Commission and of the World Bank, will discuss how to improve the justice systems and examine possible future actions. The independence, quality and efficiency of justice systems are crucial for upholding the values upon which the EU is founded, for the implementation of EU law, for mutual trust, and for an investment-friendly environment. To help Member States, the Commission has been monitoring the effectiveness of justice systems in Member States with the [EU Justice Scoreboard](#) since 2013. More information about tomorrow's conference can be found [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

## “The #EUROat20: an extraordinary journey” event on 3 December

As the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the euro approaches, the European Commission will mark the singly currency's extraordinary journey with an [event on 3 December](#) in Brussels, at Bibliothèque Solvay. Among the speakers at the event are European Commission Vice-President Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Commissioner Pierre **Moscovici**, former President of the European Central Bank Jean-Claude Trichet, Chair of the Supervisory Board of the Single Supervisory Mechanism at the ECB Danièle Nouy and Spanish Minister for Economy and Business Nadia Calviño. The event will launch an interinstitutional campaign to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the euro and will be web-streamed on the [event webpage](#) and by [EbS](#) and tweeted live by @ecfin with the hashtag #EUROat20. (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229-56153; Annikky Lamp – Tel.: +32 229 56151; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

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

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**[DiscoverEU: 12,000 travel passes](#)**

# available for 18-year-olds to explore Europe in 2019

This follows the successful first round which gave 15,000 young people the opportunity to travel around Europe between July and October 2018. Many of them participated in the events taking place during the [European Year of Cultural Heritage](#).

Commissioner Tibor **Navracsics**, responsible for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *“It is great to see that young people are embracing this new opportunity to explore European cultures and traditions, feel what European diversity means and to make friends they would have not met otherwise. The first round showed that young people gain self-confidence and skills, such as taking initiative and speaking other languages. DiscoverEU is about much more than travelling, it is about learning for life.”*

## **Who can apply and how?**

Any EU citizen born between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2000 will be able to [apply](#) for this round.

Those interested in taking part can apply via the [European Youth Portal](#) where they will need to register and share their travel plans. Applicants will be selected based on their replies to a quiz of five multiple-choice questions linked to European culture and diversity, EU initiatives targeting young people, the upcoming European Parliament elections and an additional question on a topic related to the second round.

Successful applicants can travel between 15 April and 31 October 2019 for between 1 and 30 days.

For this round the Commission encourages particularly people who have special needs or face social challenges to apply. For people with special needs, the Commission will put information and tips at their disposal and cover the necessary costs of special assistance (for example an accompanying person or a guide dog for visually impaired participants).

Successful applicants can travel alone or in a group of up to five people (all 18-year-olds). As a general rule they will travel by rail. However, to ensure wide access across the continent, participants can also use alternative modes of transport, such as buses or ferries, or, exceptionally, planes where necessary. This will ensure that young people living in remote areas or on islands which are part of the EU will also have a chance to take part.

Every EU Member State has been allocated a number of travel passes, based on the share of its country's population compared to the overall population of the European Union.

Background

DiscoverEU was launched in June 2018 with a budget of €12 million. So far, it has given more than 15,000 young people the opportunity to travel around Europe. The aim is to create fresh opportunities for them to explore the continent's rich cultural heritage, get to know other people, learn from other cultures and experience what it feels like to be European.

Feedback from participants is positive. For many, it was the first time they travelled without parents or other adults, and the majority indicated that they had become more independent as a result. They also say that the DiscoverEU experience has given them a better understanding of other cultures and of European history. They feel that it has also improved their foreign language skills. Two thirds said that they would not have been able to finance their travel pass without DiscoverEU.

The European Commission proposed €700 million for DiscoverEU under the future [Erasmus](#) programme in the EU's next long-term budget (2021-2027). If the European Parliament and the Council agree to this proposal, an additional 1.5 million 18-year-olds would be able to travel between 2021 and 2027.

For more information

Information is available on the [European Youth Portal](#) as well as on the [European Youth Facebook page](#) and the [European Youth Twitter account](#).

