Launch of Judicial Counter-Terrorism Register at Eurojust

Speeding up and strengthening the judicial response to terrorism

The Hague/Brussels, 5 September 2019

A Counter-Terrorism Register (CTR) has been launched at Eurojust to reinforce the judicial response in Member States to terrorist threats and to improve security for citizens. The CTR, which entered into force on 1 September, centralises key judicial information to establish links in proceedings against suspects of terrorist offences. The CTR is managed by Eurojust in The Hague on a 24-hour basis and provides proactive support to national judicial authorities. This centralised information will help prosecutors to coordinate more actively and to identify the suspects or networks that are being investigated in specific cases with potential cross-border implications.

Based on Council Decision 2005/671/JHA, a register has now been set up, with the support of the European Commission, the Special Committee on Terrorism of the European Parliament and the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. The international and multilateral dimension of the fight against terrorism and the importance of information sharing have been demonstrated in the growing number of ongoing judicial proceedings of which Eurojust is informed, amounting to 580 in 2018.

Eurojust President Mr Ladislav Hamran said: *'The Counter-Terrorism Register is a major step forward in the fight against terrorism. Now that terrorists operate more and more in cross-border networks, the EU must do the same. By providing swift feedback on cross-border links between judicial proceedings, we can better coordinate and speed up actions against suspects of terrorist activities. Having the right information is of essential importance to combat terrorism and will reinforce the EU as an area of justice and security.'*

Mr Frédéric Baab, until recently French National Member at Eurojust and initiator of the Counter-Terrorism Register, stated: *'In fighting terrorism, we must avoid all blind spots. The experience that we have gained in the case related to the terrorist attacks in Paris and Saint-Denis on 13 November 2015 has shown the necessity of having a complete overview of all the ongoing judicial proceedings in the Member States. With the Counter-Terrorism Register at Eurojust, we will have the tool that we need at operational level to support the coordination of investigations in terrorism cases.'*

Following the terrorist attacks in France in Paris and Saint-Denis in November 2015, crossborder links between suspects were immediately detected. France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands subsequently took the initiative to set up a register at Eurojust to collect judicial information on terrorist activities and networks and identify coordination needs.

Based on Council Decision 2005/671/JHA, a register has now been set up, with the support of the European Commission, the Special Committee on Terrorism of the European Parliament and the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. The international and multilateral dimension of the fight against terrorism and the importance of information sharing have been demonstrated in the growing number of ongoing judicial proceedings of which Eurojust is informed, amounting to 580 in 2018.

All Member States can use the CTR and are asked to register information on suspects and cases this month. A special template has been developed and common standards on the information that needs to be provided have been agreed upon, ensuring compliance with all existing data protection rules. The information for the register will be provided to Eurojust by the competent national authorities.

The CTR is a unique EU-wide database for all kinds of terrorist acts, also addressing the evolving threat from non-jihadist terrorism, including extreme right- and left-wing groups in Europe. The CTR focuses entirely on judicial proceedings and convictions and therefore will not overlap with the criminal analysis carried out by Europol.

EU leading in global agri-food trade

In a report published today, the EU confirms for yet another year its position as largest global exporter of agri-food products, with EU exports reaching €138 billion in 2018.

Agriculture products represent a solid share of 7% of the value of EU total goods exported in 2018, ranking fourth after machinery, other manufactured goods and chemicals. Agriculture and the food related industries and services together provide almost 44 million jobs in the EU. The food production and processing chain accounts for 7.5% of employment and 3.7% of total value added in the EU.

Phil **Hogan**, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development said: "*The increasingly market-oriented Common Agricultural Policy has made a decisive contribution to the EU's success in agricultural trade. The EU's reputation for having safe, sustainably produced, nutritious and quality products is a winning formula in the global marketplace. The Commission is here to assist producers in taking full advantage of opportunities around the globe, while always making sure that our more sensitive sectors are provided with sufficient safeguards*."

The top five destinations for EU's agri-food products continues to be the United States, China, Switzerland, Japan and Russia, accounting for 40% of EU exports. In addition to negotiating trade agreements that provide further opportunities for EU farmers, the European Commission helps EU exporters to enter new markets and benefit from business possibilities through promotion activities, including high-level missions led by Commissioner Hogan. In 2018 and 2019, Commissioner Hogan accompanied by EU producers travelled to China, Japan and the United Arab Emirates.

