

Main topics and media events 25 November – 9 December 2018

Press office

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Overview of the main subjects to be discussed at meetings of the Council of the EU over the next two weeks.

Special meeting of the European Council (Article 50), Sunday 25 November 2018

EU27 leaders will meet to endorse the Brexit withdrawal agreement and approve the political declaration on future.

Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council, Monday 26 November 2018

Ministers are expected to reach a partial general approach on a proposal for a Regulation on the European Solidarity Corps 2021-2027 and on a Regulation on the Erasmus programme. On Tuesday 27, ministers will focus on the Creative Europe programme, and on how to tackle the spread of disinformation online. They will also hold a debate on major sporting events as drivers for innovation in the presence of a guest speaker, Martin Kallen, CEO of UEFA events.

Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council, Tuesday 27 November 2018

Ministers will focus on the Creative Europe programme, and on how to tackle the spread of disinformation online. They will also hold a debate on major sporting events as drivers for innovation in the presence of a guest speaker, Martin Kallen, CEO of UEFA events.

Foreign Affairs Council (Development), Monday 26 November 2018

Development ministers will discuss the Africa-Europe alliance for sustainable investment and jobs, the future financial architecture for sustainable development and neighbourhood, and gender and human rights issues.

Competitiveness Council, Thursday 29 November 2018

The Competitiveness Council is expected to agree on general approaches on the draft regulations on platforms to business, the single market programme (partial general approach) and the general safety of vehicles. It will also adopt conclusions on the future EU industrial policy strategy and will exchange views on the future of the single market.

Competitiveness Council, Friday 30 November 2018

The Council will take stock of progress so far on the proposed EU space

programme. It will be invited to adopt a partial general approach on the Horizon Europe (framework programme) and take stock of progress on the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe. The Council will also adopt conclusions on the European Research Area.

General Affairs Council on cohesion, Friday 30 November 2018

The Council will hold a policy debate on the legislative package for cohesion policy after 2020.

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Transport), Monday 3 December 2018

The Council will aim for a general approach on a number of proposals including key rules for the road transport sector, and for a partial general approach on the proposal on the Connected Europe Facility (CEF). The proposals to stop seasonal time changes and update rail passenger rights will be the topic of a progress report.

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Telecommunication), Tuesday 4 December 2018

The Council will aim to agree on a partial general approach on the proposed Digital Europe programme. It will assess progress and exchange views on a draft regulation on ePrivacy. It will also take stock of progress on a proposal to establish a European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre and a Network of National Coordination Centres.

Economic and Financial Affairs Council, Tuesday 4 December 2018

The Council will discuss the digital services tax, take stock of progress on completing the banking union and adopt an action plan on tackling anti-money laundering.

Justice and Home Affairs Council (Home), Thursday 6 December 2018

Home Affairs ministers are expected to discuss the European Border and Coast Guard, the prevention of dissemination of terrorist content online and the Justice and Home Affairs priorities for the next Multiannual Financial Framework.

Justice and Home Affairs Council (Justice), Friday 7 December 2018

Justice ministers are expected to reach agreement on a number of files, including the e-evidence regulation, the sales of goods directive and the so-called Brussels IIa regulation on parental responsibility in cross border cases.

Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council, Thursday 6 December 2018

Ministers will aim at reaching a general approach on a proposal for a regulation establishing a European Labour Authority and a proposal for a

Directive on carcinogens or mutagens at work (third batch) with the aim of reaching a general approach on both proposals. They will also hold a policy debate on the European semester 2019.

Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council, Friday 7 December 2018

Ministers will focus on ways to strengthen the cooperation against vaccine preventable diseases and will hold an exchange of views on tackling vaccine hesitancy at national and EU level.

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Weekly schedule of President Donald Tusk

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[Network of five organised crime groups disrupted in Romania](#)

Successful action day with Eurojust's support

23 November 2018

Yesterday, the Romanian Territorial Office of the Directorate for Investigation of Organised Crime of Vâlcea and judicial police officers of the Vâlcea Organised Crime Service dismantled a network of five organised crime groups (OCGs) involved in cybercrime, money laundering and computer fraud in Romania and various other States. Since January 2018, Eurojust has supported the national authorities by swiftly executing requests for cooperation, by accelerating the real-time exchange of information, and by providing regular updates on the case.

