

Boštjan Škrlec: New National Member for Slovenia at Eurojust

The Hague, 29 August 2017

✘ Boštjan Škrlec began his career as a State Prosecutor in 1999. He has more than 20 years of experience in the judiciary. Being recognised as a prosecutor with considerable professional expertise by the Prosecutorial Council, he was seconded to the Office of the Prosecutor General in 2005 and to the Ministry of Justice in 2007.

Throughout his professional career, Mr Škrlec has been involved in international relations and cooperation. He has participated in numerous international projects and has worked with international institutions in the field of criminal justice. He has been a member of the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures (MONEYVAL) at the Council of Europe since 2005, and is currently participating in the work of its European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT). Since 2011, he is a contact point for Slovenia in the [Genocide Network](#).

Mr Škrlec is a regular speaker at the Centre for Judicial Training at the Ministry of Justice and has participated as a speaker in several meetings and seminars organised by Eurojust. Currently, he is actively participating in the [Twinning project](#) between the Republic of Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina on strengthening the law enforcement agencies in that country.

In 2007, during the Slovenian EU Presidency, he chaired the working group negotiating the Council Decision on the strengthening of Eurojust and obtained in-depth knowledge about Eurojust as an EU body. From 2008 to 2012, Mr Škrlec served as the State Secretary at the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Slovenia. He actively participated in preparation and adoption of legislation introducing important reforms, such as plea bargaining in criminal procedure and the establishment of the Specialised Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

Before joining Eurojust, Mr Škrlec was the Director General at the Office of the State Prosecutor General of the Republic of Slovenia.

Upon his appointment, Mr Škrlec said, *'It is with a strong sense of responsibility that I am taking over the tasks of the National Member of Slovenia. Increasing terrorist threats, growing cybercrime and human trafficking are presenting major challenges to investigation and prosecution of criminal offences. My intention is therefore to invest my knowledge, experience and energy into improvement of cooperation between Slovenian prosecution authorities and authorities of other Member States to enhance their efficiency when prosecuting the most dangerous types of cross-border crime. With energy, dedication and commitment, I will, together with my colleagues at the Slovenian Desk at Eurojust, aim to sustain and improve the*

existing high-quality standards, which are enabling Eurojust to achieve its success at establishing the European Union as an area of freedom, security and justice.'

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[Commission proposes Baltic Sea fishing opportunities for 2018 with increased](#)

quotas for herring and salmon

In particular, the Commission [proposes](#) to increase catches for Central Herring, Sprat and the Main Basin Salmon stocks, and to maintain the number of catches for the important stock of Western Baltic Cod. For the remaining stocks the Commission proposes reducing catches. This year's proposal also includes a ban on Baltic Eel fisheries, not traditionally a part of the annual allowable catch proposals but a necessary step due to alarming scientific evidence and historically low levels.

Karmenu **Vella**, Commissioner for Environment, Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, said: *"We are proposing a balanced package that will ensure sustainable fisheries in the Baltic Sea. The good news is that important quotas for Baltic herring and salmon can be increased. Responsible management measures by Member States and the fishing industry are paying off. Now we must learn from these success stories and act urgently for those stocks that are still in a worrying state, like the European eel."*

The proposed total allowable catches (TAC) for herring, cod, sprat and salmon stocks are based on scientific advice from the [International Council on the Exploration of the Seas](#) and follow the [Baltic multiannual management plan](#) adopted last year by Member States and the European Parliament.

Efforts by stakeholders in recent years have already succeeded in rebuilding important stocks in the Baltic. Between 2012 and 2016, for example, the overall biomass of pelagic stocks increased by 50%. But further action remains necessary to ensure all stocks are exploited at sustainable levels.

European Ministers for Fisheries will now examine the Commission proposal, with the aim of adopting it during the Fisheries Council of 9-10 October.

