

Main topics and media events 6 – 19 November 2017

Press contacts

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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.

Agriculture and Fisheries Council, 6 November 2017

The agriculture and fisheries Council will discuss the sustainable use of pesticides, trade-related agricultural issues and sustainable soil management.

Economic and Financial Affairs Council, 7 November 2017

The Council will be called on to agree on new VAT rules for e-commerce, and will discuss proposals to strengthen financial supervision. The Court of Auditors will present its report on implementation of the 2016 EU budget.

Foreign Affairs Council (Trade), 10 November 2017

The Council will take stock of the preparations ahead of the WTO ministerial meeting in Buenos Aires on 10-13 December. Ministers will also discuss the state of play of negotiations with Mexico and Mercosur.

Foreign Affairs Council (including Defence), 13 November 2017

The Foreign Affairs Council will discuss Africa-EU relations and EU strategic communications. Over lunch, foreign ministers will be joined by defence ministers to discuss security and defence. The Council will adopt conclusions on security and defence. Defence ministers will then discuss EU-NATO cooperation with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg. The European Defence Agency's steering board meeting with the Defence ministers will be held after the Foreign Affairs Council (defence).

In the margins of the Foreign Affairs Council, those member states who intend to join the permanent structured cooperation (PESCO) are expected to jointly sign the notification letter addressed to the Council and the High Representative.

General Affairs Council (Cohesion policy), 15 November 2017

The Council will be updated on ongoing work to amend the Common Provisions Regulation. It will also discuss on the future of Cohesion Policy post 2020.

Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Budget), 17 November 2017

The Council will prepare negotiations with the European Parliament on the EU's general budget for 2018. The negotiations will be held at a conciliation committee meeting the same day.

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Weekly schedule of President Donald Tusk

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Reopening of the Europa building

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Daily News 06 / 11 / 2017

EU expects solid progress on Paris Agreement implementation at UN climate conference in Bonn

The EU expects this year's UN climate conference (COP23) to reaffirm once again the international community's commitment to stepping up the global response to climate change and achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement. Following the entry into force of the historic agreement last year, elaborating its implementing guidelines is now a key focus. Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel **Arias Cañete** said: *"The Paris Agreement has set the direction of travel for the global transition to a modern low-carbon economy. The increasingly frequent and intense extreme weather events we are witnessing across the world are a stark reminder of the urgency of the challenges we face. Now is the time to translate ambition into action and speed up implementation. COP23 will be a key moment to ensure that we are on track to meet our first deadline: completing the Paris work programme by 2018."* This year's Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP23), presided over by Fiji, is taking place from 6-17 November 2017 in Bonn, Germany. The EU expects the conference to demonstrate clear progress on the development of the technical rules and guidelines for implementing the provisions of the Paris Agreement, for example on the transparency framework and the 5-year ambition cycle aimed at helping countries make progressively more ambitious contributions. The work programme is due to be adopted at the 2018 UN climate conference (COP24) in Katowice, Poland. Read entire [press release](#) and [MEMO](#). (For more information: Anna-Kaisa Iitkonen – Tel.: +32 229 56186; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)

Juncker Plan: new projects signed in France, Portugal and Romania worth €100 million

On Monday, the European Investment Bank (EIB) signed several new deals under the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the core of the Investment Plan for Europe. In France, it is providing €43 million to Artee to make 2,000 buildings more energy efficient in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region. In Romania, a deal with UniCredit will see an additional €50 million made available to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Finally, in Portugal the EIB signed a €10 million agreement with Science4You, a company which makes educational toys for children. Speaking at the signature of the agreement with Science4You in Lisbon, Carlos **Moedas**, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: *"It is very satisfying to see Portuguese companies making such good use of the European Fund for Strategic Investments, with Portugal currently ranked in the top 5 of EU countries in investment triggered relative to GDP. The deal signed today with Science4you shows the positive impact that the Juncker Plan is having on small and medium-sized enterprises across Europe. In the more immediate term, this project will create more than 300 jobs in Portugal. In the long term, by investing in our children's education in subjects related to science, technology, engineering and maths, we are developing the next generation of scientists and innovators."* (For full press releases on all of the projects see the [Investment Plan website](#) and for more information contact Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Siobhán Millbright – Tel.: +32 229 57361)

