

Increasing numbers of working poor in post-crisis Europe

One in ten workers in the EU is at risk of poverty, and 13% of workers are materially deprived and cannot afford basic household goods. Despite the fact that levels of in-work poverty have increased in Europe during the financial crisis, most Member States do not specifically address in-work poverty. These findings were highlighted by Eurofound's new report [In-work poverty in the EU](#), published in Dublin today.

In-work poverty in the EU examines what it means for workers to be poor in the 21st century and looks at the ramifications of poverty for workers. Being among the working poor is associated with various social problems, including lower levels of subjective and mental well-being, problems with accommodation and living environment, poor relationships, and feelings of social exclusion.

The report builds on mounting evidence to show that in-work poverty represents a significant challenge for Europe, particularly in the context of the post-crisis labour market. Not only has the number of workers at risk of poverty in Europe increased in many Member States between 2007 and 2014, there is also a strong connection between changing contract types and in-work poverty: just 5% of full-time workers qualified as working poor, whereas 29% of involuntary part-time workers were working poor and 25% of self-employed workers without employees were working poor. As the post-crisis labour market is increasingly characterised by non-standard forms of employment, it is important that these workers have the same rights and access to social protection that are accorded to workers with standard contracts.

The report found that while an adequate minimum wage is a core pillar of any model of social protection for the working poor, increased attention should be paid to minimum household income to reflect more accurately the situation of many of the working poor. Considering the risks that temporary workers face during spells of unemployment, measures are needed to facilitate transitions between jobs and to provide financial support while workers are in this position.

Finally, the report identifies the need to provide indirect help to raise the living standards of vulnerable workers; this requires a better understanding of the effectiveness of different kinds of indirect measures on the levels and impact of in-work poverty, as well as a concerted policy approach.

Download the report: [In-work poverty in the EU](#)

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Press remarks by Commissioner Andriukaitis following the Informal Agriculture Council

Ladies and gentlemen

(As Minister Tamm said earlier) today also constituted an occasion to present the state of play as regards to the fipronil case.

I want to thank the Presidency for including it on the agenda of this informal meeting.

The impact of the **illegal use of this** product on laying hens has reached an EU wide dimension with today hundreds of farms blocked for production, 26 Member States and 19 Third Countries involved.

While the risk to human health is low, the consequences of this **criminal activity** have impacted greatly the consumer confidence. This is why we need:

- o To obtain a complete picture of what happened,
- o Collectively provide clear answers to the citizens, and
- o make sure that those who pursue in that kind of illegitimate business are found and brought to justice.

From the moment this criminal fraud case was notified to my services, the Commission has requested specific measures to be taken at national level to safeguard a high level of public health protection.

I personally held a number of calls with German, Dutch, Belgian and Austrian Ministers to discuss the state of play and actions to follow.

We also launched an European Union wide monitoring exercise investigating the possible use of illegal substances in egg products and egg producing farms.

My services have also did their outmost to reassure our trade partners as regards the safety and traceability of EU's food products.

Today, I heard detailed explanations from the ministers: it is confirmed that all suspected farms have been blocked and contaminated eggs and egg products are being destroyed.

But some work remains to be done:

Some fact-finding missions to the four most affected Member States are scheduled in late September/early October.

The EU has always drawn lessons from so-called "food crisis", and this is why

I'm already looking forward a High-level Ministerial meeting in Brussels on 26 September where we'll discuss how to strengthen the way the EU networks are dealing with food safety and food fraud function. I have invited the ministers to attend. This will be an opportunity to draw some conclusions that we will be then able to put forward to our next formal Council agenda.

Let me conclude by reassuring the EU citizens that we will remain extremely vigilant and will not tolerate that actions of few people put in question the integrity, the reputation and the stability of our entire food chain, one of the economic pillars of the Union.

I will remain personally involved and as the fipronil situation evolves almost on a daily basis, my services are working closely with those of Commissioners Malmström and Hogan to ensure that the Commission's response remains coordinated, comprehensive and forward looking.

Finally, I called once again Member States to remain open, cooperative and communicate with each other. This is essential to maintain high levels of public health protection across Europe.

Thank you.