Wines and vermouth continue to dominate the basket of exported products with spirits and liqueurs ranking second. Then come infant food and various food preparations, chocolate, pasta and pastry.

Regarding imports, the report concludes that the EU became the second biggest importer of agri-food products with €116 billion worth of imports. This brings the EU trade balance for this sector to a positive net of €22 billion.

The EU mainly sources three types of products: products that are not, or only to a small extent, produced in the EU such as tropical fruit, coffee and fresh or dried fruits (representing 23.4% of imports in 2018); products that are destined for animal feed (including oilcakes and soybeans – together 10.8% of imports); and products used as ingredients in further processing (such as palm oil).

Imports from the U.S. were the fastest growing in 2018, with an increase of 10%, which makes this country the EU's top supplier of agri-food products.

The full report also includes an overview of the trade performance of the EU's key partners (United States, China, Brazil, Japan, Russia) and their trade flows with the EU, as well as a chapter on trade and cooperation with Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

For More Information

Monitoring Agri-trade Policy

[VAT Gap: Frequently asked questions]

See also [IP/19/5511]

What is VAT?

Value Added Tax (VAT) is a consumption tax, charged on most goods and services traded in the EU. The tax is levied on the ‘value added’ to the product at each stage of production and distribution. This means that VAT is charged when VAT-registered businesses sell to other businesses (B-2-B) or to the final consumer (B-2-C). VAT is intended to be ‘neutral’, in that businesses are able to reclaim any VAT that they pay on goods or services. Ultimately, the final consumer should be the only one who is actually taxed. Businesses are given a VAT identification number and have to show the VAT charged to customers on their invoices. The VAT system in the EU is governed by a common legal framework.

What is the VAT Gap?

The VAT Gap is the overall difference between the expected VAT revenue and the amount actually collected. The VAT Gap is defined as the difference between the amount of VAT amount actually collected and the VAT Total Tax Liability (VTTL), in absolute or percentage terms. The VTTL is an estimated amount of VAT that is theoretically collectable based on the VAT legislation and ancillary regulations.

The VAT Gap measures the effectiveness of VAT enforcement and compliance measures in each Member State, as it provides an estimate of revenue loss due to fraud and evasion, tax avoidance, bankruptcies, financial insolvencies as well as miscalculations.

What are the main findings of the 2017 Report on the VAT Gap?

During 2017, the overall VAT Total Tax Liability (VTTL) for the EU Member States increased by 2.9%, whereas VAT revenue increased by 4.1%. As a result, the overall VAT Gap in the EU Member States fell from €145.4 billion in 2016 to €137.5 billion in 2017. In relative terms, the EU-wide gap dropped to 11.2%, down from 12.2% in 2016.

In 2017, Member States’ estimated VAT Gaps ranged from 0.6% in Cyprus, to 35.5% in Romania. Overall, the VAT Gap decreased in the majority of Member States, with the largest improvements noted in Malta, Poland, Cyprus, Slovenia, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Portugal, Czechia and France and increased in three: Greece, Latvia and marginally in Germany.

Member State	VAT Gap %	VAT Gap (Revenues in €mn)	Member State	VAT Gap %	VAT Gap (Revenues in €mn)
Belgium	12%	3996	Lithuania	25%	1119
Bulgaria	12%	625	Luxembourg	1%	23
Czechia	12%	2082	Hungary	14%	1893
Denmark	7%	2235	Malta	2%	13
Germany	10%	25016	The Netherlands	5%	2744
Estonia	5%	122	Austria	8%	2444
Ireland	13%	1938	Poland	14%	5764
Greece	34%	7399	Portugal	10%	1929
Spain	2%	1806	Romania	36%	6413
France	7%	12030	Slovenia	4%	128
Croatia	7%	459	Slovakia	23%	1791
Italy	24%	33629	Finland	7%	1622
Cyprus	1%	11	Sweden	1%	654
Latvia	15%	385	United Kingdom	11%	19199

What is being done at EU level to improve VAT collection?

Much progress has been achieved since the beginning of the Juncker Commission mandate to strengthen the ability of Member States to administer and collect VAT in their countries:

- New rules for sales of e-services online came into force in 2015 which allows Member States to collect VAT where the consumer is based – an underlying basic principle of the tax. This is made possible through a 'One Stop Shop' which allows traders to take care of all their VAT obligations using one online portal.
- In 2017 Member States have also now agreed to extend this new system to sales of goods online, delivering another boost for VAT collection in the EU and helping authorities to recoup the current estimated €5 billion of VAT lost on online sales every year. For the first time, online marketplaces will also be made responsible for ensuring VAT is collected on sales on their platforms made by companies in non-EU countries to EU consumers.
- In 2018 the EU has also agreed on a ground-breaking new framework to exchange more information and boost cooperation between national tax authorities and law enforcement authorities. Once in force, Member States will be able to exchange more relevant information and to cooperate more closely in the fight against criminal organisations, including terrorists.

That said, Member States should now move forward and agree as soon as possible on the much broader reform to cut down on VAT fraud in the EU's system, as proposed in 2017 year by the Commission. VAT fraud results from weaknesses in the current VAT system and the way in which tax administrations manage VAT collection. As VAT is a major revenue source for Member States, VAT losses, including those due to VAT fraud, have a big impact on the State budget. The new rules would help to make the VAT system much more fraud-resilient and easy to use for business, while bringing in much needed revenues for Member States.

What methodology was used to calculate the VAT Gap?

The study derives the VTTL for each country from national accounts by mapping information on different VAT rates (standard, reduced and exemptions) onto data available on final and intermediate consumption, along with other information provided by Member States. This means that the quality of the VAT Gap estimates depends on the accuracy and completeness of national accounts data.

When national accounts figures are reliable, the methodology is precise enough to estimate the VAT Gap. The main limitation of the methodology is the quality of the national accounts: collecting better data and relying less on estimations. Moreover, Member States use different methodology to estimate the informal economy and to reflect it in their national accounts, thus indirectly affecting the VAT Gap figures.

What causes such differences in the VAT Gap between the Member States?

Variations in the VAT Gap reflect the differences in Member States in terms of tax compliance, fraud, avoidance, bankruptcies, insolvencies and tax administration. The estimates also reflect structural differences in national economies and other variables. Indirect circumstances such as the organisation of national statistics could also have an impact on the size of the VAT Gap.

What is the Policy Gap?

The Policy Gap is an indicator of the additional VAT revenue that a Member State could theoretically collect if it applied a uniform VAT rate on all consumption of goods and services supplied for consideration.

The Policy Gap as defined above can in turn be broken down into the Rate Gap and the Exemption Gap. As the terminology suggests, the Rate Gap represents the potential revenue loss due to the existence of reduced rates, whereas the Exemptions Gap represents the potential revenue loss due to the existence of exempted supplies of goods and services.

The Exemption Gap, or the average share of ‘ideal revenue’ lost due to various exemptions is normally the larger of the two and is at 35% in the EU on average. Member States with the highest Exemption Gap are Spain (46.4%) and UK (44.3%), whereas the lowest value of the Exemption Gap was observed in Cyprus (15.9%) and in six other countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, and Romania), the Exemption Gap was below 30%. The Exemption Gap in Spain is relatively high due to the application of other than VAT indirect taxes in the Canary Islands, Ceuta, and Melilla. The largest part of Exemption Gap is composed of exemptions on services that cannot be taxed in principle, such as imputed rents, the provision of public goods by the government, or financial services. The remaining level of so-called 'actionable' Exemption Gap is about 3.4% on average.

The Rate Gap, on the other hand, ranges from a low of under 1% in the case of Denmark, to a high of 29.6% in Cyprus. The average is 9.6%.

The results moderate views about the relative importance of reduced rates and exemptions in decreasing the potential VAT revenue, and suggest that better enforcement remains a key component of any strategy to improve the functioning of the VAT system.

What is the Fast Estimate?

