

Daily News 31 / 10 / 2017

Employment: Report confirms effectiveness of EU Globalisation Adjustment Fund

Today the Commission has published its [report on the performance of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund \(EGF\) in 2015 and 2016](#). The report reaffirms the role of the Fund as a flagship demonstration of European solidarity within the limits of its set-up and budgetary availabilities, having helped close to 19,500 workers to adjust to changing trade patterns and consequences of the economic and financial crisis in that period. Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility Marianne **Thyssen** said: *"Today's results demonstrate the added value of the Globalisation Fund in helping redundant workers who have difficulties to find a new job. The assistance worth €70 million of the Globalisation Adjustment Fund has paid off: in 2015 and 2016, 9,072 assisted workers were re-employed, despite the challenging labour market situation these people faced. This year's tenth anniversary of the Fund marks it as a proof of European solidarity to workers falling victim to mass lay-offs caused by globalisation or the crisis."* 9,072 workers, or close to half of the workers who participated in the Globalisation Adjustment Fund measures, had found new jobs or were self-employed after one year, at the end of the implementation period of the measures. An additional 645 people were at that time in education or training to increase their future employability. Member States also reported that the personal situation, employability and self-confidence of the workers concerned had visibly improved thanks to the Globalisation Adjustment Fund assistance and services. More information can be found in this [press release](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094)

Eurostat: Septembre 2017 – Le taux de chômage à 8,9% dans la zone euro – À 7,5% dans l'UE28

Dans la zone euro (ZE19), le taux de chômage corrigé des variations saisonnières s'est établi à 8,9% en septembre 2017, en baisse par rapport au taux de 9,0% d'août 2017 et au taux de 9,9% de septembre 2016. Il s'agit du taux le plus faible enregistré dans la zone euro depuis janvier 2009. Dans l'UE28, le taux de chômage s'est établi à 7,5% en septembre 2017, stable par rapport à août 2017 et en baisse par rapport au taux de 8,4% de septembre 2016. Cela demeure le taux le plus faible enregistré dans l'UE28 depuis novembre 2008. Eurostat estime qu'en septembre 2017, 18,446 millions d'hommes et de femmes étaient au chômage dans l'UE28, dont 14,513 millions dans la zone euro. Par rapport à août 2017, le nombre de chômeurs a diminué de 116 000 dans l'UE28 et de 96 000 dans la zone euro. Comparé à septembre 2016, le chômage a baissé de 2,076 millions de personnes dans l'UE28 et de 1,463 million dans la zone euro. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094)

Eurostat: Estimation rapide – octobre 2017, le taux d'inflation annuel de la zone euro en baisse à 1,4%

Le taux d'inflation annuel de la zone euro est estimé à 1,4% en octobre 2017, contre 1,5% en septembre selon une estimation rapide publiée par Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. S'agissant des principales composantes de l'inflation de la zone euro, l'énergie devrait connaître le taux annuel le plus élevé en octobre (3,0%, comparé à 3,9% en septembre), suivie de l'alimentation, alcool & tabac (2,4%, comparé à 1,9% en septembre), des services (1,2%, comparé à 1,5% en septembre) et des biens industriels non énergétiques (0,4%, comparé à 0,5% en septembre). Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Juliana Dahl – Tel.: +32 229 59914)

Le PIB en hausse de 0,6% dans la zone euro et dans l'UE28

Au cours du troisième trimestre 2017, le PIB corrigé des variations saisonnières a augmenté de 0,6% tant dans la zone euro (ZE19) que dans l'UE28 par rapport au trimestre précédent, selon l'estimation rapide préliminaire publiée par Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. Au cours du deuxième trimestre 2017, le PIB avait progressé de 0,7% dans les deux zones. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Juliana Dahl – Tel.: +32 229 59914)

Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and Mongolia enters into force