Herring

The largest proposed increase (25%) for 2018 concerns the Central Herring stock. Responsible management of this stock has already borne fruit in recent years. This has allowed the fishing industry to reap the rewards and offer consumers a stable supply. Scientific advice for the Western Herring stock revealed a significant negative change in the state of the stock. The Commission is therefore proposing a corresponding reduction of 54% for the catch of 2018. For Herring in the Gulf of Bothnia the Commission is proposing a reduction of 50%, following the plan that was agreed by Member States and the European Parliament last year.

Cod

Western Baltic Cod is an important stock for many small-scale fishermen, and has been at very low levels in recent years. For 2017 allowable catches were reduced by 56% compared to 2016, and additional measures like closure periods and limiting recreational fishing were taken. Currently, the stock is still below the threshold of biologically safe limits. The Commission therefore

considers it necessary to maintain existing measures to ensure that young cod can reproduce and help rebuild the stock. For **Eastern Cod**, scientists advice that catches are significantly reduced as the stock remains data-limited and scientists detect a slow growth. The Commission is therefore following a precautionary approach and proposes a reduction of 28%.

Salmon

The scientific advice for **Main Basin Salmon**, a stable stock, allows for an increase in catches by 11%. This reflects the responsible management of the fisheries by the industry. Thanks to this the number of returning spawners in the rivers of our Member States has reached record levels, with the Torne river now home to the world's largest salmon population.

Eel

The **European Eel** stock has been at a historically low level since the late 1990s. It is today listed in [Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species](#) (CITES). In 2007 the EU adopted measures to allow this stock to recover. However, ICES advice published in May 2017 indicates that these measures have not been sufficient and the stock is still in a critical state. The Commission therefore proposes to ban all marine eel fisheries in the EU waters of the Baltic Sea for 2018. This ban would apply to commercial and recreational fishing. This also means that all eels caught accidentally will have to be released immediately. In addition, the Commission is planning to evaluate the [Regulation on the recovery of the European eel](#).

Table: Overview of TAC changes 2017-2018 (figures in tonnes except for salmon, which is in number of pieces)

Stock and ICES fishing zone; subdivision	2017	Council agreement (in tonnes & % change from 2016 TAC)	2018
	Commission proposal (in tonnes & % change from 2016 TAC)		Commission proposal (in tonnes & % change from 2017 TAC)
Western Cod 22-24	1,588 (-88%)	5,597 (-56%)	5,597 (0%)
Eastern Cod 25-32	24,927 (-39%)	30,857 (-25%)	22,275 (-28%)
Western Herring 22-24	28,401 (+8%)	28,401 (+8%)	12,987 (-54%)
Bothnian Herring 30-31	140,998 (+17%)	140,998 (+17%)	70,617 (-50%)
Riga Herring 28.1	27,429 (-21%)	31,074 (-11%)	28,999 (-7%)
Central Herring 25-27, 28.2, 29, 32	191,129 (+8%)	191,129 (+8%)	238,229 (+25%)
Sprat 22-32	282,349 (+40%)	260,993 (+29%)	262,310 (+1%)
Plaice 22-32	7,862 (+95%)	7,862 (+95%)	6,272 (-20%)
Main Basin Salmon 22-31	105,696 (+10%)	95,928 (0%)	106,096 (+11%)
Gulf of Finland Salmon 32	9,403 (-28%)	10,485 (-20%)	10,003 (-5%)

Background

The proposal is part of the European Union's approach to adjust the levels of fishing to long-term sustainability targets, or [maximum sustainable yield](#) (MSY) by 2020 as agreed by Member States and the European Parliament in the Common Fisheries Policy. The Commission's proposal is also in line with the policy intentions expressed in the Commission's [Communication on Fishing Opportunities for 2018](#).