[Q&A 2<sup>nd</sup> round of DiscoverEU](#)

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## [EU Report: reinforcing the strong and solid EU-Jordan partnership](#)

This is the conclusion drawn by a [report](#) released today on the partnership between the EU and Jordan for the period from May 2017 to May 2018.

High Representative/Vice-President, Federica **Mogherini** said: *“Jordan is a strong partner for the EU, bilaterally and on the regional scene. It plays a vital role in the region and we value enormously the unique wisdom and balance the country and its people show. We have always been supporting them, including their internal, domestic work, with all possible means at our disposal, including economic and financial means. And we will continue to be at their side.”*

Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes **Hahn** added: *“This report shows how strong our relations are. The EU financial support to Jordan since 2011 has surpassed €2 billion and I can confirm that the EU will keep working with Jordan to strengthen its resilience by creating opportunities, promoting entrepreneurship, to generate economic growth and attracting foreign investors. We commend Jordan making an*

*incredible contribution in hosting so many Syrian refugees; our support will continue.*“

The joint report highlights common efforts undertaken in the framework of the [Partnership Priorities and the Compact](#) adopted in 2016, such as promoting stability and security, countering terrorism, fostering macroeconomic stability and knowledge-based growth, job creation, trade, education, strengthening democratic governance, the rule of law and human rights.

As a key partner for the EU in a turbulent region impacted by the Syrian crisis, Jordan demonstrated firm commitment to political and economic reforms, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The EU's commitment vis-à-vis Jordan was expressed by regular political dialogue and financial assistance throughout the reporting period. A number of high-level meetings with the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini and the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn further deepened the close relations between the EU and Jordan.

Since 2011, the EU mobilised more than €2 billion in financial assistance to Jordan, including almost €800 million for bilateral cooperation assistance and €1.2 billion of additional assistance to help the country cope with the consequences of the Syrian crisis. The latter includes humanitarian assistance, together with longer-term resilience and development support in areas such as education, livelihoods, water, sanitation and health, as well as macro-financial assistance addressed to Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities.

The Second [Brussels Conference](#) on 'Supporting the Future of Syria and the region' on 24-25 April 2018 which the EU hosted, gathered further EU support for Jordan in hosting Syrian refugees, with €89 million for 2018.

Also work continues on boosting EU-Jordan trade relations and the first tranche of €100 million of the second EU Macro-Financial Assistance programme was made available to Jordan in October 2017.

The report concluded that in the future, continued EU support in the form of policy dialogue, financial assistance and specific projects will contribute towards a secure, democratic and economically strong Jordan. In particular, EU assistance in carrying out political and economic reforms will strengthen the country's sustainable and inclusive development, also bearing in mind Jordan's huge efforts in hosting Syrian refugees. Support on border security and counter-terrorism issues will also maintain and boost confidence in the country.

#### **For more information**

[Report on EU-Jordan relations in the framework of the revised ENP \(2017-2018\)](#)

[EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities and Compact](#)

## [EU provides humanitarian aid for refugees and migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

This additional funding brings EU humanitarian assistance in the Western Balkans to €31 million since the start of the refugee crisis in 2015, including €2 million for Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2018.

*“Refugees and migrants continue to arrive in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU is committed to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need, supporting the efforts of national and local authorities. Our humanitarian aid will provide food, water, emergency shelter, sanitation, health care and warm clothing”* said Christos **Stylianides**, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management.

EU’s humanitarian assistance is provided in locations such as Bihac, Velika Kladusa and Sarajevo.

### **Background**

Over 22,000 refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants have arrived in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2018, of which around 4000 are currently in need of humanitarian assistance. Thanks to EU funding, most of the persons of concern are accommodated in facilities in Bihac, Velika Kladusa and near Sarajevo. Additional accommodation is however urgently needed.

The short-term emergency assistance is complemented by a mid-term response amounting to €7.2 million. It aims to strengthen the country’s migration management capacities and provide adequate accommodation and basic services as well as provide education.

In May 2018, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina officially requested assistance from the EU. The European Commission continues to monitor the situation and do everything it can to improve the humanitarian situation on the ground. It is crucial that the national and local authorities provide refugees and migrants with proper accommodation.

### **For More Information**

[Factsheet – EU humanitarian aid in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)