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Supporting refugees in Greece: €180 million in emergency support

The European Commission has announced new funding of €180 million for aid projects in Greece, including to scale up the flagship [‘Emergency Support to Integration & Accommodation’ \(ESTIA\)](#) programme which helps get refugees into urban accommodation and out of camps and provides them with regular cash assistance. The funding comes as Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** met today with Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras in Athens. *“Our humanitarian programmes for refugees in Greece are a clear and loud signal of European solidarity. We continue to deliver on our strong commitment to help refugees in Greece live more secure, normal and dignified lives, and facilitate their integration into the local economy and society. Our ESTIA programme is achieving real results to change people’s lives for the better. I pay special tribute to the Greek citizens and mayors who have welcomed refugees in their municipalities with great empathy and care,”* said Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides**. Launched in July 2017 with the UN Refugee Agency, ESTIA is the biggest EU aid operation in the country and works in line with the Greek government’s ‘out of camps’ policy. So far it has created more than 23,000 urban accommodation places and set up a cash assistance scheme serving more than 41,000 refugees and asylum seekers. Six other contracts have been signed with NGOs to address pressing humanitarian needs. Overall, the European Commission has mobilised over €1.5 billion of support for Greece to help manage the humanitarian situation, migration and the external borders, through various kinds of funding. The press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

EU pledges €107.5 million to address urgent needs of Yemeni civilians

As the crisis in Yemen continues to worsen, the European Union has pledged €107.5 million in new funding for 2018 to help civilians most in need across the country. The announcement was made at the [High Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen](#) held in Geneva today, bringing total EU funding to Yemen to €438.2 million since the beginning of the crisis in 2015. Speaking at the event in Geneva today, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos **Stylianides** said: *“The European Union is committed to assist those affected by the conflict in Yemen. To save lives on the ground, all parties to the conflict must ensure safe, unhindered and continuous humanitarian access to all affected communities in Yemen. Facilitating commercial imports through all ports of Yemen is essential. A political solution is a matter of urgency to bring an end to this conflict which has caused millions to suffer.”* Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica** added: *“Yemen continues to suffer from the devastating effects of conflict. We stand shoulder to shoulder with the Yemeni people. The EU will help people survive and also support them on a path to resilience, recovery and self-reliance. We will support vulnerable communities and the internally displaced in particular, equipping them with*

sustainable livelihood tools to weather the current crisis.” Read the full press release [here](#). (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

New rules guaranteeing the right to presumption of innocence and the right to be present at trial apply since 1 April

New EU rules guaranteeing that anyone accused or suspected of a crime is innocent until proven guilty apply since Sunday 1 April. The rules will also better protect peoples’ right to remain silent and right to be present at their trial. It will ensure people across the EU always benefit from these procedural rights, which are currently not protected in the same way in every Member State. Commissioner Věra **Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, said: “9 million people face criminal proceedings across the EU every year. Presumption of innocence is a fundamental right and must be respected in practice everywhere in Europe. Every citizen must always be guaranteed a fair trial. I call on all Member States to implement the rules as quickly as possible.” The directive ensures that public authorities and judicial decisions are prohibited from making any public references to guilt, before the person is proven guilty. It also gives people the right to remain silent. In case the right to be present at trial is breached, people have the right to a new trial. This [directive](#) is part of a package of six laws providing common minimum standards on procedural rights of suspects and accused persons in criminal proceedings. The procedural rights package ensures people have common rights whether they are accused or suspected in their home country or elsewhere in the EU, and allows for better judicial cooperation across the EU. More information on [procedural rights](#) is available online and in the [factsheet](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: +32 229 67094)

La ville grecque de Florina bénéficie d’un chauffage à haut rendement énergétique grâce à la politique de cohésion