[Hear from Dombrovskis, Barnier, Gualtieri and Alder at the ESMA Conference](#)

The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) conference, which takes place in Paris on Tuesday 17 October, will be this autumn's key event focusing on developments in the EU's financial services markets.

Participants will hear from leading figures on issues such as Brexit, CMU, MiFID, market infrastructures, financial innovation and the future shape of financial services regulation. Confirmed keynote speakers include:

- Steven Maijoor, Chair, European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA);
- Valdia Dombrovskis, Vice President of the European Commission with responsibility for the Euro and Social Dialogue as well as Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union;
- Michel Barnier, European Commission Chief Brexit Negotiator;
- Roberto Gualtieri MEP, Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON), European Parliament; and
- Ashley Alder, Chair of the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO).

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L'UE investit pour une eau potable plus saine et accessible en Roumanie

155 millions d'euros du [Fonds de Cohésion](#) sont investis dans 6 grands projets d'infrastructure afin d'améliorer la collecte, le traitement et la distribution de l'eau à travers le pays. La Commissaire à la politique régionale Corina **Crețu** a déclaré: « *La politique de Cohésion investit pour que chacun ait en permanence accès à une eau saine ; c'est la santé de nos citoyens et notre environnement que nous préservons ainsi.* » Ces 6 projets comprennent : (1) 51 millions d'euros pour améliorer l'accès à l'eau pour 179 000 habitants, dans le comté de Vaslui. Ce projet, qui concerne les zones urbaines de Vaslui, Barlad, Husi et Negresti, comprend la construction et rénovation de plus de 130 km de réseau. (2) 46 millions d'euros pour, notamment, la construction et modernisation de 7 stations de traitement de l'eau dans le comté de Prahova, pour le bénéfice de 167 000 habitants. (3) 12.6 millions d'euros pour un meilleur accès à l'eau potable dans le comté de Satu Mare, avec notamment le forage de 4 puits et 40 km d'extension du réseau d'égout. (4) 21 millions d'euros pour des travaux dans le comté de Maramureș, avec en particulier l'extension sur près de 60 km du réseau de distribution d'eau, pour une population de 230 000 personnes. (5) Dans le comté de Dâmbovița, 6.3 millions d'euros pour, notamment, la rénovation de 2 réservoirs et 10 km de réseau de distribution d'eau additionnel. (6) 18 millions d'euros pour, entre autres, la construction et rénovation de 18 puits et de 3 stations de traitement de l'eau dans le comté d'Argeș, pour près de 200 000 personnes. (Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

Smoother, faster road connections in Greece thanks to EU investments

The Commission welcomes the inauguration today of the Ionian Highway, construction of which has been 100% supported by Cohesion Policy funds thanks to the exceptional measures the Commission put forward in the 2015 [“A New Start for Growth and Jobs in Greece”](#) plan. Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu** said: “*The EU invests to improve the everyday lives of Greek citizens with safer roads and reduced travel time. Better transport connections also mean new economic opportunities and faster growth. The Ionian Highway is a new token of steadfast EU solidarity and friendship with Greece.*” The new, 200 km-long highway connects the city of Ioannina in the region of Epirus (North-Western Greece) to Antirrio, in Western Greece, and cuts travel time by two hours. The highway reaches the Peloponnese peninsula in the South, via the EU-funded Rio-Antirrio bridge and, in the North, allows smoother access to Greece's neighbours countries in the Western Balkans. The Ionian highway is one of the 5 EU-funded motorway concessions in the country,

with the Moreas Motorway in the Peloponnese, the Aegean Motorway linking Athens to Thessaloniki, the Olympia Motorway from Corinth to Patras and the middle section of the E65 Motorway in Central Greece. They have been supported with €3.6 billion of EU funds. By seamlessly connecting Greece with the rest of Europe along a strategic trans-European network and allowing a smooth flow of people and goods, those 5 motorways make a key contribution to a steady economic growth in the country. *(For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)*