On 1 November, the [Partnership and Cooperation Agreement \(PCA\)](#) between the European Union and Mongolia enters into force. The High Representative/Vice-President, Federica **Mogherini** said: *"The European Union and Mongolia are consolidating their strong ties, based on shared values and interests, and a common will to work more closely together. The entry into force of our Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, combined with the establishment of a European Union Delegation in Ulaanbaatar, which will take place in the coming days, consolidates existing areas of cooperation and engagement, and deepens and diversifies relations further in areas of mutual interest, for the sake of our peoples."* Replacing the 1993 Agreement on trade and economic cooperation, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement strengthens the [existing relationship between the EU and Mongolia](#), consolidates existing areas of cooperation and engagement, and deepens and diversifies relations further in areas of mutual interest. The entry into force of the PCA coincides with the [opening of an EU Delegation in Mongolia](#), for which implementing the Agreement will be a top priority. A full press release is available [online](#). More information on EU-Mongolia relations is available on the website of the [EU Delegation to Mongolia](#) and a [factsheet](#) on the new Agreement is available online. (For more information: Maja Kocijančič – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Adam Kaznowski – Tel.: +32 229 89359)

EU-Cuba: new landmark agreement entering into force on 1 November 2017

A new chapter in EU-Cuba relations will be marked tomorrow, on 1 November 2017, with the start of provisional application of the first ever agreement between the European Union and Cuba – [the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement \(PDCA\)](#). *“The EU and Cuba are truly turning a page, and the new chapter of our partnership begins now – with the provisional application of our new agreement. Today the European Union gets closer to Cuba and all Cuban citizens as the country goes through economic, political and social modernisation”*, said the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini**, adding: *“We Europeans are tied to Cuba, Latin America and the Caribbean by a shared history, culture, values, and aspirations for the present and the future”*. The PDCA comprises three main chapters on political dialogue, cooperation and sector policy dialogue as well as trade cooperation. A full press release is available [online](#). More information on the EU-Cuba relations is available on the website of the [EU Delegation to Cuba](#) and a [factsheet](#) on the EU-Cuba relations is available as well. (For more information: Catherine Ray – Tel.: +32 229 69921; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)

Rohingya crisis: Commissioner Stylianides visits Bangladesh and reaffirms EU humanitarian support

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** has started a two-day visit to Bangladesh, to assess the situation on the ground and visit EU aid projects that are addressing the Rohingya refugee crisis. His visit comes a week after the EU and its Member States pledged more than 50% of the USD 344 million total funding raised at the international Conference on the Rohingya Refugee Crisis held in Geneva. *“Here in Bangladesh the scale of this emergency is painfully clear to see; this is the fastest-growing refugee crisis in the world. The EU has decisively stepped up its aid to Rohingya communities. The Rohingya people are not alone in these difficult times. We commend and support the generous approach of the Bangladeshi authorities. At the same time, the European Union continues to insist on full aid access in Myanmar and is working to address the situation in Northern Rakhine State. Beyond aid, it is crucial that every refugee is registered properly and that Myanmar takes all necessary steps to allow them a voluntary and dignified return in secure conditions.”*, said Commissioner **Stylianides**. Commissioner **Stylianides** is today visiting the Kutupalong camp in the Cox’s Bazar area, where an EU funded project is helping over 100,000 people, mostly vulnerable children and women, gain access to essential services. The Commissioner will also hold meetings with government officials of Bangladesh and humanitarian partners to discuss the international community’s response to the crisis and Bangladesh’s needs moving forwards. Read the full press release [here](#). Audiovisual coverage will be available [here](#). (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

Digital contract rules: amended proposal on sales of goods across the EU

The Commission adopted today an amended proposal to extend the scope of the proposed Directive on online and other distance sales of goods to cover sales of goods offline. The initial [proposal](#) on the online sale of goods was presented in December 2015 together with the proposal on the supply of digital content as part of the Commission's commitment to deliver on its [Digital Single Market Strategy](#). Its aim is to break down the barriers due to differences in contract law which hinder cross-border online trade. The amendments to the proposal follow calls to align the rules applicable to online and offline sales more closely and avoid fragmentation. The Commission had already committed, when adopting the initial proposal, to assess the need of coherent rules on the basis of the [analysis](#) of existing consumer legislation. These results were introduced into discussions between the co-legislators. Given the increasing importance of both online and offline sales for consumers and businesses, this amended proposal will ensure that they benefit from on a coherent legal framework across EU borders. The amended proposal will now be transmitted to Parliament and Council to continue the ongoing legislative process. The new proposal is available [here](#). *(For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of sole control over Fels-Werke by CRH