The methodology used to estimate the VTTL for 2018 differs markedly from the one used to estimate the VTTL for 2013-2017. The main simplifications and assumptions include:

- Structure of household final consumption does not change with respect to 2017. In fact, due to unavailability of up-to-date figures, it relies in most of the cases on a three-year lagged series.
- Non-deductible Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) liability changes in line with the year-over-year change in government GFCF published by the AMECO database.
- In the vast majority of cases where there are no significant changes in the statutory rates, net adjustments and intermediate consumption liability are rescaled from 2017 using growth rates for the entire tax base.
- The main limitation of this simplified method is a potentially large estimation error that could happen due to some important component of the country-specific adjustments. In this case, fast estimates for the Member State(s) concerned are not possible.

Fast estimates indicate that the VAT Gap will likely continue its downward trend and fall below €130 billion and 10% of the VTTL in 2018.

VAT Gap: EU countries lost €137 billion in VAT revenues in 2017

EU countries lost €137 billion in Value-Added Tax (VAT) revenues in 2017 according to a study released by the European Commission today. The so-called 'VAT Gap' – or the overall difference between the expected VAT revenue and the amount actually collected – has reduced somewhat compared to previous years but remains very high. This substantial VAT Gap again highlights the need for comprehensive reform of the EU VAT rules, as proposed in 2017 by the Commission, and increased cooperation between Member States to clamp down on VAT fraud and to make the rules work for legitimate businesses and traders.

The VAT Gap measures the effectiveness of VAT enforcement and compliance measures in each Member State, as it provides an estimate of revenue loss due to fraud and evasion, tax avoidance, bankruptcies, financial insolvencies as well as miscalculations.

Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, Pierre **Moscovici** said: "*The favourable economic climate and some short-term policy solutions put in place by the EU helped to lower the VAT Gap in 2017. However, to achieve more meaningful progress we will need to see a thorough reform of the VAT system to make it more fraud-proof. Our proposals to introduce a definitive and business-friendly VAT system remain on the table. Member States cannot afford to stand by while billions are lost to illegal VAT carousel fraud and inconsistencies in the system*."

Romania recorded the largest national VAT Gap with 36% of VAT revenues going missing in 2017. This was followed by Greece (34%) and Lithuania (25%). The smallest gaps were in Sweden, Luxembourg and Cyprus where only 1% of VAT revenues on average fell by the wayside. In absolute terms, the highest VAT Gap of around €33.5 billion was in Italy.

Individual performances across Member States still vary significantly. The VAT Gap decreased in 25 Member States and increased in three. Malta (-7 percentage points), Poland (-6 percentage points) and Cyprus (-4 percentage points) showed strong performances, with large decrease in their VAT losses. Seven Member States, namely Slovenia, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Portugal, Czechia and France also revealed robust results, reducing their VAT Gap by more than 2 percentage points. The VAT Gap grew noticeably in Greece (2.6%) and Latvia (1.9%) and marginally in Germany (0.2%).

In nominal terms, the VAT Gap decreased by €8 billion to €137.5 billion in 2017, a similar amount as the 2016 decrease of €7.8 billion. The VAT Gap in 2017 represents 11.2% of total VAT revenues in the EU, compared to 12.2% the year before. This downward trend can now be observed for the fifth consecutive year.

The VAT Gap report published today concentrates on 2017, as this is the most recent period for which comprehensive national accounts data and own resources data are available. This year's study introduces a new element, however: a forecasting exercise which provides so-called "fast estimates" for the year preceding the publication year, i.e. 2018. These fast estimates indicate that the VAT Gap will likely continue its downward trend and fall below €130 billion and 10% of the VAT Total Tax Liability (VTTL) in 2018.

Background

The VAT Gap study is funded by the EU budget and its findings are relevant for both the EU and Member States as VAT makes an important contribution to both the EU and national budgets. The study applies a "top-down" methodology using national accounts data to produce estimations of the VAT Gaps. The method used was improved and refined over the years and offers now the best combination of estimates in terms of comparability of results and accuracy.

For more information

For more information, see our FAQ.

The full report and a factsheet is available here.

VIDEO: Commissioner Moscovici on the fight against VAT fraud

Daily News 05 / 09 / 2019

VAT Gap: EU countries lost €137 billion in VAT revenues in 2017

EU countries lost €137 billion in Value-Added Tax (VAT) revenues in 2017, according to a study released by the European Commission today. The VAT Gap describes the overall difference between the expected VAT revenue and the amount actually collected. It has reduced somewhat compared to previous years but remains very high, highlighting once more the need for comprehensive reform of the EU VAT rules, as proposed in 2017 by the Commission. New rules would help clamp down on VAT fraud and improve the rules for legitimate businesses and traders. Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, Pierre **Moscovici** said: *"The favourable economic climate and some short-term policy solutions put in place by the EU helped to lower the VAT Gap in 2017. However, to achieve more meaningful progress we will need to see a thorough reform of the VAT system to make it more fraud-proof. Our proposals to introduce a definitive and business-friendly VAT system remain on the table. Member States cannot afford to stand by while billions are lost to illegal VAT carousel fraud and inconsistencies in the system."* Romania recorded the largest national VAT Gap with 36% of VAT revenues going missing in 2017. This was followed by Greece (34%) and Lithuania (25%). The smallest gaps were in Sweden, Luxembourg and Cyprus where only 1% of VAT revenues on average fell by the wayside. In absolute terms, the highest VAT Gap of around €33.5 billion was in Italy. The VAT Gap measures the effectiveness of VAT enforcement and compliance measures in each Member State, as it provides an estimate of revenue loss due to fraud and evasion, tax avoidance, bankruptcies, financial insolvencies as well as miscalculations. You can find a press release, FAQ and factsheet online. The report itself is available here. (*For more information: Vanessa Mock – Tel.: +32 229 56194; Patrick McCullough – Tel.: +32 229 87183)*

Security Union: Eurojust launches a new Counter-Terrorism Register

Today, with the Commission's support, Eurojust, the EU's agency on judicial cooperation, has launched a Counter-Terrorism Register, which will help EU countries exchange information on terrorist offences in a quick, efficient and uniform manner. Member States already share information with each other on the suspects of terrorist offences who are under criminal investigation or prosecution in their countries. The new Counter-Terrorism Register launched today will enable them to do so more efficiently and effectively, as Eurojust will be able to better detect links between terrorist cases in different Member Statesand provide timely and proactive feedback to national authorities as well as follow-up measures needed. Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality Věra **Jourová** said: *"Eurojust plays a key role in supporting the fight against cross-border crime and terrorism. Fast exchange of data can make or break effective investigation and this new tool will put Eurojust on stronger footing to protect Europeans against terrorism."* Speaking at today's official launch of the Register, Commissioner for the Security Union, Julian **King** said: *"The new Counter-Terrorism Register will help judges and prosecutors to proactively establish links between cases to ensure that criminals and terrorists do not go unpunished. This new tool is yet another building block in our Security Union."* Following the terrorist attacks in France in November 2015, France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands took the initiative to set up a register at Eurojust. Today's Register is a result of Eurojust developing this initiative into a tool available to all EU countries. The press conference from the official launch is available on EbS+. For more information, see the press release from Eurojust and information from the European Commission on judicial cooperation and fighting terrorism. *(For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444).*

L'Union européenne en tête du commerce agroalimentaire mondial

Dans un rapport publié aujourd'hui, l'UE confirme pour une nouvelle année sa position de premier exportateur mondial de produits agroalimentaires, avec des exportations atteignant 138 milliards d'euros en 2018. Cette même année, le secteur agro-alimentaire de l'UE a connu un excédent commercial de 22 milliards d'euros. Les produits agricoles représentent 7 % de la valeur totale des biens exportés par l'UE en 2018, se classant ainsi au quatrième rang après les machines, les autres biens manufacturés et les produits chimiques. L'agriculture et les industries et services liés à l'alimentation fournissent ensemble près de 44 millions d'emplois dans l'UE. Phil **Hogan**, commissaire à l'agriculture, a déclaré : *"La politique agricole commune, de plus en plus axée vers les marchés, a contribué de manière décisive au succès des échanges agricoles de l'UE. La réputation de l'UE d'avoir des produits sûrs, produits de manière durable, nutritifs et de qualité est une formule gagnante sur le marché mondial. La Commission est là pour aider les producteurs à tirer pleinement parti des possibilités qui s'offrent à eux dans le monde entier, tout en veillant toujours à ce que nos secteurs les plus sensibles bénéficient de garanties et de protections suffisantes".* Les cinq principales destinations des produits agroalimentaires de l'UE restent les États-Unis, la Chine, la Suisse, le Japon et la Russie, qui représentent 40% des exportations communautaires. L'UE devient aussi le deuxième plus grand importateur mondial de produits agro-alimentaires. Un communiqué de presse est en ligne. *(Pour plus d'informations: Daniel Rosario – Tél.: +32 229 56185; Clémence Robin – Tél.: +32 229 52509)*

