

100 European geographical indications set to be protected in China

The EU and China agreed today to formally publish a list of two hundred [European](#) and [Chinese](#) geographical indications -100 from each side- that will be considered for protection through a [bilateral agreement](#) to be concluded in 2017.

This publication opens the process for protecting the listed products against imitations and usurpations and is expected to result in reciprocal trade benefits and increased consumers' awareness and demand for high-quality products on both sides.

The EU list of products to be protected in China includes products like Bayerisches Bier, Feta, Queso Manchego, Champagne, Gorgonzola and Polska Wódka while among the Chinese products aspiring to obtain geographical indications status in the EU we can find for example Yantai Ping Guo (Yantai apple), Hengxian Mo Li Hua Cha (Hengxian jasmine tea), Panjin Da Mi (Panjin rice) and Baise Mang Guo (Baise Mango). The publication of these lists is part of the standard procedure and opens a period for interested parties to present their comments.

The Chinese market for agri-food products is one of the world's largest, and is getting larger every year, fuelled by a growing middle class population that has a taste for European food and drink products, often as a result of their international travels. The country also has a rich tradition of geographical indications of its own, many of which are still largely unknown to European consumers but which should now become more widely available thanks to the agreement.

European Commissioner for agriculture, Phil Hogan, said today: "*Our EU geographical indication products are a real success story, with growing global sales worldwide. Consumers all around the world trust in our Geographical Indication classification system – this means that they trust the origin and quality of the products, and are willing to pay a higher price for the products, thus a higher premium for the farmer. Working closely with our global trading partners such as China is a win: it benefits our farmer and agri-businesses; it develops stronger trading relationships between like-minded operators; and of course, it benefits consumers on both sides of the agreement.*"

EU-China cooperation on geographical indications began over 10 years ago and led to the protection of 10 GIs names on both sides under EU and Chinese legislation. Building on this initial cooperation, in 2010 the EU and China started to negotiate a bilateral agreement on cooperation on, and protection of, geographical indications. The first step of this process is the publication of the two lists of 100 products from each side that the other will protect in their territory once the agreement enters into force.

Interested parties now have two months to comment on the products selected by both parties and, if necessary, raise any concerns with either the EU or Chinese authorities.

Geographical indications are one of the great successes of European agriculture, with over 3300 EU names registered. A further 1250 or so non-EU names are also protected within the EU, mostly thanks to bilateral agreements such as this one with China. In value terms, the market for EU geographical indications is around €54.3 billion, and together they account for 15% of total EU food and drinks exports.

For more information

[Joint statement of the Commission and the government of the People's Republic of China](#)

[List of European geographical indications published](#)

[List of Chinese geographical indications published](#)

[EU agricultural product quality policy](#)

[EU-China Geographical Indications – “10 plus 10” project](#)

EP president Tajani and EESC president Dassis commit to improving cooperation, helping people regain trust in Europe

The president of the European Parliament (EP) Antonio Tajani joined the [European Economic and Social Committee \(EESC\)](#) plenary session on Thursday 1 June to discuss the EP's priorities and the strengthening of cooperation between the two institutions.

The EP's six priorities for this year are very much in line with the concerns of Europe's civil society, according to the EESC. They include: giving a new boost to jobs, growth and investment; addressing the social dimension of the European Union; better protecting the security of EU citizens; reforming and developing migration policy in a spirit of responsibility and solidarity; delivering on the commitment to implement a connected Digital Single Market; delivering on the objective of an ambitious Energy Union and a forward-looking climate-change policy.

"The three main challenges we need to work on together are unemployment (especially youth unemployment), migration and terrorism. Most citizens want protection from the EU in particular areas, but there is a high percentage of citizens voting for populism, which means there is discontent," Mr Tajani stated.

Mr Tajani and the **EESC president Georges Dassis** pledged to improve the dialogue between the EP and the EESC both formally and informally and to hold regular exchanges, discuss ideas, engage and deepen the cooperation so as to ensure a quality response to what is happening on the ground. This should in turn improve the effectiveness of EU policies, with a clear impact on the lives of ordinary citizens.

Mr Tajani said the improved cooperation was crucial because of the EESC's vital closeness to the people. "The EESC represents workers, employers, SMEs, etc., and because of that you have the finger on the pulse and you can help us transmit the messages to European citizens," Tajani told the plenary, describing the EESC as "the ears of Europe" and adding that "just like the MEPs, the EESC members are in a position to listen and understand what citizens really want and expect".

EESC president Georges Dassis declared that every single action and work of the Committee made it clear that the EESC stands for European democracy and "is truly engaged in making the slogan – for a united, democratic, solidarity-based, peaceful and prosperous Europe, close to its people – a reality".

Jacek Krawczyk, president of the EESC Employers' Group welcomed the fact that a number of EP priorities are aligned with what employers ask for: a stable macroeconomic environment; a stronger culture of entrepreneurship; completion of the single market; a more efficient and forward-looking industrial policy, championing free trade and, finally, supporting competitiveness as the key for more employment and for maintaining and enhancing the social dimension of the EU.

Representing the EESC Workers' Group, **Christian Bäumler** said that stronger cooperation between the two institutions was crucial to secure a strong pillar of social rights in the future. "The EU should be protecting its citizens against the effects of globalisation in order to be seen as more legitimate. We also need to make progress towards reducing unemployment and put an end to inequalities".

Luca Jahier, president of the EESC Various Interests Group, expressed his support for the EP president's statement made at the recent G7 meeting in Taormina, saying that "it is time for Europe to take the lead in matters such as trade and the Paris agreement on climate". He also urged Mr Tajani to make a detailed programme to engage both the EP and the EESC on a joint communication strategy in the run up to the EP elections in 2019, in order to overcome the distance between the EU and its citizens, and to speak with one voice.

The EP and the EESC, together with the European Committee of the Regions,

signed the first [Cooperation Agreement](#) in 2014. 

Daily News 02 / 06 / 2017

President Juncker and Commissioner Malmström at the 12th EU-China Business Summit

This morning, President **Juncker** and Commissioner **Malmström** spoke at the [12th EU-China Business Summit](#), an event that provides an opportunity for EU and Chinese leaders to exchange views with representatives of the business community on economic relations between the European Union and China and on the challenges that remain. In his [keynote speech](#), President **Juncker** said: *“Our relationship is founded on a shared commitment to openness and working together as part of a rules-based international system. I am glad that we can meet here today and say this, loud and clear. It is one that recognises that together we can promote prosperity and sustainability at home and abroad. We applaud the ambition of China’s reform path. We recognise that reforms have been made and that plans have been established. But we would like to see implementation speed up – so that your policies are in line with your world vision.”* In [her speech](#), Commissioner **Malmström** stressed that: *“Sound economic development, trade and investment also require respect for the rule of law, with independent lawyers and judges who can operate freely and independently. To conduct business – and for their daily lives – people need to be able to access free and independent information, communicate and discuss. This is a fundamental human right which also applies in the age of the internet. Limits to online freedom also affect peoples’ lives and the business climate.”* The Business Summit took place in the sidelines of the [19th Summit](#) between the European Union and the People’s Republic of China, which is currently ongoing. A signing ceremony will take place at [12:30](#) followed by a press conference at [12:40](#). A press release summarising the Summit’s deliverables will be available [here](#) this afternoon. Coverage is available live on [EbS](#). For more information on EU-China relations, read the [factsheet](#) or consult the [memo](#). (For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524; Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Adam Kaznowski – Tel.: +32 229 89359)

Juncker Plan backs social investments: EUR 10 million agreement to support migrants in Finland

The Investment Plan for Europe, the so-called “Juncker Plan”, has backed a [European Investment Fund](#) (EIF) agreement with [Epiqus](#), a Finnish fund manager that specialises in social impact investments, and the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs. The agreement will see EUR 10 million to support the integration of between 2,500 and 3,700 migrants and refugees into the Finnish labour market through the provision of training and job-matching assistance. This agreement was made possible by the support of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the central pillar of the Juncker Plan.

European Commission Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, participated in the signature ceremony to mark the transaction. He said: “*The Investment Plan for Europe and the European Fund for Strategic Investments included in it are innovative tools to get investment moving in Europe. Today’s contract is indicative of the growing role of EFSI in promoting societal projects, in this case concerned with the integration and employment of immigrants. The project is the first of its kind in Europe, and we will follow its impact very closely as we hope it may serve as a model for others. I wish the best success to all who benefit from the education, training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities offered by the project.*” The Juncker Plan is now expected to trigger over EUR 4.4 billion in investments in Finland and EUR 194 billion across Europe. As of May 2017, EUR 1.3 billion in approved EFSI financing in the social sector is expected to mobilise EUR 7.8 billion in investments. For the latest figures country-by-country, see [here](#). A full press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

Commission support from Globalisation Fund for former coal miners in Spain

The European Commission has proposed to provide Spain with €1 million from the [European Globalisation Adjustment Fund \(EGF\)](#) to help dismissed coal miners and young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) in the Spanish region Castilla y León to find new jobs. Marianne **Thyssen**, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, commented: “*The Globalisation Adjustment Fund provides support to workers falling victim to mass lay-offs caused by globalisation or the crisis. Today’s decision will help to prepare the former miners and young people in the region for new job opportunities. By helping workers and young people in vulnerable labour force segments to adapt to changing patterns in the labour market, the EU is showing solidarity, making sure that nobody is left behind. This is also important for businesses, as improving skills and employability of workers creates a more dynamic and competitive European economy.*” Spain applied for support from the EGF following the dismissal of 339 coal workers in five coal mines in the Spanish region of Castilla y León. The measures co-financed by the EGF would aim at providing them with employment guidance and counselling; general training, re-training and vocational training; intensive job-search assistance; promotion of entrepreneurship and support for business start-up; as well as various types of incentives, contributions and allowances. The total estimated cost of the package is €1.6 million, of which the EGF would provide one million. The proposal now goes to the European Parliament and the EU’s Council of Ministers for approval. (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: +32 229 67094)

Concentrations: la Commission approuve la création d'une entreprise commune par EDF, CDC et Mitsubishi

La Commission Européenne a autorisé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l’acquisition du contrôle conjoint de l’entreprise commune

nouvellement créée, NGM S.A.S. ("NGM") par les entreprises Électricité de France ("EDF"), Caisse des dépôts et consignations ("CDC") – toutes trois basées en France, et Mitsubishi Corporation du Japon. L'entreprise commune sera active dans le développement, le financement et la gestion de divers projets en matière de mobilité électrique. EDF est principalement active dans le secteur de l'électricité en France et à l'étranger. CDC est une institution publique active dans le financement de projets d'intérêt général, la prise de participations dans des secteurs ouverts à la concurrence et la gestion de fonds. Mitsubishi est active dans divers secteurs, y compris l'environnement et les infrastructures, l'industrie manufacturière, la finance, et l'énergie. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, compte tenu du fait que l'entreprise commune ne prévoit d'exercer qu'une activité négligeable sur le territoire de l'Espace Economique Européen. La transaction a été examinée selon la procédure simplifiée de 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.8447](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control by LGP and OMERS over CCC

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed acquisition of joint control by Leonard Green & Partners, L.P. (LGP) of the US and OMERS Group of Canada over the American company Caliber Collision Centers (CCC). CCC operates a network of automobile collision repair centres in the USA. LGP is a private equity investment firm focused on retail, consumer, healthcare, wellness, business, consumer services and distribution. OMERS is the administrator of the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System Primary Pension Plan in Canada. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns as CCC has no current or foreseen business activities or revenues in the European Economic Area. 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.8477](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control of the Shawbrook Group by BC Partners and Pollen Street Capital

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control over Shawbrook Group Plc by BC Partner LLP and Pollen Street Capital Ltd. All three companies are based in the UK. Shawbrook is a specialist UK lending and savings bank. BC Partners is a private equity firm focusing on the European and North American markets. Pollen Street is also a private equity firm focussed on investing in businesses in the

financial services sector in Europe. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the companies' moderate combined market shares, the very limited overlaps between the activities of the companies, as well as their limited vertical relationships in the markets for consumer lending. 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.8471](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Competition: Commission launches cooperation programme with competition authorities in Asia

The European Commission is launching a €5 million programme offering technical cooperation to competition authorities in Asia. The objective is to exchange experiences and strengthen convergence in competition policy, to the benefit of citizens and businesses on both in the EU and in Asia. The cooperation programme will provide the financial and logistic platform for high-level technical exchanges between competition authorities from the European Commission, EU Members States and a number of countries in Asia, including China, India, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam). The programme is due to start its activities in the third quarter of 2017 and will run for five years. It will cover all areas of competition law, including antitrust, cartels, merger review and State aid control. The programme will offer activities such as EU competition weeks held in Asian partner countries, competition summer schools in the EU, and visits to the Commission's Directorate General for Competition and national competition authorities in the EU Member States. The programme will be funded by the [Partnership Instrument](#), which funds projects that enable the European Union to take part in shaping global change and promote its fundamental values, and managed by the Commission. (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Eurostat: Les prix à la production industrielle stables tant dans la zone euro que dans l'UE28

En avril 2017 par rapport à mars 2017, les prix à la production industrielle sont restés stables dans la zone euro (ZE19) ainsi que dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En mars 2017, les prix avaient diminué de 0,3% dans la zone euro et de 0,2% dans l'UE28. En avril 2017 par rapport à avril 2016, les prix à la production industrielle ont progressé de 4,3% dans la zone euro et de 4,8% dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278; Maud Noyon – Tel.: +32 229 80379)

STATEMENTS

Statement by the Commissioner for Climate action and energy, Miguel Arias Cañete on the US announcement to withdraw from the Paris Agreement

Commissioner for Climate action and energy, Miguel **Arias Cañete** issued a statement yesterday on the US announcement to withdraw from the Paris Agreement: *“Today is a sad day for the global community, as a key partner turns its back on the fight against climate change. The EU deeply regrets the unilateral decision by the Trump administration to withdraw the US from the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement brought us together in very challenging times. It is an unprecedented multilateral partnership between nearly 200 countries, supported by companies and communities across the world, to address a problem that threatens us all. It demonstrates our generation’s responsibility towards this and future generations. [...] The Paris Agreement will endure. The world can continue to count on Europe for global leadership in the fight against climate change. Europe will lead through ambitious climate policies and through continued support to the poor and vulnerable.”* The full statement is available [here](#). (For more information: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel.: +32 229 56186; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)

EU-African Union Joint Communiqué on the Implementation of the Paris Agreement

The European Union and the African Union reaffirm their strong commitment to full implementation of the Paris agreement, and call on all partners to keep up the momentum created in 2015. Ahead of the COP23 in November they pledge to work together to finalise the Paris Agreement work programme. Climate change and renewable energy will figure on the agenda of the upcoming Africa-EU Summit in Abidjan on 29/30 November. This will be an opportunity to confirm the strong solidarity with those most vulnerable to climate change and the determination to work together to build strong and sustainable economies and societies resilient to climate change. The European Union and the African Union reaffirm their commitment to continuing to address the adverse effects of climate change on human and animal health, natural ecosystems and other social and economic impacts that threaten our developmental gains as a global community. The statement is available [here](#). (For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Conference “An Action Plan for nature, people and the economy”, 6 June

On Monday 6 June, the Commission is co-hosting, with the Committee of the

Regions and the Maltese Presidency of the Council, a conference to present the recently adopted [Action Plan for nature, people and the economy](#). First Vice-President **Timmermans**, Vice-President **Katainen** and Commissioner **Vella** will open the debate and will discuss how the newly adopted Action Plan will improve the implementation of EU nature legislation on the ground. First Vice-President **Timmermans** said: “*Europe is moving from a ‘you only live once’ society to a ‘we only have one world’ society. By investing in nature we are investing in ourselves and our children. Together with stakeholders we will improve the implementation of our EU nature legislation so we can grow our economies, secure our environment and lead by example.*” European Commission Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, said: “*In order to ensure the success of the Action Plan for nature people and the economy, it is crucial to engage with all relevant stakeholders, in particular local and regional authorities. I look forward to participating in this conference, which represents an excellent opportunity to do just that.*” Commissioner **Vella** said: “*With the help of local and regional actors we have today an ambitious Action Plan to help protect our natural resources for a more resilient economy and local communities. There is definitely plenty of work ahead. After 25 years of Natura 2000, we have a very solid foundation. But we need to push on.*” The Action Plan follows up the [Fitness Check of the Nature Directives](#) which showed that while the Nature Directives were fit for purpose, implementation needs to be improved, to take account of the concerns of local and regional authorities. The discussions of the conference will focus on the 15 actions outlined in the Action Plan and will emphasise the attraction for investment in nature. If EU rules are properly implemented, protected areas could yield substantial economic benefits for local communities through tourism, cleaner water, pollination or climate mitigation. The conference can be followed live [here](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

La Haute Représentante/Vice-Présidente Federica Mogherini assistera au Sommet de la Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEDEAO) au Liberia et se rendra au Mali pour la rencontre des ministres du G5 Sahel

Le 4 juin, la HR/VP entamera une visite en Afrique de l'Ouest et dans la région du Sahel. Cette visite a pour objectif de renforcer la coopération de l'UE avec les pays de la région à travers la gestion de défis communs en matière de paix, sécurité et développement économique. La première étape commencera au Liberia où la HR/VP **Mogherini** s'adressera au Sommet de la Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest afin de réitérer le soutien de l'UE à l'organisation régionale. En marge du Sommet, la HR/VP tiendra une série de rencontres bilatérales avec des Chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement. La visite se poursuivra au Mali du 4 au 6 juin. La HR/VP **Federica Mogherini** rencontrera le Président du Mali, Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, le Ministre des Affaires étrangères Abdoulaye Diop et d'autres membres du gouvernement malien pour discuter des relations bilatérales ainsi que du soutien important qu'apporte l'UE à la stabilisation, au processus de paix et réconciliation nationale, et au développement du pays. Dans ce contexte, elle participera également à une réunion du Comité de suivi de l'Accord (Accord de Paix) le 5 juin. La HR/VP assistera ensuite à la 3ème rencontre des Ministres

du G5 Sahel à Bamako avec les Ministres des Affaires étrangères du Burkina Faso, du Mali, de la Mauritanie, du Niger et du Tchad. Cette 3ème rencontre ministérielle du G5 sera l'occasion de confirmer que l'UE se tient prête à soutenir davantage les projets concrets initiés par les pays du G5 Sahel afin de renforcer notre coopération face aux défis communs, tels que l'éradication de la pauvreté, l'emploi des jeunes et la lutte contre le terrorisme. La HR/VP participera ainsi à une rencontre avec des jeunes du Sahel et de la région. Fiche technique sur [les relations entre l'UE et les pays du Sahel](#), et plus d'information sur [EUCAP Sahel Mali](#) et [EUTM Mali](#). Les conférences de presse et différents reportages audiovisuels sur la mission seront mis en ligne et sur EbS la semaine prochaine. (For more information: Catherine Ray – Tel.: +32 229 69921; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

Vice-President Šefčovič in China for Mission Innovation and Clean Energy Ministerial meetings

On 6-8 June Vice-President for Energy Union Maroš Šefčovič will be travelling to China to co-chair the second [Mission Innovation ministerial](#). Back-to-back with the Clean Energy Ministerial, both International fora offer a robust platform for respectively accelerating clean energy innovation and facilitating its uptake by a global market. Vice-President Šefčovič will hold a series of bilateral meetings i.a. with the Canadian Minister of Natural Resources James Gordon Carr, US Secretary of Energy Rick Perry and the Chinese Minister of Science and Technology Wan Gang. Together with Swedish Minister for Energy Ibrahim Baylan, Vice-President Šefčovič will announce the launch of next year's Mission Innovation and Clean Energy Ministerial meetings in Europe. Together with former Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC Christiana Figueres, he will speak at the high-level dialogue on the collective role that cities and local governments can play through organisations such as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy and attends public private roundtable aiming at accelerating innovation in clean energy technology through public and private collaboration. Ahead of the visit, Vice-President Šefčovič said: *"The global clean energy transition is ongoing and irreversible. The EU-China Summit shows the global lead taken by both the EU and China on climate action. The Paris agreement is an unprecedented success of multilateral partnership between countries across the world. Mission Innovation and the Clean Energy Ministerial are key to reach the goals of Paris and reap the benefits of the clean energy transition. The world can count on Europe to maintain its leadership in providing a global response to climate change and accelerating the pace of clean energy innovation worldwide"*. The EU joined the Mission Innovation in 2016, see more information [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)

Vice-President Dombrovskis in Riga

Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union,

will be in Riga, Latvia, on Monday. He will hold a number of meetings related to economic and financial affairs as well as deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will meet the European Affairs Committee as well as the Budget and Finance (Taxation) Committee of the Latvian Parliament. On Monday, following a working lunch with the Foreign Affairs Minister Edgars Rinkēvičs, Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will meet the Association of Latvian Commercial Banks to discuss the [public consultation on FinTech](#), as well as the board members of the non-governmental organisation Foreign Investors' Council in Latvia (FICIL). (For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Juliana Dahl – Tel.: +32 229 59914)

Animal welfare: EU platform to be launched next week

Next Tuesday (6 June 2017) Commissioner **Andriukaitis**, in charge of Health and Food safety, will address members of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare at its inaugural meeting. The Platform has been set up to coordinate actions related to animal welfare and to share best experiences by relevant stakeholders. Commissioner **Andriukaitis** said: "*I expect the Platform to be a true engine for real and concrete progress in the area of animal welfare in the EU. We can achieve this if all the actors make every effort to better implement the existing rules and commit to concrete improvements on the ground.*" The EU Platform on Animal Welfare brings together all relevant stakeholders involved in the field of animal welfare: business and professional organisations, organisations from civil society, independent experts from academic and research institutes, EU and European Economic Area Member States, the European Food Safety Authority and relevant international intergovernmental organisations. The Platform's main objectives and desired outcomes are, first of all, the better application of EU rules on animal welfare, through exchanges of information, best practices and the direct involvement of stakeholders. Secondly, the development and use of voluntary commitments by businesses to further improve animal welfare. Finally, the Platform intends to focus on how to promote EU animal welfare standards better in order to increase the market value of the Union's products globally. At the inaugural meeting, the members will discuss how the Platform can contribute to better implementation and understanding of EU legislation on animal welfare at national, European and global level, and share good practices and professional experiences. The meeting will be web-streamed [here](#) and [on EbS](#) (at 10:00 CET). The [agenda](#) is available online. (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

La Commissaire Cretu à Molenbeek: "L'UE investit pour l'avenir et pour le vivre-ensemble"

Mardi matin la Commissaire à la politique régionale Corina **Cretu** visitera des projets soutenus par la politique de Cohésion de l'UE à Molenbeek, dans la région de Bruxelles-Capitale. Dans le cadre de la campagne [#InvestEU](#), qui fait connaitre aux citoyens les opportunités offertes par les investissements de l'UE, la Commissaire visitera le site Belle-vue, qui regroupe plusieurs

projets d'inclusion sociale et de formation professionnelle, notamment pour les jeunes de la commune – le centre de formation [Hôtel Belvue](#), Molenbeek formation et [Art2Work](#). Elle effectuera cette visite aux côtés du Ministre-Président de la région, Rudi Vervoort, la Bourgmestre de Molenbeek-Saint-Jean, Françoise Schepmans, Aboubakr Bensaihi, chanteur et acteur du film 'Black', et Nel Vandevannet, Directrice de programme Belgique Médecins du Monde, dont l'association a reçu des fonds européens pour la construction d'un centre d'assistance sociale et de soins pour les migrants à Molenbeek (voir notre [communiqué](#) sur le sujet). En amont de sa visite, la Commissaire [Cretu](#) a déclaré: "A Molenbeek comme partout en Europe, l'UE investit pour l'avenir et le vivre-ensemble. Les projets que je vais visiter montrent comment l'Europe soutient la création d'emplois, protège les jeunes, les populations marginalisées et tous ceux qui se sentent exclus, et leur donne les moyens de réussir." Plus d'informations sur l'action et les investissements de l'UE dans le développement urbain durable, notamment dans le cadre de [l'Agenda Urbain de l'UE](#), et sur [les fonds européens en Belgique](#), sont disponibles en ligne. (Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

[Calendar](#)

The Commissioners' weekly activities

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

[HR/VP Federica Mogherini meets with the Syrian opposition repres](#)

The HRVP Federica Mogherini met today with the newly-elected President of the Syrian Opposition Coalition (SOC) Mr Riad Seif, and the Prime Minister of the Syrian Interim Government (SIG) Mr Jawad About Hatab, and their delegation to discuss the political process and support for resilience inside Syria.

They discussed the practical support the European Union can continue to give to the Syrian opposition, to civil society, and to the women of Syria, and the additional work that could be done – namely on reconstruction- if and when the parties are to succeed in negotiating a framework for a transitional political agreement, based on the relevant UNSC resolutions.

They also exchanged views on the EU's work with the Syrian Interim Government to provide resilience support through the provision of education, job creation, and support for local civilian governance structures in opposition held areas.

Both parties reiterated their commitment and support to the UN led Geneva process, calling on all parties to fully engage in the intra-Syrian

negotiations to achieve a political transition in Syria. It was agreed that only a political solution can constitute the way out of the Syrian crisis, for the sake of all Syrian people.

ESMA updates its CSDR Q&As

The updated Q&As include new answers regarding certain aspects of the regime applying to central securities depositories (CSDs):

- CSDs' investment policy;
- access to CSDs; and
- conditions to provide services in another Member State.

The purpose of this document is to promote common supervisory approaches and practices in the application of the CSDR. The Q&A mechanism is a practical convergence tool used for this purpose. It should also help investors and other market participants by providing clarity on the requirements. ESMA will periodically review these Q&As and update them where required.