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control over Fels-Werke of Germany by CRH of Ireland. Fels-Werke is active in mining, processing and distribution of lime and limestone products, gypsum and mortar in Germany, the Czech Republic and Russia. CRH is active in the manufacture and distribution of various building materials, including aggregates, cement, lime and concrete worldwide. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because there is limited geographic overlap between the companies' activities, so that they are only remote competitors. The operation was examined under the normal merger review procedure. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#) under the case number [M.8626](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)*

State aid: Commission approves PLN 1 billion public support for intermodal transport in Poland

The European Commission has approved a PLN 1 billion (around €238 million) aid scheme to support the construction, modernisation and upgrade of intermodal transport infrastructure in Poland. The scheme will also support the purchase of specialised equipment (e.g. lifting and transshipment equipment, telematics and satellite systems) required for intermodal transport, as well the purchase and modernisation of specialised rolling stock. The Commission concluded that the measure is necessary to improve the competitiveness of intermodal transport services in Poland and that it is proportionate in accordance with EU State aid rules. The aid will be available to intermodal operators and rolling stock leasing companies. The Polish government will support up to 50% of the eligible costs, through

funding from the EU Cohesion Fund. The scheme will be in place until 31 December 2023. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number SA.48093. (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

STATEMENTS

Equal Pay Day: Statement by First Vice-President Timmermans and Commissioners Thyssen and Jourová

Today, the average hourly pay of women in Europe is 16.3% lower than that of men. European Equal Pay Day, which falls on 3 November this year, marks the moment when women effectively stop getting paid compared to their male colleagues, with almost two months of the year remaining. First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans**, Commissioner Marianne **Thyssen** and Commissioner Věra **Jourová** said: *“Gender equality, including equal pay for men and women, is one of the EU’s founding values. But it is still far from a reality. For the past years, the gender pay gap has basically refused to budge. This means that women work for two months a year for free in comparison to their male colleagues. This is a shocking and unacceptable injustice in the 21st century Europe. We urgently need to make progress with this stubborn issue, which affects women and our societies on many other points: Women still tend to work in lesser-paid sectors, get fewer promotions and are underrepresented in management positions. And single-parent households with women as the sole breadwinner are more exposed to poverty, including child poverty and consequent disadvantages. Pay gap is not the only problem. Recent revelations on sexual harassment underline the sometimes hostile working environments which women also have to face, with obvious consequences for their professional development and well-being. The European Commission wants to lead the way to fight this injustice.”* Read the full statement [here](#). EU-wide and national infographics are available [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Jourová on official visit to Finland

Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Vera **Jourová** is in Helsinki today. She just delivered a keynote speech on *“Justice systems and rule of law in the EU: the ripe time for change”* at the Finland 100 years [event](#) dedicated to Finnish and European perspectives to the rule of law. She said: *“Rule of law is a bedrock of European democracies and one of the core values of the European Union. That’s why one of the priorities of the Commission for next year is to look at ways how to strengthen the enforcement of rule of law in the European Union. The judicial system in the EU is like a chain of Christmas lights. When one light goes off, others don’t light up and the chain is dark.”* The event was concluded by a press point with the Finnish Minister of Justice, Anti Häkkänen, and the Estonian Minister of Justice, Urmas Reinsalu. Commissioner **Jourová** will also meet Minister Häkkänen for a bilateral meeting. In the afternoon, she will visit a vocational school, benefitting from the European Social Fund to develop the

promotion of gender equality and better bridge education and working life. She will participate in a roundtable with businesses on digital topics, including the general data protection regulation. Commissioner **Jourová** will also visit Vantaa prison and discuss how prison staff can detect radicalisation and violent extremism. Her last visit at the VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland will focus on artificial intelligence. Commissioner **Jourová**'s keynote speech on rule of law is available [online](#) and on [EbS](#), where you can also find other pictures and videos from her trip. (For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

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

[Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and Mongolia enters into force](#)

The Agreement, which was signed on 30 April 2013, replaces the 1993 Agreement on trade and economic cooperation between the European Economic Community and Mongolia.

The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini said: *“The European Union and Mongolia are consolidating their strong ties, based on shared values and interests, and a common will to work more closely together. The entry into force of our Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, combined with the establishment of a European Union Delegation in Ulaanbaatar, which will take place in the coming days, consolidates existing areas of cooperation and engagement, and deepens and diversifies relations further in areas of mutual interest, for the sake of our peoples.”*

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement strengthens the existing relationship between the European Union and Mongolia and builds on a shared commitment towards good governance, human rights and sustainable development. Moreover, the Agreement will broaden cooperation in a wide range of areas, such as sustainable development, raw materials, climate change, justice and security, human rights, science and technology, good governance, as well as facilitate trade and investment. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement brings on board the European Union and all of its Member States, therefore providing opportunities to create synergies between EU activities and individual Member States' policies.

The entry into force of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement coincides with the opening of an EU Delegation in Mongolia, for which implementing the Agreement will be a top priority.

For more information:

[Website](#) of the EU Delegation to Mongolia

[Factsheet](#) on the EU-Mongolia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

[Press release](#) on the decision to open an EU Delegation to Mongolia

[Full text](#) of the EU-Mongolia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

EU-Cuba: new landmark agreement entering into force on 1 November 2017

“The EU and Cuba are truly turning a page, and the new chapter of our partnership begins now – with the provisional application of our new agreement. Today the European Union gets closer to Cuba and all Cuban citizens as the country goes through economic, political and social modernisation”, said the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President Federica **Mogherini**, adding: *“We Europeans are tied to Cuba, Latin America and the Caribbean by a shared history, culture, values, and aspirations for the present and the future”.*

The Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA) comprises three main chapters on political dialogue, cooperation and sector policy dialogue as well as trade cooperation.

It promotes dialogue and cooperation to encourage sustainable development, democracy and human rights, as well as to find shared solutions to global challenges through joint action in multilateral fora. Areas of common interest include for example renewable energies, rural development, the environment, human rights, good governance, security, and job creation. Activities will be conducted with all actors in Cuba, including the public sector, local authorities, the whole range of civil society, the private sector, as well as international organisations and their agencies.

Background

On 12 December 2016, EU and Cuba signed the political dialogue and cooperation agreement, and the European Parliament approved it on 5 July 2017. While most of the agreement starts provisionally applying on 1 November 2017, its full application will begin once all EU Member States have ratified the agreement.

This agreement also confirms the EU’s continued engagement with Latin America and the Caribbean. Cuba was the only country in the region with which the EU had not yet agreed on a legal basis for dialogue and cooperation.

For More Information

[Factsheet EU-Cuba relations](#)

[Delegation of the EU to Cuba](#)

Employment: Report confirms effectiveness of EU Globalisation Fund

The report reaffirms the role of the Fund as a flagship demonstration of European solidarity within the limits of its set-up and budgetary availabilities, having helped close to 19,500 workers to adjust to changing trade patterns and consequences of the economic and financial crisis in that period.

European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility Marianne Thyssen, said: *"Today's results demonstrate the added value of the Globalisation Adjustment Fund in helping redundant workers who have difficulties to find a new job. The assistance worth €70 million of the Fund has paid off: in 2015 and 2016, 9,072 assisted workers were re-employed, despite the challenging labour market situation these people faced. This year's tenth anniversary of the Globalisation Adjustment Fund marks it as a proof of European solidarity to workers falling victim to mass lay-offs caused by globalisation or the crisis."*

9,072 workers, or close to half of the workers who participated in the Globalisation Adjustment Fund measures, had found new jobs or were self-employed after one year, at the end of the implementation period of the measures. An additional 645 people were at that time in education or training to increase their future employability. Member States also reported that the personal situation, employability and self-confidence of the workers concerned had visibly improved thanks to the Globalisation Adjustment Fund assistance and services. This was even the case for those who had not found new work immediately after the end of the measures.

These positive results are encouraging, especially given the difficult context in which they have been achieved. The labour market situation in some Member States was particularly challenging in the period covered by the report. Mass lay-offs occurred in territories that were already suffering from above average unemployment rates. Many supported workers were low-skilled or had other disadvantages as jobseekers. This proves once again that EU funding, such as the Globalisation Adjustment Fund, can make a difference, especially for the most vulnerable people in our societies.

Background

More open trade with the rest of the world leads to overall benefits for growth and employment, but it can also cost jobs, particularly in vulnerable sectors and among lower-skilled workers. This is why the Commission set up a fund to help those adjusting to the consequences of changing trade patterns or those who have been made redundant because of the economic crisis.

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund provides funding for concrete measures to help dismissed workers improve their employability and find new job opportunities. It finances measures tailored to the specific circumstances of each worker concerned, such as:

- intensive, personalised job-search assistance
- various types of vocational training, up-skilling and retraining measures
- temporary incentives and allowances for the duration of the active measures
- Support for business start-up
- mentoring throughout the process

Founded in 2007, [this year marks the 10th anniversary of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund](#). Since then, the Fund has received 147 applications. Some €600 million has been requested to help about 137,600 workers and 2,944 NEETs.

In 2015 and 2016, the Globalisation Adjustment Fund provided assistance to 19,500 redundant workers and 1,251 young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs). The EU contribution amounted to more than €70 million and was matched by another €48 million from national resources. 11 Member States requested assistance from the Fund: Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Spain and Sweden.

For More Information

[EGF website](#)

Video News Releases:

[Europe acts to fight the crisis: the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund revitalised](#)

[Facing up to a globalised world – The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund](#)

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Daily News 30 / 10 / 2017

President Juncker visits Portugal, 30-31 October

At the invitation of the Portuguese President, President **Juncker** is travelling to Portugal today and tomorrow on what is his second official visit to the country as President of the Commission. Later today, in Lisbon, he will meet Prime Minister António Costa in a bilateral meeting, before being received by President of the Republic Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, and will then participate, on invitation of the President, in a meeting of the Council of State. Tomorrow, 31 October, President **Juncker** will be awarded the Honoris Causa diploma by the University of Coimbra, in the presence of President Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Assembly of the Republic Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues, Prime Minister Costa, and representatives of the diplomatic corps of the EU countries. After a working lunch with Prime Minister Costa, President **Juncker** and the Prime Minister will meet the leaders of the 130-year-old Academic Association of Coimbra and participate in a debate with students and entrepreneurs on "Future of Europe – what Europe do we want?" at the Gil Vicente Academic Theatre. (*For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185*)

Le Plan Juncker traverse l'Atlantique: premier projet signé en Guyane

Vendredi à Cayenne, à l'occasion de la conférence des Présidents des Régions Ultrapérimériques, le [premier projet guyanais](#) sous le [Plan Juncker](#) a été signé en présence du Président de la Commission européenne Jean-Claude **Juncker**. L'Europe soutient ainsi la construction d'un complexe composé d'une résidence pour les seniors et d'un hôtel dans la commune de Macouria. La Commissaire Corina **Crețu**, en charge de la Politique régionale, a déclaré: *« J'ai été ravie de signer ce projet en Guyane en présence du Président **Juncker**. La dimension sociale est au cœur du Plan d'Investissement; ces projets petits par la taille ont un grand impact dans la vie des communautés. Celui-ci créera des emplois mais surtout du lien social dans la région. Dans le cadre de notre nouvelle stratégie pour les régions ultrapérimériques, nous travaillons avec la Banque européenne d'investissement sur une initiative dédiée, pour qu'elles aient plus facilement accès aux Fonds européens pour les investissements stratégiques. »* Le projet, soutenu par l'Agence française de Développement, est également un exemple d'une [combinaison](#) réussie entre les fonds de la politique de Cohésion, qui apportent ici 4 millions d'euros, et le Fonds européen pour les investissements stratégiques (EFIS). Par ailleurs, la Commission salue [l'extension de l'accord](#) de partage de risque entre la Banque Européenne d'Investissement et l'Agence Française de Développement aux Territoires français d'Outre-mer, comme la Polynésie française, par exemple. Sous le Plan Juncker, les deux entités avaient signé en décembre 2016 un programme cadre de 150 millions d'euros pour développer les financements dans les Départements d'Outre-Mer, grâce à la garantie européenne. Avec cette extension de l'accord, le montant total des financements sous ce programme augmentera de 30 millions d'euros, pour s'élever à 180 millions d'euros. Plus d'informations sur [la nouvelle stratégie de l'UE](#) pour les régions

ultrapériphériques sont disponibles en ligne. Retrouvez la visite du Président **Juncker** et de la Commissaire **Crețu** en Guyane sur le [portail audiovisuel](#) de la Commission. (Pour plus d'informations: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524; Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

Concentrations: la Commission autorise l'acquisition d'ENGIE E&P par le groupe Carlyle, CVC et CIC

La Commission européenne a approuvé en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition de la société française ENGIE E&P International S.A. par le groupe américain Carlyle, la société luxembourgeoise CVC Capital Partners SICAV-FIS S.A. et la société chinoise China Investment Corporation ("CIC"). ENGIE E&P est présent sur le marché de l'exploration et de la production pétrolières, ainsi que sur celui de services connexes ayant notamment trait au forage, au reconditionnement et aux gisements pétroliers. Carlyle et CVC sont des sociétés de gestion d'actifs. CIC est une entreprise d'État dont l'objet est de diversifier le portefeuille de devises étrangères de l'État chinois. Les activités des sociétés se recouvrent partiellement en ce qui concerne l'exploration pétrolière et gazière, le développement, la production et la fourniture en gros de gaz et de pétrole brut, et le raffinage de ce dernier. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence compte-tenu de la faiblesse de la part de marché combinée des sociétés, et de la présence d'un nombre significatif de concurrents sérieux sur chaque marché. L'opération a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée du contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.8542](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

EU and Egypt cooperation: towards a stronger partnership

The EU adopted a multiannual framework defining the [priorities](#) for the financial and technical cooperation with [Egypt](#) for the period 2017-2020, with a special focus on youth and women. Johannes **Hahn**, Commissioner for the European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, currently in Cairo, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the EU Single Support Framework with the Egyptian authorities. Commissioner **Hahn** also signed two financial agreements supporting the sectors of health, environment and transport as well as a €60 million programme to support Egypt in addressing migration challenges. High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: "With the new EU-Egypt Partnership Priorities, we are focussing on the future of the Egyptian people. We believe that social development and social protection, especially when it comes to young people and women, are key towards sustainable growth and stability in Egypt and in the region. That is why we put them at the basis of our partnership". Commenting on the signature together with Sahar Nasr Minister of Investment and International Cooperation, Commissioner Johannes **Hahn** said: "We recognise the significant socio-economic challenges Egypt is facing. The EU is fully committed to supporting Egypt's efforts to reform its economy to achieve sustainable and

inclusive growth, and to tackle key socio-economic challenges, such as the high population growth and the impact of economic reforms on the most vulnerable.” The full press release is available [online](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Catherine Ray – Tel.: +32 2 296 99 21; Alceo Smerilli – Tel.: +32 229 64887)

Forest fires: EU helps mobilise firefighting planes and satellite mapping for Italy

The European Commission has helped mobilise emergency support for Italy through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, following a request for assistance to battle forest fires in the country. In an immediate response, Croatia has offered 2 specialised Canadair planes that have been operating in the affected areas in northern Italy since yesterday. The EU’s Copernicus satellite system has also been activated to provide mapping services for the local civil protection authorities. *“The EU is here to help. Firefighting aircraft and our EU satellite mapping system are supporting the national civil protection authorities. I want to thank Croatia for its swift response to Italy’s request. Our thoughts are with all the people and the brave first responders working in the affected areas. This week I had the pleasure of meeting the head of the Italian Civil Protection department Mr Borelli and our cooperation with Italy is excellent,”* said Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides**. The Commission’s [24/7 Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#) is closely monitoring the situation in Italy and other natural disasters across Europe, including the flooding in northern and central Europe over recent days. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism has now been activated 17 times since this summer by several countries across Europe for forest fires. The European Commission coordinates offers of assistance through the Civil Protection Mechanism and offers to co-finance related transport costs to countries offering support. President **Juncker** has tasked Commissioner **Stylianides** to put forward [proposals this year](#) to boost the EU’s [Civil Protection Mechanism](#), following the many devastating natural disasters across Europe this past year. [Photos](#) and [video](#) stockshots of the Emergency Centre are available, as well as a [MEMO](#) ‘Fighting forest fires in Europe – how it works’. (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Dombrovskis in Tallinn, Estonia

Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, is in Tallinn and Tartu for a European Semester visit and a Citizens’ Dialogue on 30 to 31 October. Vice-President **Dombrovskis**’ visit also includes several bilateral meetings, including with Kersti Kaljulaid, President of Estonia, Jüri Ratas, Prime Minister of Estonia, Toomas Tõniste, Minister of Finance of Estonia, Ardo Hansson, Governor of the Bank of Estonia and Eiki Nestor, Speaker of the Riigikogu, Parliament of Estonia. On Monday, the Vice-

President will deliver a keynote speech on “The Future of the Economic and Monetary Union. The Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance and the EU Legal Framework” at the [Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union](#) (SECG) in Tallinn. On Tuesday, Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will participate in a Citizens’ Dialogue on “[The Future of the Economic and Monetary Union](#)”, in the framework of the European Semester in Tartu. *(For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Juliana Dahl – Tel.: +32 229 64976)*

Future of EU finances – Commissioner Oettinger visits Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Commissioner Günther H. **Oettinger**, in charge of Budget and Human Resources, is visiting Estonia on 31 October, Latvia on 1 November and Lithuania on 2 November as part of his tour across EU Member States aimed to gather views on the future of EU finances and the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). In Estonia, the Commissioner will meet the country’s Prime Minister, Mr Jüri Ratas, Mr Toomas Tõniste, Minister of Finance, and Mr Matti Maasikas, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister. He will also exchange views with members of the Finance, Economic Affairs and EU Affairs Committees of the Estonian Parliament. Commissioner **Oettinger** will deliver a keynote speech at the [Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union](#) and answer questions by citizens at a [Citizens’ dialogue](#) in the Estonian Business School. In Latvia, the Commissioner will meet Ms Dana Reizniece-Ozola, Minister of Finance, Mr Edgars Rinkēvičs, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Kaspars Gerhards, Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development, and Mr Jānis Dūklavs, Minister of Agriculture. Commissioner **Oettinger** will discuss the challenges ahead of the EU budget with members of the European Affairs and Budget Committees of the Latvian Parliament, and with the wider public at a [Citizens’ Dialogue](#). In Lithuania, the Commissioner will meet the country’s Prime Minister, Mr Saulius Skvernelis, Mr Vilius Šapoka, Minister of Finance, Mr Bronius Markauskas, Minister of Agriculture, Mr Žygimantas Vaičiūnas, Minister of Energy, and Mr Albinas Zananavičius, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs. Commissioner **Oettinger** will visit the Parliament and meet the speaker and members of the European Affairs committee and deliver a keynote speech at a conference on Lithuania and the future of EU finances. The meetings in the three Baltic states are part of the Commissioner’s [tour](#) aimed to gather the broadest possible views on the future of EU finances – #MFFtour27. The Commission kicked off this debate on 28 June 2017 with the publication its [Reflection paper on the future of EU finances](#), which is also available in [Estonian](#), [Latvian](#) and [Lithuanian](#). Stakeholder views will be taken into account when preparing the next MFF, to be presented [in May 2018](#). *(For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265; Andreana Stankova – Tel.: +32 229 57857)*

Commissioner Jourová on visit to Prague

Today, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Vera **Jourová**, is on a visit to Prague, Czech Republic. This morning, the Commissioner gave a [keynote speech](#) at the conference “Jewish Communities and Western Democracies: What Future?”. In the afternoon, she will participate in a round

table with stakeholders to discuss the Commission Work Programme for next year. The Commissioner will use this visit also as an opportunity to meet Mr Aleš Chmelař, Czech State Secretary for European Affairs, and Mr Ondřej Malý, Government Co-ordinator of Digital Agenda. *(For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)*

Commissioner Gabriel in Bucharest to discuss progress on Digital Single Market legislation

Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, Mariya **Gabriel** is in Bucharest, Romania for a two-day visit. This morning she delivered a keynote speech at the 7th annual high-level international conference '[New global challenges in cybersecurity](#)' focussing on the Commission's proposals to scale up EU's response to cyber-attacks. After the speech she met with Romania's Minister for Communications and Information Society Lucian Şova to discuss among other digital topics the coordination of spectrum policies that is vital for successful 5G deployment. Later today, Commissioner **Gabriel** will meet Deputy Vice Prime Minister of Romania Ion-Marcel Ciolacu with a focus on the swift progress on the Digital Single Market legislation. Additionally to the bilateral meetings, the Commissioner will visit the startup mentoring programme Innovation Labs, hold a meeting on tackling illegal content online and participate in a working breakfast of the [Digital Romania International Forum 'Start-ups in 4.0 industries'](#). Tomorrow morning she will hold a keynote speech at the Forum and meet the representatives of the Parliament of Romania. In the afternoon she will briefly meet Codette community – an education and inclusion project brought to life by women who are passionate about ICT –, and visit Dream project dedicated to the inclusion of blind or visually impaired people. The Commissioner's visit concludes with a bilateral meeting with Alexandru Oprean, State Secretary in the Romanian Ministry of Culture. *(For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)*

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