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Discours du Président Juncker à la conférence annuelle des ambassadeurs de l'UE

Ce matin, le Président **Juncker** s'est adressé aux ambassadeurs de l'UE lors de leur conférence annuelle à Bruxelles. Dans son discours d'ouverture, il a rappelé que: *«L'Europe pour les autres veut dire la paix, le bien-être, les valeurs, la règle de droit. (...) La planète reste impressionnée par le fait que nous ayons été à même après multiples difficultés de faire de l'espace économique européen le grand marché intérieur; et c'est une performance.»* Evoquant les bonnes nouvelles pour l'économie européenne, le Président **Juncker** a constaté que *"depuis 21 mois, l'économie européenne progresse plus rapidement que l'économie américaine"*, que *"le taux d'emploi en Europe est plus élevé qu'il ne le fut jamais"* et que dans certains pays, *"le chômage baisse assez considérablement"*. Par ailleurs le Président a aussi rappelé les efforts de la Commission pour résoudre la crise de migration: *"L'arrangement que nous avons conclu avec la Turquie – depuis cet arrangement, le nombre de réfugiés qui de Turquie viennent en Grèce a diminué de 97%."* Il a également souligné l'importance des accords commerciaux: *"Pour l'Europe, disposer d'un 'trade network' avec le reste du monde est très important. Pour chaque milliard d'euros que nous exportons en plus vers les autres parties de la planète, nous pouvons constater qu'il y a création spontanée, organisée de 14 000 emplois en Europe. C'est donc une affaire qui mérite toute notre attention."* Le discours sera disponible [ici](#) et la vidéo sur [EbS](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524; Vanessa Mock – Tel.: +32 229 56194)

Commission proposes Baltic Sea fishing opportunities for 2018 with increased quotas for herring and salmon

Today the Commission adopted a [proposal](#) for fishing opportunities in the Baltic Sea for 2018. In particular, the Commission proposes to increase catches for Central Herring, Sprat and the Main Basin Salmon stocks, and to maintain the number of catches for the important stock of Western Baltic Cod. For the remaining stocks the Commission proposes reducing catches, following scientific advice. This year's proposal also includes a ban on Baltic European Eel fisheries, not traditionally a part of the annual allowable catch proposals but a necessary step due to alarming scientific evidence and historically low levels. The proposed total allowable catches are based on scientific advice from the [International Council on the Exploration of the Seas](#) and follow the [Baltic multiannual fisheries management plan](#) adopted last year by Member States and the European Parliament. Efforts by stakeholders in recent years have already succeeded in rebuilding important stocks in the Baltic. Between 2012 and 2016, for example, the overall biomass of pelagic stocks increased by 50%. But further action remains necessary to ensure all stocks are exploited at sustainable levels. European Ministers for Fisheries will now examine the Commission proposal, with the aim of adopting it during the Fisheries Council of 9-10 October. A press release is available [here](#).
(For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Iris Petsa – Tel.: + 32 229 93321)

Rencontre à Paris sur la migration: réaffirmation du soutien à la Libye, au Tchad et au Niger pour le contrôle et la gestion maîtrisée le long de la Route de la Méditerranée centrale

La Haute Représentante/Vice-Présidente Federica **Mogherini** a participé lundi à la rencontre entre les chefs d'État et de gouvernement d'Allemagne, d'Espagne, de France et d'Italie ainsi que du Niger, du Tchad et de la Libye, organisée par la France à Paris. Les chefs de délégations présents ont conclu de poursuivre leurs actions le long de la Route de la Méditerranée centrale, en travaillant étroitement avec les pays partenaires en Afrique. La HR/VP **Mogherini** a dit: *"Cette réunion confirme et renforce le travail que l'Union européenne a initié depuis l'an passé et qui commence à porter ses fruits dans le sens d'une gestion commune, durable et respectueuse des droits de l'homme, d'un phénomène extrêmement complexe et qui nécessite un partenariat fort."* Les chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement et la HR/VP Mogherini ont convenu de prendre des mesures, s'inscrivant dans le cadre du travail en cours du plan d'action du 4 juillet et celui du partenariat pour les migrations dans 4 domaines clés: 1) continuer à soutenir et à améliorer la coordination du soutien aux pays d'origine, au Niger, au Tchad et à la Libye, notamment en luttant davantage contre les réseaux de trafiquants criminels, et par le renforcement des missions de PSDC; 2) offrir la protection à ceux qui en ont besoin en augmentant les efforts pour la réinstallation dans cette région; 3) améliorer les retours et les réadmissions pour les migrants irréguliers; 4) la création d'une équipe opérationnelle de coordination par l'Allemagne, la France, l'Espagne et l'Italie qui travaillera en étroite collaboration avec la HR/VP **Mogherini** et le Commissaire européen pour la migration, les affaires intérieures et la citoyenneté Dimitris **Avramopoulos**. Vous trouverez les remarques de la HR/VP

