

# Romanian THB ring disrupted in France

7 July 2017

A joint action day on 19 June in France and Romania led to 23 arrests (13 in France and 10 in Romania) for suspected involvement in a human trafficking ring and participation in a criminal organisation.

In 2011, French police became aware of thefts committed on the Metro in and around Paris by young adult and underage Romanian nationals. The level of these crimes peaked in 2015 and 2016, when France hosted very large international events (the Paris Climate Change Conference (COP 21) and the Euro football competition).

Young potential thieves, belonging to family clans from Iasi and Roman in Romania, were regularly trafficked from Romania to France. The thieves reside in one building in Saint-Denis, and are supervised by adult organisers. Every morning, between 6:00 to 10:00, groups of children and young adults leave the building to commit crimes on the Metro.

The action was led in France by the Brigade for the protection of minors of Paris, conducted by an investigative judge, and in Romania by the Directorate for Investigation of Organized Crime and Terrorism, Iasi Territorial Office, and Brigade for Combating Organized Crime, as well as Border Police Iasi. Of the 39 suspects identified, 31 are minors. The value of the stolen goods is estimated at approximately EUR 600 000 since 2011.

Preparations for the action day were made possible by the signing of a joint investigation team (JIT) agreement between France and Romania, funded and supported by Eurojust.

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## Public consultation identifies challenges for future Common Agricultural Policy

European citizens believe that agricultural policy should continue to be managed at the EU level, and that helping farmers and protecting the environment should be its two main goals.

These are among the key findings of the [public consultation](#) published today on modernising and simplifying the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which received more than 322,000 submissions from a wide range of stakeholders, including farmers, citizens, organisations and other interested parties

Speaking at "[The CAP: Have your say](#)" conference today in Brussels, where the findings were disclosed, Phil **Hogan**, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, said: *"Today is another milestone on the journey towards the future of the Common Agricultural Policy and an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute further to the debate. The response to the public consultation shows the level of interest that there is in the CAP, which continues to support a dynamic agricultural sector, ensures safe and high quality food for 508 million citizens and provides for significant investment in rural areas."*

The high level of participation in the consultation shows that agriculture and its role in society has become an increasingly important issue for many European citizens. The vast majority of respondents (90%) are also clear that there is a real added-value in managing agricultural policy at the European level, as it ensures a level playing field within the single market and ensures that agriculture can respond more effectively to the shared challenges such as environmental protection (85%) and tackling climate change (73%). The need to maintain economic, social and territorial cohesion across the EU (86%) as well as the need for a common framework of sharing best practices (91%) was also frequently mentioned.

## **Clear aims**

The findings of the consultation are also clear about what the Common Agricultural Policy should achieve. Ensuring a fair standard of living for farmers is a key demand, with a majority of respondents (88%) recognising that farm incomes are lower than the EU average and that farmers receive only a small amount of the final consumer price for food (97%). Direct income support for farmers is considered the best way to achieve this (66% of respondents).

The other main aim of the CAP should be to ensure that farmers are encouraged to play their part in tackling climate change and protecting the environment, protecting biodiversity, reducing soil degradation and ensuring a more sustainable use of pesticides and fertilisers.

It is also clear from the findings that citizens and farmers alike want the future CAP to be simpler and less bureaucratic in order to more effectively rise to these challenges.

The findings of the consultation will feed into the Commission's ongoing reflection on the future of food and farming. A Communication on modernising and simplifying the CAP will follow an impact assessment of possible future policy proposals.

## **Background**

The online public consultation on modernising and simplifying the CAP was launched on 2 February 2017 and ran until 2 May 2017. It was open to all interested citizens and organisations and organised through a questionnaire in all 23 official EU languages.

The aim of the consultation was to gather views from farmers, organisations

and any other interested parties on three main issues: agriculture, rural areas and the CAP today; objectives and governance of the CAP; and agriculture, rural areas and the CAP tomorrow. It included 28 closed questions (multiple choice), five open questions and the possibility to upload position papers.

### **For More Information**

All replies to the consultation and a summary of the results will be published [here](#).

“The CAP: Have your say” – conference reports and documents will be available [here](#).

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## **Highlights: Launch of EASO Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU 2016**

On 5 July 2017, EASO organised the **Launch of the EASO Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU+ 2016**, which was held in **Brussels**.

The 2016 [EASO Annual Report on the Situation of the Asylum in the EU+](#) aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the situation of asylum in the EU+ (EU Member States plus Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein) by examining requests for international protection to the EU, analysing application and decision data, asylum trends, including key challenges and responses during the year, major institutional and legal developments and providing an overview of the practical functioning of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). According to the main findings and figures presented during the launching event:




- There was significant increase in asylum applications over the past two years led to a growth in decisions issued at first instance: in 2016, EU+ countries issued close to 1.15 million first-instance decisions, an increase of 84 % compared to 2015.
- The highest numbers of asylum applicants recorded were citizens of Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Nigeria.
- The main receiving countries were Germany, Italy, France, Greece and Austria. There were 7 % more applicants awaiting a final decision on their application compared to 2015 which continued to put pressure on the asylum and reception systems of the EU+ countries.
- The crisis in Syria continued to be a key factor in the number of applications for international protection in the EU+. Syria was the top

citizenship of applicants reported with its citizens accounting for 26 % of all applications in the EU+ while more than 65 000 unaccompanied minors (UAMs) applied for international protection in the EU+, 37 % less than the previous year. Afghan nationals lodged 37 % of all UAM applications in the EU+.




Commenting on the main findings, **Jose Carreira, Executive Director of EASO**, highlighted: *The launch of the Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU represents an excellent opportunity to identify the key changes, developments and trends in the field of international protection in 2016, so that we can better assess where we stand now and what should continue to be the focus of our efforts. The current situation of asylum in the EU and the fast pace in which the Agency is scaling up its operational capacity, makes this the right time to think about the future evolution of EASO.*"

[Click on photo to watch video](#)

 A panel discussion on **EASO activities and operational work in the context of the hotspots**, also held during the launching event with the participation of European Commission, representatives of EASO and national authorities. Among main topics discussed was the state of play on [EU Relocation Programme](#) and the implementation of the EU-TR Statement. According to statistics, more than 23 03 applicants relocated as of 3 July 2017, stated during the discussion.

[Click on photo to watch video](#)

Contributions to the Annual Report were also specifically sought from civil society with an open call for input from the EASO Executive Director to the members of the [EASO Consultative Forum](#) and other civil society stakeholders, inviting them to provide information on their work relevant for the functioning of the CEAS.

 This year's launching of EASO's Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU was also marked by a **Relocation Café concept event** which was organised by EASO with the participation of Belgian Asylum Authorities. The meeting aimed at providing factual information referring to the support provided by EASO to Greece and Italy in the context of the EU Relocation Programme. The Relocation Café offered the participants the opportunity to discuss important aspects of the EU Relocation Programme, as well as latest developments, with EASO's asylum experts, in the active presence of successfully relocated persons from Greece and Italy to Belgium.

[Click here to see more \*\*photos\*\* and \*\*videos\*\* of the event](#)

[Click on photo to watch testimonial from Relocation Cafe](#)

[Click here to watch videos of Relocation Success Stories](#)

EASO will continue its work within its mandate, as it may be strengthened to respond to current needs, while delivering on its core tasks in all areas, including: operational support, capacity building and training, facilitating

practical cooperation among EU+ countries, collecting and analysing qualitative and quantitative information and information on countries of origin, and external dimension.

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## Daily News 07 / 07 / 2017

### **President Juncker at the G20 in Hamburg: warns against protectionism**

President Jean-Claude **Juncker** and Commissioner Pierre **Moscovici** are attending the G20 Summit in Hamburg today and tomorrow. Under the German G20 Presidency, the G20 nations will be meeting under the motto "Shaping an interconnected world". This morning, President **Juncker** and President of the European Council, Donald Tusk held a joint press conference ahead of the start of the G20 Summit. Speaking of the global economy outlook, President **Juncker** said: *"This year, we are meeting with the wind in our sails. All 28 Member States of the EU are growing. Since 2013, ten million jobs have been created in the European Union. We have the lowest unemployment in nine years [...]. There are 233 million Europeans at work – the highest employment rate we have ever had in the European Union."* President **Juncker** also said that *"going back to protectionism is not the way ahead,"* instead, the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement concluded yesterday, was the right way forward, adding that this agreement takes account of all European interests and high standards related to labour, environment and data protection. President **Juncker** underlined the importance of a partnership with Africa and described climate change as *"the biggest challenge for the future"*. Concrete G20 commitments in support of Africa are central to the Summit. Work at G20 Summit will take place in four working sessions on: 1. Global Growth and Trade; 2. Sustainable Development, Climate and Energy; 3. Partnership with Africa, Migration and Health and 4. Digitalisation, Women's Empowerment and Employment. The EU's priorities for the G20 Summit are outlined in the [joint letter](#) by Presidents Juncker and Tusk sent to EU Heads of State or Government on 4 July. President Juncker's press remarks are available [here](#). (For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524; Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382)

### **EU boosts aid to drought affected countries in the Horn of Africa**

The European Commission has announced additional humanitarian assistance of €60 million to help people in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, who have been facing critical levels of food insecurity due to severe drought. This

additional assistance brings EU humanitarian aid to the Horn of Africa region (including Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti) to nearly €260 million since the beginning of the year. *"The situation in Horn of Africa has drastically deteriorated in 2017 and it keeps getting worse. Millions of people are struggling to meet their and their families' food needs. The risk of famine is real. The European Union has been following the situation closely since the very beginning and progressively increasing aid to the affected populations. This new package will help our humanitarian partners scale up the response further and keep bringing lifesaving assistance to people in need,"* said Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides**. The newly announced EU assistance will support humanitarian partners already responding to the needs of the affected populations to step up emergency food assistance and treatment of malnutrition. Projects addressing water supply, livestock protection and response to outbreaks will also be supported. The bulk of the funding (€40 million) will go to help the most vulnerable in Somalia, while €15 million will go to Ethiopia and €5 million to Kenya. *(For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)*

### **Les principaux défis de la future Politique Agricole Commune identifiés par la consultation publique**

La Commission a présenté aujourd'hui, le 7 juillet, les résultats de la consultation publique sur ["la modernisation et la simplification de la Politique Agricole Commune \(PAC\)"](#). Le Commissaire à l'agriculture, Phil **Hogan**, a ouvert la [conférence](#) consacrée aux enseignements de la consultation et a déclaré à cette occasion: *"Nous vivons aujourd'hui une autre étape importante vers l'avenir de la Politique Agricole Commune et il s'agit là d'une opportunité pour les parties prenantes de contribuer encore plus au débat en cours. La réaction du public à la consultation démontre le niveau d'intérêt qui existe pour la PAC, qui est une politique qui continue de soutenir un secteur agricole dynamique, d'assurer la production d'aliments sûrs et de grande qualité aux 508 millions de citoyens européens et d'investir massivement dans les zones rurales."* Les citoyens européens estiment que la politique agricole doit continuer à être gérée au niveau de l'UE et que le soutien aux agriculteurs et la protection de l'environnement devraient être ses principaux objectifs. Voici ce qu'il ressort principalement de la consultation publique qui aura reçu au cours de trois mois plus de 322 000 contributions d'un large éventail de parties prenantes, dont des agriculteurs, des citoyens à titre individuel, des ONGs, et autres. Les résultats de la consultation et l'analyse de terrain réalisée par la Commission seront utilisés pour élaborer une Communication qui contiendra des propositions législatives concrètes pour moderniser et simplifier la PAC. Un [communiqué de presse](#) est en ligne et les [présentations de la conférence](#) sont également disponibles en ligne. *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Clémence Robin – Tel: +32 229 52509)*

### **Agriculture: the Commission approves new geographical indication from Poland**

The Commission has approved today the addition of one new product from Poland to the quality register of Protected Geographical Indications (PGI).



[‘Kiełbasa biała parzona wielkopolska’](#) is a pork sausage produced in the Wielkopolskie, Lubuskie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie Provinces. The only seasonings used are salt, pepper, garlic and marjoram, which dominates. ‘Kiełbasa biała parzona wielkopolska’ grew so much in popularity over time that butchers began to produce it outside the festive seasons. It can be served fried in lard with onions and finely chopped sour apples or grilled. Throughout Wielkopolska, ‘kiełbasa biała parzona wielkopolska’ is served in a traditional soup called żurek. This new denomination will be added to the list of over 1,400 products already protected. More information: webpages on [quality products](#) and [DOOR database](#) of protected products. *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel: +32 229 56 185; Clémence Robin – Tel: +32 229)*

### **Concentrations: la Commission approuve la prise de contrôle conjoint de CDPR par PGA et le groupe Bernard**

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, la prise de contrôle conjoint de CDPR par la société PGA Group SAS et la société Bernard Participation SAS (Groupe Bernard), toutes basées en France. CDPR est active dans la distribution au détail de pièces de rechange d’origine PSA pour les véhicules automobiles particuliers et commerciaux et non d’origine pour tout type de véhicules. PGA est active dans la distribution au détail d’automobiles et de pièces de rechanges en France, en Pologne, aux Pays-Bas, en Belgique, en Espagne et en Italie. Le Groupe Bernard exploite diverses concessions d’automobiles et de camions en France. La Commission a conclu que l’opération envisagée ne soulevait pas de problème de concurrence compte tenu du caractère limité des parts de marché des sociétés et du nombre conséquent de concurrents présent sur les marchés concernés. La transaction a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée du contrôle des concentrations. Pour de plus amples informations, veuillez consulter le [registre public des affaires de concurrence](#) sur le site web de la Commission consacré à la [concurrence](#), sous le numéro [M.8491](#). *(Pour plus d’informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)*

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of SAVE by DAAM, InfraVia and FIH**

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of SAVE S.p.A. of Italy, by Deutsche Alternative Asset Management (Global) Limited (DAAM) of the UK, InfraVia Capital Partners of France, and Finanziaria Internazionale Holding S.p.A. (FIH) of Italy. SAVE, which is currently controlled by FIH, operates mainly in the airport management business. DAAM, a wholly owned subsidiary of Deutsche Bank, is a management company that provides investment management and fund management services. InfraVia is an independent investment manager dedicated to the infrastructure sectors, including transportation, environment, energy and social infrastructure. FIH is a financial company active in investment banking and asset management, business process outsourcing, and proprietary investments. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because SAVE is not active in the same market as its

new parents. In addition, the relationships between the ground handling services that SAVE provides at some of the airports it manages and the supply of ground support equipment by TCR, which is one of DAAM's portfolio companies, would only have a marginal impact on the market structure. The transaction was examined under the normal merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.8470](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)*

### **Mergers: Commission clears creation of a joint venture by Gasunie, Vopak and Oiltanking**

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control over a newly created joint venture by Gasunie LNG Holding B.V., Vopak LNG Holding B.V., both of the Netherlands, and Oiltanking GmbH of Germany. The joint venture will own and operate a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in Northern Germany. Gasunie is a European gas infrastructure company which owns and operates the Dutch transmission system and an LNG terminal in the Netherlands. Vopak is an independent tank storage provider, operating two LNG import terminals in the Netherlands and in Mexico. Oiltanking is an independent storage services provider for petroleum products, chemical gases and dry bulk. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns because the companies are not active in the same product and geographic markets, or in a market which is upstream or downstream from those markets. 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.8484](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)*

### **Eurostat: Des régions d'Espagne, de France et d'Italie destinations touristiques phares dans l'UE**

Dans l'Union européenne (UE), le tourisme est avant tout une affaire intérieure. Environ 90% des nuitées touristiques dans l'UE sont le fait de résidents des États membres, ce qui signifie que les touristes des pays hors-UE ne représentent que quelque 10% du total. Et lorsqu'ils sont en voyage, les résidents de l'UE passent près de 85% de leurs nuitées au sein même de l'UE, contre à peine plus de 15% dans des destinations extra-UE. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). *(Pour plus d'informations: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278)*

### **[Calendar](#)**

Commissioners' Weekly Activities

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## EESC launches its 2017 Civil Society Prize

### **Rewards to go to best projects to integrate people into labour market**

The EESC has launched its 2017 Civil Society Prize. This year, the EESC will reward **innovative projects to promote quality employment and entrepreneurship for the future of work** undertaken by civil society, focusing on young people, migrants and other people who have difficulty accessing the labour market.

A total of **EUR 50.000** will be awarded to a maximum of five winners. The **deadline for applications is 8 September 2017** while the award ceremony will take place on 7 December 2017 in Brussels.

Almost ten years after the peak of the financial and economic crisis the European Union is still struggling with high levels of unemployment, despite recent improvements. That is why this year the EESC has decided to reward the best innovative projects which promote quality jobs, entrepreneurship or self-employment, and thus fight to reverse the trend.

The prize will be granted to initiatives already implemented or still ongoing which favour non-discrimination as regards labour market integration. Initiatives must target newcomers such as young people, people with a migrant background or requiring specific support such as the long-term unemployed, women detached from the labour market, people with disabilities or living in poverty.

The Civil Society Prize, now in its ninth year, was launched by the EESC to reward and encourage tangible initiatives and achievements by civil society organisations and/or individuals that have made a significant contribution to promoting the common values that shore up European cohesion and integration. [In 2016 the Prize focused on migration.](#)

Further details and the application form are available [here](#).