

Daily News 24 / 08 / 2018

Estonia joins European initiative to develop supercomputers

Estonia is the 21st European country to sign the [European declaration on high-performance computing](#) (HPC) with the aim to pool European and national resources to build and deploy world-class supercomputers that would be ranked in the world's top-three by 2022-2023. Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus Ansip attended the signing ceremony in Tartu, Estonia. With this signature, Estonia marks its intention to join the European cooperation on supercomputing – the [EuroHPC Joint Undertaking](#) that was proposed by the European Commission in January. The Vice-President welcomed Estonia's signature and said: *"Supercomputers are becoming the engine of our economy, fuelled by large amounts of data. The EU is currently lagging behind: we do not have any supercomputers in the world's top ten. This is why we have launched the EuroHPC initiative."* High-performance computing is needed to process ever larger amounts of data and help researchers make scientific breakthroughs in many areas from healthcare and renewable energy to car safety and cybersecurity. The EuroHPC Joint Undertaking, which is due to begin operations before the end of this year, will cover the whole value chain from technology components to systems and machines, and to applications and skills. It will offer expertise and training with a particular focus on helping small and medium-sized companies. The EU's contribution in the cooperation project will be around €486 million under the current EU budget, which should be matched by a similar amount from Member States and associated countries. Further details are available [here](#). More information on enhanced cooperation in the EU is available [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – tel.: +32 229 62253; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of LNG trading and optimisation business of EDF Trading by JERA Trading

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of the LNG trading and optimisation business of EDF Trading Limited of the United Kingdom, by JERA Trading Pte Ltd, of Singapore. JERA Trading is jointly controlled by JERA Co. Inc., of Japan, and EDF Trading, belonging to the French EDF group. JERA Trading is currently active in coal and freight trading and optimisation. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns, because it does not result in any overlaps. 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.8879](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100)

Mergers: Commission approves the acquisition of Sonae Sierra by Sonae

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of sole control over Sonae Sierra SGPS SA ("Sonae Sierra") by Sonae SGPS SA ("Sonae"), a company ultimately controlled by Efanor Investimentos SA ("Efanor"), all of Portugal. Sonae Sierra is active in real

estate services. Sonae is active in retail and wholesale distribution of food and non-food products and the management of related real estate assets, as well as in telecommunications, media and technology. Other companies controlled by Efanor are active in the production of wood-based boards and related products as well as in other sectors, such as tourism, hospitality, fitness, energy and refrigeration. The Commission found that, since Sonae already jointly controlled Sonae Sierra prior to the transaction, the acquisition will not bring a significant change in the market. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns. 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.9058](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis in Minsk

On 27 August, Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, Commissioner for Health and Food safety will be in Minsk, Belarus to meet with Mr Mikhail I. Rusyi, Deputy Prime Minister and Mr Ivan Smilhin, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food, Director of the Department of Veterinary and Food Control, Mr Valery Malashko, Minister of Public Health and Mr Oleg Kravchenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. *“I am looking forward to engaging in fruitful discussions with our Belarus counterparts on issues related to animal diseases, including African Swine Fever, bilateral market access issues, antimicrobial resistance, vaccination and non-communicable diseases among others”*, said Commissioner **Andriukaitis** ahead of the visit. On Tuesday, Commissioner will visit the [EU funded project site in Navahrudak](#) and the Lithuanian Centre of Education, Culture and Information in Rymdziuny. (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

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

[ESMA to renew prohibition on binary options for a further three months](#)

The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) has agreed to renew the prohibition of the marketing, distribution or sale of binary options to retail clients, in effect since 2 July, from 2 October 2018 for a further three-month period. ESMA has also agreed on the exclusion of a limited number of products from the scope of the measure.

ESMA has carefully considered the need to extend the intervention measure currently in effect. ESMA considers that a significant investor protection

concern related to the offer of binary options to retail clients continues to exist. It has therefore agreed to renew the prohibition from 2 October.

During its review of the intervention measure, ESMA considered the specific features of binary options currently within the scope of the measures. Certain binary options were found to have specific features which mitigate the risk of investor detriment, namely; they are sufficiently long-term (at least 90 days); are accompanied by a prospectus; and are fully hedged by the provider or another entity within the same group as the provider. ESMA considers that a binary option that benefits from the cumulative effect of these three criteria is less likely to lead to a significant investor protection concern.

In addition, products that at the end of the term have one of two predetermined pay-outs, neither of which is less than the initial investment of the client, will be excluded. The pay-out for this type of binary option could be the higher or lower one but in either circumstances the investor would not lose money compared to their total investment. As the investor's capital is not at risk these products should be explicitly excluded.

Hence, ESMA agreed to exclude from the scope of the renewal the following binary options:

- a binary option for which the lower of the two predetermined fixed amounts is at least equal to the total payment made by a retail client for the binary option, including any commissions, transaction fees and other related costs; and
- a binary option that meets cumulatively the following three (3) conditions:
 - (a) the term from issuance to maturity is at least ninety (90) calendar days;
 - (b) a prospectus drawn up and approved in accordance with the Prospectus Directive (2003/71/EC) is available to the public; and
 - (c) the binary option does not expose the provider to market risk throughout the term of the binary option and the provider or any of its group entities do not make a profit or loss from the binary option, other than previously disclosed commissions, transaction fees or other related charges.

ESMA will continue to keep these products under review during the prohibition period. The renewal was agreed by ESMA's Board of Supervisors on 22 August 2018.

Next steps

ESMA intends to adopt the renewal measure in the official languages of the EU in the coming weeks, following which ESMA will publish an official notice on its website. The measure will then be published in the Official Journal of the EU and will start to apply from 2 October 2018 for a period of three months.

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La Commission européenne adopte un programme de soutien pour l'Iran, axé sur le secteur privé

Aujourd'hui, la Commission a adopté une aide à hauteur de 18 millions d'euros pour des projets en faveur du développement économique et social durable en Iran, dont 8 millions d'euros pour le secteur privé. Les projets s'inscrivent dans un ensemble plus vaste d'aides à hauteur de 50 millions d'euros pour l'Iran, visant à assister le pays à faire face aux principaux défis économiques et sociaux. La haute représentante / vice-présidente **Federica Mogherini** a déclaré: " *La coopération s'est développée dans de nombreux secteurs depuis que les relations entre l'UE et l'Iran ont été relancées à la suite de l'accord sur le nucléaire iranien. Nous nous engageons à la poursuivre et, ce nouvel ensemble de mesures approfondira les relations économiques et sectorielles dans des domaines qui profitent directement à nos citoyens.*" Le commissaire chargé de la coopération internationale et du développement, **Neven Mimica**, a déclaré pour sa part: " *Avec cette mesure, l'UE témoigne de son soutien à la population iranienne et à son développement pacifique et durable. Elle encourage tous les acteurs présents en Iran, et plus particulièrement le secteur privé, à s'engager davantage.* » "Les activités visant le secteur privé incluront le soutien aux petites et moyennes entreprises (PMEs) iraniennes à fort potentiel, le développement de chaînes de valeur sélectionnées et l'assistance technique à l'Organisation iranienne pour la promotion du commerce. Dans le cadre de ce programme de soutien de 18 millions d'euros, la Commission fournira également une assistance technique dans le domaine des défis environnementaux pour un montant de 8 millions d'euros et soutiendra la prévention et la réduction des problèmes engendrés par l'usage des drogues, avec une aide de 2 millions d'euros. Le communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). Pour plus d'informations sur les relations UE-Iran, veuillez consulter [la page web](#) dédiée. (Pour plus d'information: *Maja Kocijančič – Tél.: +32 229 86570; Lauranne Devillé – Tél.: +32 229 80833; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140*)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Stena Renewable by Stena Sphere, AMF and KLP

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Stena Renewable AB, of Sweden, by Stena Sphere and AMF Pensionförsäkring AB ("AMF"), both of Sweden, and Kommunal Landspensjonskasse gjensidig forsikringsselskap ("KLP") of Norway. Stena Renewable is engaged in the business of wind power production and owns, directly and indirectly through subsidiaries, certain onshore wind parks as well as certain assets and rights to develop, construct and operate new onshore wind parks in Sweden. Prior to the transaction, Stena Renewable was indirectly controlled by Stena Sphere whose activities mainly relate to shipping. AMF is a life insurance company providing pensions to individuals and companies. KLP is

active in the provision of pension, insurance, banking and financial services. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns, because it would not result in any overlaps. 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.8978](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Asia Healthcare Holdings by Sheares Healthcare and TPG Growth

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of Asia Healthcare Holdings Pte. Ltd. (“AHH”) by Sheares Healthcare Group Pte. Ltd. and TPG Growth III SF Pte. Ltd., all of Singapore. AHH is the holding company for Rhea Healthcare Pte. Ltd. and Cancer Treatment Services International, which provide health services in India. Sheares Healthcare provides healthcare services in Asia, via its portfolio companies. TPG Growth is a private investment firm. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns, because AHH has no actual or foreseen activities within 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.9051](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control of Allocate Software by HgCapital and Vista Equity Partners

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of Allocate Software by Vista Equity Partners and HgCapital LLP. Allocate Software is a provider of workforce and risk management software primarily to the healthcare industry. Vista Equity Partners is a U.S. based private equity firm that is focused on investments in software, data and technology-enabled businesses. HgCapital is a private equity firm which invests mainly in Europe into technology and technology enabled service businesses including the provision of business software. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the companies' moderate combined market position resulting from the proposed transaction. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.8984](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Gabriel in Argentina for G20 ministerial meeting on digital economy

Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** will attend the [G20](#) Digital Economy Ministerial meeting today and tomorrow in Salta, Argentina. She will join the other G20 partners in discussing the impact of the digital transformation on global development. The Commissioner will bring the EU's perspective to a debate centred on [online platforms](#), digital for

development, [e-government](#) and the [digital gender divide](#). She will use this opportunity to present EU action in areas such as the [Digital4Her](#) strategy to promote a diverse and inclusive digital sector. The Argentinian presidency of G20 will present at the meeting a toolkit to measure the advancement of the digital economy globally. In this context, the Commissioner will inform colleagues on the progress of the [Digital Economy & Society Index](#), which summarises Europe's digital performance and tracks the evolution of EU Member States in digital competitiveness. The G20 Digital Economy Ministers are expected to sign a declaration that reflects their determination to pursue the work begun under previous G20 presidencies in strengthening the global digital economy. The Commissioner will also hold a number of bilateral meetings with key partners of the EU in developing an open, rules-based approach to the challenges of the digital economy and society. The Commissioner will hold today a meeting with Japan's State Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Manabu Sakai and Vice-Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Daisaku Hiraki. Tomorrow she will meet China's Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology Miao Wei, Minister of Modernisation of Argentina Andrés Ibarra, Indonesia's Minister of Communication and Informatics Rudiantara, Indian Union Minister of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and Ministry for Law & Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad, as well as Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Mukhisa Kituyi. *(For more information: Christian Wigand – tel.: +32 229 62253; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)*

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

[European Commission adopts support package for Iran, with a focus on the private sector](#)

Today's projects are the first of a wider package of €50 million for Iran, aiming to support the country to address key economic and social challenges. They are part of the renewed cooperation and engagement between the European Union and Iran following the conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: "Since the renewal of the EU-Iran relations as a result of the Iran nuclear deal, cooperation has developed in many sectors. We are committed to sustain it and this new package will widen economic and sectoral relations in areas that are of direct benefit to our citizens".

Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica**,

said: “With these measures, the EU demonstrates its support to the Iranian people and their peaceful and sustainable development. It encourages stronger involvement of all actors in Iran and in particular the private sector.”

Activities supporting the private sector will include support to high-potential Iranian Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), the development of selected value chains, and technical assistance to Iran’s Trade Promotion Organisation.

As part of the €18 million, the Commission will also provide technical support in the area of environmental challenges for €8 million and support drug harm reduction for €2 million.

The projects will be implemented by the [International Trade Centre](#), EU Member State agencies, and other organisations in close cooperation with Iranian counterparts.

Background

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran nuclear deal, concluded on 14 July 2015, opened the way for a new chapter in EU-Iran relations. A high level EU delegation – High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini and seven Commissioners – [visited Tehran](#) in this context in April 2016 and since then the cooperation has evolved in various sectors ranging from economic cooperation, transport and energy to education and culture, as well as global challenges such as climate change, drugs, migration and refugee flows.

Cooperation between the EU and Iran in these sectors involves high-level dialogues, technical exchanges and concrete projects. This includes support to Iran’s national nuclear regulatory authority and the Bushehr nuclear power plant. The Commission also assists Iran since 2001 by providing support to the education, health care, and job opportunities benefitting the 3.5 million Afghan refugees and migrants residing in the country.

The European Union is fully committed to the continued, full and effective implementation of the JCPOA, as long as Iran respects its nuclear-related commitments. The lifting of nuclear-related sanctions allowing for the normalisation of trade and economic relations with Iran constitutes an essential part of the JCPOA.

For more information:

[Joint statement by the High Representative/Vice-President of the European Union, Federica Mogherini and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Javad Zarif, 16 April 2016](#)

[Statement from the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, 6 July 2018](#)

[Joint statement on the re-imposition of US sanctions due to its withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action \(JCPOA\), 6 August 2018](#)

[Press release: Updated Blocking Statute in support of Iran nuclear deal](#)

Securitisation

ANNEX15 INSIDE INFORMATION-

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