Preparation of the Eurogroup and ECOFIN meetings, 6-7 November 2017

Vice-President **Dombrovskis** and Commissioner **Moscovici** will represent the European Commission at today's Eurogroup. The ministers will hear from Danièle Nouy, Chair of the [European Central Bank's Supervisory Board](#), on banking supervision activities since last April and from Elke Koenig, Chair of the [Single Resolution Board](#) (SRB), on the SRB's ongoing activities and how the Single Resolution Fund (SRF) is being built up. Ministers will also hold a thematic discussion on jobs and growth, in particular investment into human capital with a focus on public spending in education. Continuing the meeting in an "inclusive format" open to 27 Member States, Eurogroup ministers will then discuss the possible steps towards the completion of the [Banking Union](#) as well as EU fiscal rules and future fiscal governance in the euro area. Here, the Commission will inform ministers of the main elements of its recent [Communication](#) on completing the Banking Union. Commissioner **Moscovici** will participate in the press conference following the meeting. At tomorrow's ECOFIN meetings, Vice-President **Dombrovskis**, Commissioner **Oettinger**, Commissioner **Thyssen**, Commissioner **Moscovici**, as well as Commissioner **Jourova** will represent the European Commission. Ministers will discuss the Commission's proposals [to make life easier when it comes to VAT](#) for businesses that sell goods online. Ministers will also take stock of the state of play of the common EU list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions, which should be agreed and published by the end of this year. On the financial services front, the Commission will present its [plans to reform the EU's financial supervisory architecture](#) and will inform ministers of the progress in the negotiations for [new European rules on business](#)

[insolvency](#). The [European Court of Auditors](#) will present its [2016 Annual Report](#) on the management of the EU budget, which Commissioner **Oettinger** will attend. Commissioner **Thyssen** will attend the meeting for the adoption of Council conclusions on EU Statistics and Commissioner **Jourová** will participate in the meeting on the [proposal on insolvency, restructuring and second chance](#). The Presidency and the Commission will report on the Washington G20 and International Monetary Fund (IMF) meetings. Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will participate in the press conference following the ECOFIN. (For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: [+32 229 56153](#); Patrick McCullough – Tel.: [+32 229 87183](#); Juliana Dahl – Tel.: [+32 229 59914](#))

Food waste: 3rd EU Platform delivers concrete results

On 7 November, the [EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste \(FLW\)](#) members will gather again to take stock of progress made in the implementation of the [Circular Economy Action Plan](#) and to discuss future actions to further strengthen the fight against food waste on the ground from farm to fork. Ahead of the meeting, Commissioner **Andriukaitis** said: *“The idea of creating a specific Platform is paying off. After less than one year since its establishment the Platform is fully operational and delivering concrete results: EU guidelines on food donation have been adopted as the result of the cooperation among Platform members. This will ease the donation of perfectly edible food that otherwise would have been waste. Advanced discussions on food waste quantification as well as the introduction of new digital tools to facilitate exchange of information and best practices are also among the achievements of the Platform. However we have no time for complacency in our fight against food waste. For this reason I will keep on encouraging Platform members to put all the necessary efforts to finalise our next mission: guidelines on the use of former foodstuffs and the work on better understanding of date marking.”* The Platform focusses on supporting members in taking effective action to prevent food waste by bringing together both public and private interests in order to foster cooperation amongst all key players in the food chain and accelerate the EU’s progress towards the global Sustainable Development Goal of halving food waste by 2030. The meeting will be web-streamed [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: [+32 229 91269](#); Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: [+32 229 87624](#))

State aid: Commission approves Belgian tax measures for maritime transport

The European Commission has approved under EU State aid rules the prolongation until end 2022 of various Belgian support measures for maritime transport. The Commission concluded that the Belgian scheme is in line with EU State aid rules, because it will provide incentives to maintain maritime jobs within the EU, whilst preserving competition within the EU Single Market. More specifically, it will encourage shipping companies to register their ships in Europe and thus commit to high social, environmental and safety standards. Belgium has also committed to a number of changes to its existing scheme to prevent any discrimination between shipping companies and

registries of different European Economic Area (EEA) States and to avoid undue competition distortions. The full press release is available [online](#).
(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

Eurostat: Septembre 2017 comparé à août 2017 –Les prix à la production industrielle en hausse de 0,6% dans la zone euro et dans l'UE28

En septembre 2017 par rapport à août 2017, les prix à la production industrielle ont augmenté de 0,6% tant dans la zone euro (ZE19) que dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En août 2017, les prix avaient crû de 0,3% dans la zone euro et de 0,4% dans l'UE28. En septembre 2017 par rapport à septembre 2016, les prix à la production industrielle ont progressé de 2,9% dans la zone euro et de 3,3% dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse est [en ligne ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commission supports deepening and integrating capital markets in the Baltics

Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, will today attend the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministers of Finance of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, to develop a regional capital market in the Baltic states. The agreement identifies areas of cooperation, and the three Member States commit to reforms that will increase the capacity of financial markets and bring economic growth. The European Commission's [Structural Reform Support Programme \(SRSP\)](#) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) will support this agreement, such as in the first project under the agreement, the creation of a legal framework for a pan-Baltic covered bond. Vice-President **Dombrovskis** said: "I welcome today's agreement – it is another step on the road to creating a Capital Markets Union. The Commission fully supports regional initiatives to facilitate cross-border investments and integrate Member States' capital markets. Our Structural Reform Support Service stands ready to step up its support for reforms that modernise economies, strengthen competitiveness, and encourage investment." The signature ceremony will take place [at 14:00 CET](#) in the margins of the Eurogroup meeting and a video recording will be available [here](#). Following the event, see the press release [here](#). (For more information: Annika Breidthardt: +32 229 56153; Juliana Dahl – Tel.: +32 229 59914)

Commissioner Malmström travels to Moldova

Trade Commissioner Cecilia **Malmström** is in Moldova today and tomorrow, to take

stock of the progress in trade relations since the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) became effective three years ago. During the visit, the Commissioner will discuss successes and challenges faced so far in the implementation of the trade agreement, meeting with President of Moldova Igor Dodon, Prime Minister Pavel Filip, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for the Economy Octavian Calmîc, Mr Andrian Candu, President of the Moldavian Parliament, as well as business support organisations and representatives of civil society. The Commissioner will also visit the premises of Monicol, a company which, thanks to the free trade area, has boosted its exports of fruits and nuts to the EU and created more jobs. The EU accounts for 66% of Moldova's exports and nearly half of its imports. Moldovan exports to the EU have increased by over 15% since the free trade area has been put in place in 2014, supporting jobs and growth in the country. For producers of juices and preserved fruit and vegetables, the DCFTA has boosted exports by up to 25%. For Moldovan wine, exports to the EU have almost doubled. Meanwhile, EU exports to Moldova have stabilised as the country's financial situation has improved. Footage and press material related to Commissioner Malmström's visit will be made available [here](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: + 32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel.: +32 229 51383)

Commissioner Navracsics in Lisbon to speak in the Portuguese Parliament

Today and tomorrow, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics**, will be in Lisbon for a series of high-level meetings and events. He will first join former [Erasmus](#) students for a discussion on the programme. The event is part of the celebrations of the [30th anniversary of the Erasmus programme](#) which are taking place across Europe throughout the year. The debate will be followed by meetings with Tiago Brandão Rodrigues, Portuguese Minister for Education, and Luís Filipe de Castro Mendes, Minister for Culture. On Tuesday, the Commissioner will speak at the annual public hearing organised by the Portuguese Parliament's European Affairs Committee on the Commission's Work Programme 2018. Finally, he will be at the Web Summit taking part in a panel discussion on "No-one left behind: the skills your children need to know". (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel: +32 229 56 184)

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

Two documentary films scoop the 2017 Healthy Workplaces Film Award

The joint winners of the best film on the subject of work are Lewis Wilcox for "*Before the bridge*" (USA) and Tuna Kaptan for "*Turtle shells*" (Germany). The awards were presented by the European Agency for Safety and Health at

Work (EU-OSHA) at the 60th International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film (DOK Leipzig).

Fast moving technological and social changes in the world affecting us all and our vision of the future of work.

The winning film "Before the bridge" by Lewis Wilcox raises awareness of how automation will affect the future of humanity. The jury commented on the film: 'Fast moving technological and social changes in the world affecting us all and our vision of the future of work'.

The second winner "Turtle shells" by Tuna Kaptan is a multi-perspective film, exploring the connections between animal, man and war. The jury thought that the film was *'a complex and poetic discussion of dramatic turmoil in the contemporary world: war, migration and cruelty, which synthesises the unexpected, including our relation to the animal world'.*

In addition, the jury gave a special mention to the film "Alien" by Morteza Atabaki (Turkey) about an old man working in a thread workshop.

EU-OSHA aims to foster discussion on the importance of occupational safety and health (OSH) in Europe. Through the creation and funding of the Healthy Workplaces Film Award, EU-OSHA hopes to build a library of films to raise awareness on OSH and to inspire directors to create more films on the subject of work, its changing nature and its effects on workers and their environment.

The directors share a prize of EUR 5 000 as well as DVD copies of their films. These DVDs will also be distributed to EU-OSHA's national focal points throughout Europe for screening, with subtitling as required. The screenings will aim to encourage debate on a variety of OSH topics, and new forms of work in particular; and to spread the message of the importance of safety and health at work to a wide audience.

The documentaries shortlisted for the award this year cover a range of work-related issues through thought-provoking and illuminating film-making: the struggles of small farmers in the UK, the dangers endured by workers in a high-altitude Bolivian mining camp and the dehumanising environment of a huge Indian textile factory.

Links: