

Pologne: une meilleure sécurité énergétique grâce à la politique de Cohésion

145,5 millions d'euros du Fonds européen de développement régional (FEDER) sont investis dans la construction du gazoduc "Pogórska Wola- Tworzeń", une canalisation de 168 km pour le transport de gaz naturel, traversant les régions polonaises de Małopolskie, Świętokrzyskie et Śląskie (Petite-Pologne, Sainte-Croix et Silésie), au Sud du pays. Ce gazoduc fait partie du corridor Nord-Sud, projet dit "d'intérêt commun" inscrit dans le plan décennal de développement 2017 établi par le réseau européen des gestionnaires de réseaux de transport de gaz (REGRT pour le gaz). La commissaire à la politique régionale Corina Crețu a commenté: "Ce gazoduc soutenu par les fonds européens est une nouvelle pierre apportée à l'édifice du marché européen de l'énergie ainsi qu'à la diversification des sources d'énergie dans l'Union Européenne. Il contribuera à fournir aux polonais une énergie plus abordable, sûre et durable." Le corridor Nord-Sud est composé de 10 projets différents, dont 6 sont pour l'instant cofinancés par l'UE. La contribution totale de l'UE à ces 6 projets pendant la période budgétaire 2014-2020 s'élève à 275 millions d'euros. Le gazoduc "Pogórska Wola- Tworzeń" devrait être achevé à la fin de 2020. (Pour plus d'informations: Vanessa Mock – Tel.: +32 229 56194, Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

L'UE en première ligne dans la lutte contre le virus Ebola en RDC

"L'UE continue de suivre de près la nouvelle épidémie d'Ebola en République Démocratique du Congo. Nous apportons tout notre soutien pour aider à contenir le virus. Nos experts humanitaires sont sur place dans les zones affectées, et travaillent dur et de concert avec les autres acteurs d'intervention d'urgence. Nous ne pouvons pas et nous ne serons pas complaisants avec Ebola, nous ne baissons pas la garde. Nous poursuivrons notre soutien aussi longtemps que nécessaire," a déclaré le commissaire chargé de l'aide humanitaire et de la gestion de crises Christos Stylianides. Durant le week-end, le Commissaire s'est entretenu avec Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Directeur général de l'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé. Ils ont évalué la situation sur place et le commissaire Stylianides a réitéré le soutien indéfectible de l'UE à la lutte conjointe contre Ebola. Tous deux ont convenu de rester en contact constant. Lorsque l'épidémie d'Ebola a été déclarée dans la province du Nord Kivu par le Ministère de la santé congolais le 1 août 2018, la Commission européenne a immédiatement mobilisé une aide d'urgence. En plus de l'envoi d'experts humanitaires de la Commission dans le pays, les [services humanitaires aériens ECHO Flight](#) ont mené jusqu'alors huit vols transportant du personnel, du matériel médical et des équipements vers la ville de Beni, dans la zone touchée par Ebola. (Pour plus d'informations: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322 ; Esther Osorio – Tel.: +32 229 62076)

Agreement signed for new digital data highway between Europe and Latin America

A group of 11 European and Latin American research and education networks forming the [BELLA \(Building Europe Link to Latin America\)](#) consortium, which is partially funded by the European Commission, have signed a contract to build [Ellalink](#), an underwater fibre optic cable in the Atlantic Ocean connecting Europe and Latin America. The cable will be operational in 2020 and will provide reliable high capacity connectivity to boost scientific and cultural exchanges as well as business. It is additionally a step forward in the creation of an [EU-Latin America](#) common research area. Construction of the cable will start as soon as the contract enters into force in the coming months. The Commission is investing around €26.5 million in the project, with funding from [Horizon 2020](#), the [Copernicus programme](#) and the regional [Development Cooperation Instrument](#). More details are available [here](#). (For more information: Vanessa Mock – tel.: +32 229 56194; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

State aid: Commission clears inclusion of new combined heat and power plant in Polish scheme to support high-efficiency co-generation