✘The Romanian judicial and law enforcement authorities identified 93 suspects and brought them before the Romanian case prosecutor for further measures. In addition, 51 house searches were carried out in the counties of Vâlcea, Mureş, Bacău, Argeş, Olt, Ilfov, Giurgiu, Suceava and in Bucharest.

Starting in spring 2017, the suspects managed to gain systematic control of the financial flows of 200 bank accounts that were fraudulently opened in Romania, nine other European States and Mexico. The suspected fraudsters used the compromised bank accounts and computer systems to defraud **more than 500 people** of a **total amount of € 3 million**.

The network used multiple modi operandi, but the criminal activity of each of the five OCGs revealed a common organisational pattern, including three levels: level 1 was made up of coordinators who unlawfully obtained data from bank accounts opened in different States and shared those data with their level 2 accomplices. They then transferred approximately 30% of those bank accounts to other accounts owned by level 2 members. Level 2 members are the actual fraudsters who used the bank accounts opened abroad to victimise people and profit from the agreed share of money that had been transferred to their accounts by the level 1 criminals. The members of level 3 were tasked with opening bank accounts in Romania and other States, which they made

available to level 2 criminals to illegally transfer money from foreign accounts to their own accounts.

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Major step against organised crime in Western Balkans

First Liaison Prosecutor for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at Eurojust

23 November 2018

On 12 November 2018, Ms Lenche Ristoska took up her duties as the first Liaison Prosecutor for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM) at Eurojust. Her appointment is an important contribution to the growing relationship between the European Union and the Western Balkan region in the area of criminal law.

Since 2008, Eurojust has established an increasingly strong framework for structural judicial cooperation in the fight against serious cross-border crime between EU Member States and the Western Balkan States. Cooperation agreements, which unlock the possibility of safe and efficient exchange of judicial information and sharing of evidence, have been concluded with Albania, Montenegro and fYROM. The agreements also allow for the partner States to take part in, and benefit from, all the practical cooperation tools offered through Eurojust to prosecute serious, transnational crime cases.

Since the conclusion of the cooperation agreement with fYROM in 2008, prosecutors from various EU Member States and fYROM have worked together in a growing number of cases, including in investigations of swindling and fraud, drug trafficking and migrant smuggling.



The cooperation agreement also provides for the appointment of a Liaison Prosecutor to Eurojust. Ms Ristoska, a prosecutor from the Special Public Prosecutors' Office, is the second Liaison Prosecutor from a Western Balkan State at Eurojust after the arrival of the Liaison Prosecutor for Montenegro earlier this year. Liaison Prosecutors work side by side with magistrates from the EU Member States and play an important role in facilitating ongoing investigations of serious cross-border organised crime.

Upon her arrival, Ms Ristoska said: *'It is a great honour and privilege to be the first Liaison Prosecutor for my country at Eurojust. As soon as I joined the Eurojust family, I witnessed the inspiring working atmosphere and deep*

commitment of all employees. I strongly believe that my country's presence at Eurojust will contribute to enhancing international cooperation in the fight against transnational organised crime. I am also confident that this will be beneficial not only for my country but also for all countries with which international cooperation exists or will be established.'

✘ Ms Lenche Ristoska is warmly welcomed by Mr Ladislav Hamran, President of Eurojust. Photos © Eurojust

Quick facts

Ms Ristoska graduated with honours from the Law Faculty of the St Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje and obtained a degree in law. In 2008, she passed her Bar Examination. Currently, she is working on her master thesis in the area of seizure of illegally gained assets.

In 2013, Ms Ristoska was appointed as public prosecutor at the Primary Public Prosecutor's Office of Skopje, after graduating from the Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors. In the Primary Public Prosecutor's Office of Skopje, she worked in the Department for International Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, executing incoming mutual legal assistance (MLA) requests, as well as in the Department for Drugs, Sexual and Violent Crimes.

In November 2015, she was appointed as prosecutor to the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, where she was in charge of matters of international cooperation and MLA requests. She also conducted national criminal investigations into complex cases of illegal interception of communications, abuse of official powers, corruption, illegal political party financing and money laundering.

Background

The negotiation of cooperation agreements between Eurojust and Western Balkan States and the appointment of Liaison Prosecutors to Eurojust are facilitated through the [Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance 2014-2020 \(IPA II Project\)](#) 'Countering Serious Crime in the Western Balkans', which fosters structural judicial cooperation between EU Member States and the Western Balkan States. The project is jointly funded by the European Union, Germany and Italy.

More information

[Q & A on Eurojust's cooperation with Albania and the Western Balkans](#)