lors de la conférence de presse conjointe [ici](#) et le texte complet de la déclaration conjointe et de l'annexe [ici](#). (*Pour plus d'informations: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 2 298 65 70; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Esther Osorio – Tel.: +32 2 296 20 76*)

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of joint control over METT by GE and Macquarie

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Markbygden ETT AB (METT) of Sweden by General Electric Company (GE) of the US and Macquarie Group Limited of Australia. METT will construct and operate the Swedish onshore wind park Markbygden ETT with a capacity of 650MW, expected to be fully operational in December 2019. GE is a global, diversified manufacturing, technology and services company. Macquarie is a global investment, banking and financial services provider. 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.8595](#). (*For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ten innovative cities shortlisted for 2017 European Capital of Innovation title

Ten cities – Aarhus, Berlin, Copenhagen, Helsinki, Nice, Paris, Tallinn, Tampere, Tel Aviv and Toulouse – are shortlisted as candidates for the European Capital of Innovation contest. The finalists have been selected from 32 eligible applications by an independent panel of experts for using innovative ideas to improve the quality of urban life and for getting citizens more involved in their communities. Carlos **Moedas**, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: *“Every new edition of the European Capital of Innovation showcases more inspiring and innovative ideas from across Europe. The tough competition this year proved how vibrant our local innovation ecosystems are. The journey so far has been very exciting, and the best is yet to come. I am looking forward to announcing the winners in November and further cooperating with them.”* The winner of the contest will be announced at the [Lisbon Web Summit](#) on 7 November and will receive €1 million to further support the city's innovative activities, while two runner-up cities will receive €100,000 respectively. Previous winners of the contest include Barcelona in 2014 and Amsterdam in 2016. More information about the finalist cities is available in the published [news item](#) and the [iCapital website](#). (*For more information: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: + 32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278; Maud Noyon – Tel.: +32 229 80379*)

Commissioner Crețu visits the Netherlands and participates in an event to highlight the benefits of EU Cohesion Policy

Tomorrow Commissioner for Regional policy Corina **Crețu** is visiting the towns of Eersel and Diessen, in the Dutch Province of Noord-Brabant. Alongside King's Commissioner of Noord-Brabant Wim van de Donk and MEP Lambert van Nistelrooij at the [LandArt](#) project in Diessen, Commissioner **Crețu** will participate in the launch of 'Let the stars shine' in the Netherlands – a common initiative of nine Members of the European Parliament designed to highlight the added value of the EU and the results of its policies, including Cohesion Policy. Commissioner **Crețu** said: *"Improving the way we communicate on the results of Cohesion Policy investments is directly linked to the ongoing discussion on the future of EU finances and the future of Europe. To get citizens to join that discussion, we need to show them clearly what we do for them. This is why Marianne **Thyssen** and I have laid out [7 concrete communication actions](#) to enhance the visibility of EU-funded projects."* With regional and local stakeholders in Eersel and Diessen, Commissioner **Crețu** will also discuss [EU actions for smart villages](#) and support to rural areas, as well as Cohesion Policy investments in bioeconomy, which help reach EU goals of a low-carbon, circular economy. (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

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