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, Poland's plans to include a 600 megawatt gas-fired combined heat and power plant located in Płock in its existing scheme to support high-efficiency co-generation of heat and electricity. Cogeneration increases energy efficiency by recycling the heat from power generation for other uses, to the overall benefit of the environment. The Polish scheme was approved by the Commission in [September 2016](#). Under the scheme, combined heat and power plants are granted certificates for each megawatt-hour of electricity they generate in combined heat and power mode. These certificates have a value because all suppliers in the Polish market are required to purchase a certain quantity of certificates or pay a penalty. The Commission found that the addition of the Płock plant to the scheme will contribute to the EU's energy and environmental objectives without unduly distorting competition in the Internal Market, in line with the Commission's 2014 [Guidelines on State aid for environmental protection and energy](#). Poland had to notify to the Commission the addition of the plant to the national scheme because the plant exceeds the 300 megawatt individual notification threshold set out in the Guidelines. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the [State Aid Register](#) under the case number SA.50305. (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100).

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principles of the EU third energy package

The WTO panel did not find basis to the claim concerning the alleged EU discrimination in its “Third Energy Package” against Russian pipeline transport services, service suppliers, or against Russian natural gas. The panel ruled in favour of the EU concerning the rules on “unbundling”, i.e. the requirement to separate energy supply and generation from the operation of transmission networks, as well as on liquefied natural gas (LNG) and on upstream pipeline networks. This is an important positive outcome for the EU, as it secures the core elements of the Third Energy Package.

The Commission will now analyse the ruling in detail, in particular as regards a limited number of issues on which the WTO-compatibility of EU energy policy has still not been recognised.

Background

The Third Energy Package consists of EU legislation for integrating the internal energy market. It includes rules on, in particular, the separation of energy supply and generation from the operation of transmission networks (unbundling), non-discriminatory access to energy infrastructure and independence of national energy regulators. An integrated and competitive EU energy market is the most cost-effective way to ensure secure and affordable supplies to EU citizens and business with a choice of energy supplier.

For more information

[Panel report](#)

[History of the case](#)

EU third energy package: [MEMO](#) and [EU Market Legislation](#)

[WTO dispute settlement](#)

South Sudan: EU transposes UN Security Council resolution 2428 reinforcing sanctions

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The Council has transposed UN Security Council resolution 2428 (2018) which notably imposes an **arms embargo** and **adds two persons** to the list of persons and entities subject to restrictive measures.

The EU already had an arms embargo in place on South Sudan since 2011. The two persons added had also already been sanctioned by the EU autonomously since 2 February 2018 for being involved in serious human rights violations. The Council adopted these additional sanctions, then, in view of the ever **deteriorating humanitarian and security situation** in South Sudan and considering **the lack of commitment by some actors to the ongoing peace process**.

The Council last adopted conclusions on South Sudan on 16 April 2018. The conclusions noted that **2018 is a critical year for securing peace in South Sudan**, as it is when the term of the transitional government of National Unity as set out in the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) comes to an end. They reaffirmed the EU's deep concern at the continued fighting and grave violations and abuses of human rights that have inflicted **horrific levels of human suffering** and left the country in ruins. In the conclusions, the EU urges all parties to the conflict in South Sudan to **immediately cease fighting** and participate in the **peace process** in good faith.

The total number of persons under EU restrictive measures in view of the situation in South Sudan is nine, of which eight are listed by the UN.

The legal acts were adopted by written procedure. They will be published in the Official Journal of 13 August.

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[European Solidarity Corps: Commission opens new call for project proposals](#)

This is the first of a series of calls that will allow at least 100,000 young people to take part in the Corps until the end of 2020.

Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, Günther H. **Oettinger**, said:
"With the launch of this new call under the European Solidarity Corps, we are delivering on our commitment to create more opportunities for young people to

engage in solidarity activities. Funded by the EU budget, the European Solidarity Corps is the best framework for young people to learn, share and use their energy for the common good."

Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport said: *"Solidarity is one of the key values of the European Union. Time and again, young people across the EU have shown their willingness to help those in need. By creating a dedicated framework and making available the necessary funding for the period 2018-2020, we want to give them more opportunities to engage, including the possibility to form a group of volunteers and come up with their own ideas for solidarity projects."*

Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**, added: *"The European Solidarity Corps helps young people in their professional development and their integration into the labour market. With its strong European dimension of solidarity, the Corps is an extraordinary opportunity for young people to develop interpersonal skills and acquire new knowledge, all of these bringing an added value to them and society in general."*

Which projects are eligible?

The call launched today is open to a broader range of projects than ever before: in addition to longer-term individual volunteering, traineeships and jobs in solidarity fields, the following projects will be eligible:

- Organisations will be able to offer short-term projects (from 2 weeks to 2 months) for teams of volunteers. Organisations will first need to receive a quality label, for which they can apply at any time by submitting a request to the Erasmus+ national agency, or in certain cases, to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.
- Not only public and private bodies established in EU Member States can apply for funding. Young people registered in the [European Solidarity Corps Portal](#) will also be able to form a group of at least 5 participants and set up youth-led solidarity activities themselves.
- Certain European Solidarity Corps projects in the field of volunteering are also open to the participation of non EU-organisations from Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and other partner countries.

Next steps

Projects under the call for proposals launched today will be selected once the European Parliament and Council formally adopt the Commission proposal, following [their political agreement in June 2018](#). The deadline to apply is 16 October 2018, except for projects of volunteering teams, who have time to apply until 18 February 2019.

Background

The detailed conditions of the call for proposals launched today, including the priorities and instructions for submission of applications for each project can be found in the [European Solidarity Corps Guide](#).

[The European Solidarity Corps was launched in December 2016](#). Since then, 72,000 young people have registered and about 7,000 of them are involved in solidarity activities.

In May 2017, the Commission put forward a proposal to dedicate more than €340 million to the EU Solidarity Corps, and to strengthen its legal structure, so that 100,000 young people can participate by the end of 2020. In June 2018, the European Parliament and the Council reached a political agreement on this proposal, which must now be formally adopted by both. In the meantime, preparatory steps can be taken, including the launch of the call for proposals today.

On 11 June 2018, the Commission put forward its [proposal for the European Solidarity Corps beyond 2020](#), allocating €1.26 billion to allow about 350,000 young people to take part in a solidarity activity.

For more information

[Strengthening the European Solidarity Corps: Joint statement by Commissioners Navracsics, Oettinger and Thyssen \(27 June 2018\)](#)

[Factsheet: The European Solidarity Corps in Action](#)

[Press release: European Solidarity Corps: Commission proposes more than €340 million to enable 100 000 placements by 2020](#)

[European Solidarity Corps call and guide](#)

[European Solidarity Corps portal](#)

[Daily News 10 / 08 / 2018](#)

European Solidarity Corps: Commission opens new call for project proposals

The European Commission is calling on interested parties to put forward ideas for projects under the European Solidarity Corps. A total of €44 million has been set aside from the EU budget for selected projects that will be open to all young people across Europe and beyond. This is the first of a series of calls that will allow at least 100,000 young people to take part in the Corps until the end of 2020. Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, Günther H. **Oettinger**, said: *“With the launch of this new call under the European Solidarity Corps, we are delivering on our commitment to create more*

opportunities for young people to engage in solidarity activities. Funded by the EU budget, the European Solidarity Corps is the best framework for young people to learn, share and use their energy for the common good.” Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport said: “Solidarity is one of the key values of the European Union. Time and again, young people across the EU have shown their willingness to help those in need. By creating a dedicated framework and making available the necessary funding for the period 2018-2020, we want to give them more opportunities to engage, including the possibility to form a group of volunteers and come up with their own ideas for solidarity projects.” Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**, added: “The European Solidarity Corps helps young people in their professional development and their integration into the labour market. With its strong European dimension of solidarity, the Corps is an extraordinary opportunity for young people to develop interpersonal skills and acquire new knowledge, all of these bringing an added value to them and society in general.” More information is available in this [press release](#) and [memo](#). A factsheet with the latest figures is available [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094)

Juncker Plan supports Bavarian Nordic’s vaccine production with €30 million EIB loan

The European Union is supporting biotech company Bavarian Nordic with a €30 million loan from the European Investment Bank (EIB) which is guaranteed under the Juncker Plan’s European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). Bavarian Nordic will use the funding to build and furnish a production facility on its existing site in Kvistgård, Denmark, where it uses advanced biotechnological manufacturing processes and technologies for the production of vaccines. Bavarian Nordic has played a pivotal role in the fight against communicable diseases – notably Ebola – and by developing defence mechanisms against potential bioterrorism threats, such as smallpox, the biotech firm is a key contributor to the European Security Initiative. Commissioner Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, responsible for Health and Food Safety, said: “Global health security is a matter of universal concern and key priority for the European Commission. The Ebola crisis showed that very clearly and gave us an important lesson on the necessity to work together to prevent new types of threats. The EIB loan allocated today under the Juncker Plan shows once again a joint commitment to support the EU’s capacity to deal with health threats by encouraging the research and development of innovative therapies against infectious diseases, cancer and other threats.” (Full press release can be found [here](#). For more information: Christian Spahr – Tel.: +32 229 50055; Siobhán Millbright – Tel.: +32 229 57361)

La Commission aide cinq régions à utiliser des procédures de passation des marchés publics plus innovantes et responsables avec les fonds européens

La Commission, en partenariat avec l’Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques ([OCDE](#)), va fournir un soutien personnalisé au comité de coordination et de développement de la région portugaise du Centre, à l’autorité athénienne pour le transport urbain, à la région italienne des Pouilles et aux régions grecques de Grèce Centrale et de Macédoine-Orientale-

et-Thrace, afin de les aider à utiliser des procédures de passation de marchés publics plus innovantes pour des projets cofinancés par l'UE. Ce soutien vise à promouvoir des critères de durabilité environnementale, d'impact social et d'innovation, au-delà du simple critère du coût. *“La Commission va aider les autorités gérant les fonds européens à en avoir plus pour leur argent,”* a commenté la Commissaire à la politique régionale Corina Crețu, *“Des procédures de marchés publics plus innovantes et responsables pour un meilleur rapport qualité-prix, voilà un exemple concret d'un budget de l'UE résolument axé sur les résultats.”* Elżbieta Bieńkowska, commissaire en charge du marché intérieur, de l'industrie, de l'entrepreneuriat et des PME, a ajouté: *“ La Commission veut aider les autorités publiques à maximiser l'impact des achats publics, en termes d'objectifs sociaux, d'innovation et de durabilité, notamment via la recommandation de l'UE sur la professionnalisation des acheteurs publics”*. Les autorités locales et régionales sélectionnées vont bénéficier du soutien de la Commission pour les projets suivants: Centre, Portugal: projets de recherche et innovation en lien avec [la stratégie régionale de spécialisation intelligente](#); Athènes, Grèce: achat de véhicules plus respectueux de l'environnement pour le transport urbain; dans les Pouilles italiennes: nouvelles technologies et services administratifs innovants dans le domaine de la gestion de l'eau; Grèce Centrale: un système moderne et respectueux de l'environnement pour l'épuration des eaux près de la rivière Asopos; Macédoine-Orientale-et-Thrace: projets liés à la stratégie de développement territoriale des zones montagneuses de Rodopi et Nestos. Ce soutien s'inscrit dans le cadre du [Plan d'Action](#) de la Commission pour les marchés publics et correspond aux orientations politiques du [Paquet Marchés Publics](#) de 2017. (Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

EU supports Bosnia and Herzegovina in managing the migration flows with additional €6 million