Florina, dans la région grecque de la Macédoine occidentale, va recevoir plus de 30 millions d’euros du Fonds européen de développement régional ([FEDER](#)) pour achever la construction d’un système à énergie thermique, pour le chauffage et l’eau chaude qui auraient autrement été alimentés par la combustion de pétrole. Plus de 2 500 bâtiments, notamment résidentiels, sont concernés par ces travaux. La Commissaire à la politique régionale Corina **Crețu** a commenté: “Ce projet financé par l’UE aura des bénéfices très concrets pour les habitants de Florina; un système de chauffage moderne et efficace et une facture d’électricité allégée!” Plus d’information sur les fonds européens [en Grèce](#) sont disponibles sur la plateforme Cohésion Open Data. (Pour plus d’information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of TDC by Macquarie Group

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of TDC of Denmark by the Macquarie Group of Australia via DK Telekommunikation ApS. TDC provides communications as well as television and home entertainment solutions primarily to residential and business markets in

Denmark and Norway. Macquarie Group is a global provider of banking, financial, advisory, investment and funds management services listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because there are no horizontal overlaps or vertical relationships between the activities of the companies. 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.8843](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control of Monnet by Apollo and JSW

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Monnet Ispat and Energy Limited (“Monnet”) by JSW Steel Limited, both of India, and Apollo Capital Management L.P. of the US. Monnet is active in mining and in the manufacture and sale of primary steel and sponge iron, steel and ferro-alloys. JSW is active in mining and in the manufacturing and sale of iron and steel products in India and abroad. Apollo is a private equity firm. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns given that Monnet has no, or negligible, actual or foreseen activities within the European Economic Area. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.8840](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition by PPF of sole control over Skoda Transportation, VUKV, Skoda Investment, Bammer Trade , JK and Satacoto

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed acquisition of sole control over Skoda Transportation a.s., VUKV a.s., Skoda Investment a.s. and Bammer Trade a.s., all four of the Czech Republic, Jokiaura Kakkonen (“JK”) of Finland, and Satacoto Ltd. of Cyprus, by PPF Group N.V. of the Netherlands. Skoda Transportation is engaged in the production, development, assembly, reconstruction and repairs of railway and subway vehicles, trams, trolleybuses and electric buses, and related services. VUKV is active in the development, research and testing of rail vehicles and their parts, and related services. Skoda Investment is involved in the renting of property and the granting of licences for the SKODA trademark and is also active, via its subsidiaries, in photovoltaic power generation, IT and telecommunications technology. Bammer Trade is involved in the repair of public transportation vehicles. JK is engaged in the renting of production facilities. Satacoto is a holding company which is active, via its subsidiary, in the production of electric motors and generators, and the renting of real estate. PPF is a multinational finance and investment group focusing on financial services, consumer finance, telecommunications, biotechnologies, retail services, real estate and agriculture. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns given the negligible overlaps between the companies' activities in the

European Economic Area. 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.8780](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Saeta by Brookfield Group

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Saeta Yield, S.A. of Spain by Brookfield Asset Management Inc. (“Brookfield Group”) of Canada. Saeta Yield is active in the generation and wholesale supply of renewable energy. Brookfield Group operates a diversified portfolio of assets that generate electricity from renewable sources, which consist of hydroelectric and wind power facilities in North America, Colombia, Brazil, Uruguay and Europe. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the very limited overlaps between the activities of Brookfield Group and Saeta. 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.8834](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

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

[Summary of Conclusions Board of Supervisors Conference call 1 March 2018](#)

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[Summary of Conclusions Board of Supervisors meeting 31 January 2018](#)

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Six other contracts have been signed with the Danish Refugee Council, Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund, Médecins du Monde, the Spanish Red Cross, as well as Greek NGOs METAdrasi and Smile of the Child to address pressing humanitarian needs in Greece, including shelter, primary health care, psycho-social support, improved hygiene conditions, non-formal education, the provision of interpretation for health and protection.

Overall, the European Commission has made available over €1.5 billion of support for Greece to help manage the humanitarian situation, migration and the external borders, through various kinds of funding.

Background

EU emergency support in Greece

In urgent and exceptional circumstances such as the increased influx of refugees in Europe, the European Commission can fund humanitarian aid for people in need within the EU territory through the Emergency Support Instrument, activated for the first time in March 2016. Overall EU humanitarian assistance disbursed so far to Greece through this instrument amounts to €605.3 million.

ESTIA programme with the UNHCR

Today's new funding for ESTIA will allow the programme to set up 27, 000 places in urban settings by the end of 2018. The bulk of the rented apartments will be in cities and towns on the Greek mainland while up to 2,000 places will be located on the Greek islands. Several municipalities in Greece are also part of this scheme.

The ESTIA cash assistance scheme aims to reach 45,000 people by mid-2018. Refugees and asylum seekers receive pre-defined monthly cash allocations through a dedicated card. This provides choice and enables them to meet their basic needs with dignity, while supporting the local economy. Making cash assistance more efficient remains a priority for the EU.

The Commission's humanitarian support complements other EU funding instruments which have already been providing significant financial resources for assistance in Greece such as the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund, the European Fund for the Most Deprived, and the EU Health Programme. It is also complementary to the voluntary offers for material assistance initially provided by states participating in the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

For More Information

[Factsheet 'Greece: Response to the Refugee Crisis'](#)

20 hackers arrested in EUR 1 million bank phishing scam

□Criminals faked e-mails from tax authorities to defraud bank customers across Italy and Romania out of EUR 1 million

29 March 2018

Joint Eurojust/Europol press release

A two-year long cybercrime investigation between the Romanian Directorate for Investigating Organised Crime and terrorism – Central Structure, Romanian National Police, the Prosecution Office of Milan and the Italian National Police, with the support of Eurojust, Europol and its Joint Cybercrime Action Taskforce, has led to the arrest of 20 suspects in a series of coordinated raids on 28 March. Nine individuals were detained in Romania and 11 were arrested in Italy for banking fraud that netted EUR 1 million from hundreds of customers of two major banking institutions. The Romanian authorities have conducted 15 house searches involving 120 Romanian police officers, while the Italian authorities carried out 9 home and computer searches, involving more

than 100 Italian police officers. Documents, IT devices, drugs and other materials were seized in Romania and Italy.

The organised crime group (OCG), comprised of Romanian and Italian nationals, used spear phishing e-mails impersonating tax authorities to harvest the online banking credentials of their victims.

While the most common phishing scams generate millions of generic e-mails, spear phishing e-mails are personally addressed to targeted stakeholders with content to make them appear to be sent from a reputable source, such as a bank. Recipients are encouraged to click on a link, which will lead to a fake version of a legitimate website from which their account or contact details can be stolen.

The investigation, initiated in 2016, uncovered how the criminals used the stolen online banking credentials to surreptitiously transfer money from the victims' accounts into accounts under their control, and from there withdrew the money from ATMs in Romania with credit/debit cards linked to the criminal accounts.

The highly organised OCG pursued its criminal activity using encrypted chat applications. It established its power by applying intimidating and punitive methods towards affiliates and competitors. The OCG is also suspected of money laundering, drug and human trafficking, prostitution and participation in a criminal organisation.

During the investigation, Europol supported the case by providing tailored intelligence analysis and expertise to the investigators and deploying mobile offices on the action day to both countries. Several coordination and operational meetings took place prior to the action at Eurojust and Europol.

Eurojust ensured close cooperation and coordination among the prosecuting and investigating authorities in both Romania and Italy. During two coordination meetings held at Eurojust in March and October 2017, decisions were taken to facilitate the execution of coordinated actions with simultaneous arrests and searches, prevent a conflict of jurisdiction (ne bis in idem issue), continue the parallel investigations and exchange of information, and organise a coordinated action day. On 28 March, a coordination centre was set up at Eurojust, facilitating the exchange of information between the involved countries and providing a final global overview of the results.

Due to the demanding investigative measures run on an international level, the Romanian and Italian judicial authorities requested the establishment of a joint investigation team (JIT), which was set up in March 2017 between Italy and Romania with the assistance of Eurojust. Eurojust also facilitated the funding process of the JIT. The JIT allowed for efficient cooperation and coordination, including the continued exchange of information and evidence between Italy and Romania.