State aid: Commission approves German rescue aid to Air Berlin

The European Commission has endorsed under EU State aid rules Germany's plans to grant Air Berlin a temporary €150 million bridging loan. The measure will allow for the orderly wind-down of the insolvent airline Air Berlin without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market. The purpose of the loan is to allow Air Berlin to continue operations in the coming months, with the aim of maintaining its services while it concludes ongoing negotiations to sell its assets. At the end of the process, Air Berlin is expected to cease operating and exit the market. Rescue and restructuring aid are among the most distortive types of State aid and can only be granted to companies once these have exhausted all other market options. The Commission found that the measure will help to protect the interests of air passengers and to maintain air passenger services. At the same time, the strict conditions attached to the loan, its short duration and the fact that Air Berlin is expected to cease operations at the end of the process, will reduce to a minimum the distortion of competition potentially triggered by the State support. The Commission therefore concluded that the measure is compatible with EU State aid rules. The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [DE](#) and [FR](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

Mergers: Commission clears the creation of a joint venture by Centerbridge Partners and Enel in the Greek wind power sector

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the creation of a joint venture by Centerbridge Partners, L.P. of the USA and Enel S.p.A. of Italy. The joint venture does not carry out any business activity yet, its object is to build and operate seven wind farms at Kafireas (Euboea) in Greece with a total installed capacity of 154 MW. Centerbridge Partners is an investment management firm focused on private equity and distressed investment opportunities. Enel is an Italian multinational company active in the production and distribution of electricity and gas. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the limited overlaps between the companies' activities. 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.8592](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)*

Eurostat: Le volume des ventes du commerce de détail en baisse de 0,3% dans

la zone euro, en baisse de 0,2% dans l'UE28

En juillet 2017 par rapport à juin 2017, le volume des ventes du commerce de détail corrigé des variations saisonnières a diminué de 0,3% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et de 0,2% dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En juin, le commerce de détail avait progressé de 0,6% dans la zone euro et de 0,5% dans l'UE28. En juillet 2017 par rapport à juillet 2016, l'indice des ventes de détail s'est accru de 2,6% dans la zone euro et de 2,7% dans l'UE28. Un [communiqué de presse Eurostat](#) est à votre disposition en ligne. (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278)

Application for 2018 edition of the Women Innovators Prize opens today

The European Commission launches today the [fifth edition of the EU Prize for Women Innovators](#) which will be awarded to women entrepreneurs who successfully brought their outstanding innovations to market. The first prize is €100.000, second and third prizes of €50.000 and €30.000 respectively and a special prize of €20.000 will be dedicated to the Rising Innovator Award. Carlos **Moedas**, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: *"The EU Prize for Women Innovators gives public recognition to outstanding women entrepreneurs and inspires other women to follow in their footsteps. We have seen some exceptional achievements since the start of the competition. For example, the [2017 winners](#) created an innovation lab bringing together scientists and artists, or invented the first ever digital tablet for blind users. I look forward to seeing many more fresh ideas and talent in the new edition of the contest."* The contest is open to women across the EU or from countries associated to Horizon 2020 who have founded or co-founded their company and benefitted from public or private research and innovation funding. Applications have to be submitted by 15 November 2017 and the winners' names will be announced on International Women's Day on 8 March 2018. Further information for the competition can be found [here](#). (For more information: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: + 32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278; Maud Noyon – Tel.: +32 229 80379)

STATEMENTS

Statement on the humanitarian situation in Myanmar

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** has issued a statement on the ongoing situation in Myanmar: *"Unrestricted humanitarian access, including for aid workers, is critical to reaching 350,000 vulnerable people in Rakhine State. They must be allowed to do their job to try to prevent the further deterioration of an already serious humanitarian situation. I call on all sides to de-escalate tensions and fully observe international human rights law, and in particular to refrain from any violence against civilians. Many Rohingya civilians are suffering greatly and are now fleeing the violence across the border into Bangladesh. They must not*

be turned back or deported. We greatly appreciate the hospitality extended by the Government and people of Bangladesh for many decades. The assistance and protection of the Bangladeshi authorities regarding these new refugees is crucial until the situation in Rakhine State has stabilised and they can safely return. The European Union is committed to supporting all efforts to bring a return to aid deliveries in Rakhine State and is working tirelessly with all stakeholders to achieve this.” The statement is available [here](#).

Commissioner **Stylianides** visited Rakhine State in Myanmar in May earlier this year where he [announced](#) EU humanitarian funding. (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

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