Today the European Commission adopted a special measure for an amount of €6 million to support [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) in managing the migration flows. The EU funds will improve the capacity of Bosnia and Herzegovina for identification, registration and referral of third-country nationals crossing the border, provide accommodation and basic services for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants and strengthen the capacity for border control and surveillance, hence also contributing to the prevention of and fight against the trafficking of human beings. These funds complement the [€1.5 million already made available](#) to Bosnia and Herzegovina in June to address the immediate humanitarian needs of refugees and migrants. In addition to humanitarian assistance, since 2007 the European Commission has been providing assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the area of migration and border management for an amount of € 24.6 million. Since January 2016 Bosnia and Herzegovina also benefits from the regional programme 'Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management' worth €8 million. (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Alceo Smerilli – Tel.:+32 229 64887)

State aid: Commission approves new Slovenian commitment package for Nova Ljubljanska Banka

Following an in-depth State aid investigation opened on [26 January 2018](#), the European Commission has concluded that Slovenia's aid for Nova Ljubljanska Banka (NLB) remains compatible with EU State aid rules on the basis of a new commitment package submitted by the Slovenian authorities on 13 July 2018. Slovenia has firmly committed to an ambitious time schedule for NLB's sale – a first sale tranche of at least 50% plus one share will be sold by the end of 2018 and the Slovenian government will reduce its stake in NLB to 25% plus one share by the end of 2019. Furthermore, Slovenia prolonged key commitments and also offered new commitments to compensate for the delayed sale and restructuring process of NLB. Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *"The sale of NLB was an important remaining milestone of NLB's restructuring plan, which allowed us to approve over €2 billion of State aid to the bank in 2013. Therefore, I welcome Slovenia's commitment to a clear time path to achieve this sale. Thanks to this, the Commission can today approve Slovenia's new commitment package for NLB, ensuring that the bank will be a viable long-term player in the Slovenian banking market."* A full press release is available in [EN](#), [SL](#), [FR](#) and [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel: +32 229 55344).

State aid: Commission approves prolongation of the Polish resolution scheme for cooperative and small commercial banks

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, the prolongation of the Polish resolution scheme for twelve months. The scheme was initially [approved in December 2016](#). The measure will continue to be available for cooperative banks and small commercial banks with total assets below €3 billion, only if they are found to be in distress by the competent national authorities. The objective of the scheme is to facilitate the work of the Polish resolution authorities, should a concrete case and need arise for it. The Commission found the prolongation of the scheme to be in line with EU State aid rules, in particular the [2013 Banking Communication](#) and EU banking rules. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website in the [case register](#) under the case number SA.51403 once any confidentiality issues have been resolved. (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel: +32 229 55344).

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Pibinew by SL04 and Ambienta

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Pibinew S.r.l. of Italy by S.L.04 S.à. r. ("SL04") of Luxembourg and Ambienta Sgr S.p.A. of Italy. Pibinew designs, manufactures, decorates and sells plastic packaging for the cosmetic industry. SL04 is a private equity firm indirectly controlled by L Catterton Partners of the US whose portfolio includes companies active in the production and sale of cosmetics and fragrance products. Ambienta is a private equity firm whose portfolio companies are not active in the cosmetic sector. Pibinew and L Catterton's portfolio companies are active in vertically related markets,

namely the production and sale of cosmetic packaging, and the supply of cosmetic and fragrance products, respectively. However, the companies' individual market shares in these vertically related markets are modest and a number of strong players would remain post-transaction in both markets. Therefore, the Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no 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.9004](#). (*For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel: +32 229 55344*).

Concentrations: la Commission autorise l'acquisition de XL Group par le groupe AXA

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition de XL Group Ltd, basé en Bermuda, par le groupe AXA, basé en France. XL Group est actif dans la fourniture d'assurances et de réassurance à des entreprises industrielles, commerciales et professionnelles et aux sociétés d'assurance. AXA est actif dans l'assurance et la gestion d'actifs dans le monde entier. La Commission a conclu que l'opération envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, compte tenu de son impact très limité sur la structure du marché. La transaction a été examinée dans le cadre de 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 [M.8908](#). (*Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – +32 229 55344*)

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