Antitrust: Commission invites comments on roadmap for the evaluation of rules on horizontal agreements

The European Commission is inviting comments on the roadmap for the evaluation of the "Horizontal Block Exemption Regulations" which exempt certain horizontal agreements from EU rules that prohibit anticompetitive agreements between companies. Such agreements between actual or potential competitors that operate at the same level of production or distribution in the market may restrict competition. In that case, they would be prohibited under EU antitrust rules, unless they create benefits that outweigh the harm to competition. The Horizontal Block Exemption Regulations define certain research and development and specialisation agreements that can be considered more beneficial than harmful, and are therefore allowed under antitrust rules. The Regulations will expire on 31 December 2022. The Commission has today taken the first step in the review process to help it determine whether the Regulations should lapse, be extended or amended. The review process will also include the existing guidelines on horizontal cooperation agreements. With the publication of the roadmap, the Commission is inviting stakeholders to comment on the purpose, consultation strategy, timing and methodology of the evaluation phase of the review process. Stakeholders can comment on the roadmap on the Commission's Better Regulation Portal until 3 October 2019. Before the end of the year, the Commission also plans to launch a public consultation inviting stakeholders to comment on the functioning of the Horizontal Block Exemption Regulations. *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of control over PPT by Charlesbank and GTCR

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over PPT Holdings I, LLC (PPT) by Charlesbank Capital Partners LLC (Charlesbank) and GTCR LLC (GTCR), all of the US. PPT is a third party maintenance provider offering storage, server and network maintenance, hardware services and proactive monitoring. Charlesbank is active in investment across a range of industries, primarily in the US. GTCR is active in investment in growth companies in the financial services & technology, healthcare, media & telecommunications and growth business services industries. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, as the transaction does not create any horizontal or vertical overlaps between the companies. 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.9487. *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.:+32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of DigiCert by Clearlake and TA

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of DigiCert Parent Inc ("DigiCert"), by Clearlake Capital Group, L.P. ("Clearlake") and TA Associates Management, L.P. ("TA"), all of them based in the US. DigiCert provides enterprise security technology and/or software solutions and Public Key Infrastructure solutions for identity and encryption. Clearlake is a private investment firm, with portfolio companies active in software and technology-enabled services, energy and industrials, and consumer products/services. TA is a private equity investment firm, with portfolio companies active in selected industries, including business services, consumer, financial services, healthcare and technologies. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given the companies' very limited combined market position resulting from the proposed transaction. 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.9471. *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears joint venture between Toyota Tsusho and Maruti Suzuki

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over a newly created joint venture in India, by Toyota Tsusho India Private Limited ("TTIPL") of India, its parent Toyota Tsusho Corporation ("TTC") of Japan, and Maruti Suzuki India Limited ("MSIL") of India. The joint venture will supply, dismantle and process end-of-life vehicles and market and sell scrap and other products generated from such activities in India. TTIPL is active in the manufacturing and trading of auto parts and components, steel shearing and processing, import and export of automobile components and logistics management services. TTC is active in metals, parts and logistics, automotive, machinery, energy and projects, chemicals, electronics, food, and consumer services. MSIL is a subsidiary of the car, motorcycle and outboard motor manufacturer Suzuki Motor Corporation of Japan and manufactures, purchases and sells motor vehicles, components and spare parts. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns because the joint venture will have no activities in the European Economic Area. More information is available on the Commission's competition website, in the public case register under the case number M.9476. *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Eurostat: Nombre de décès évitables en 2016: Les maladies cardiaques et pulmonaires, principales catégories de décès évitables

Dans l'Union européenne (UE), 1,7 million de décès ont été enregistrés en 2016 pour les personnes âgées de moins de 75 ans. Sur ce total, 1,2 million de décès pourraient être considérés comme prématurés en vertu de la liste Eurostat-OCDE récemment élaborée en ce qui concerne la mortalité évitable. Quelque 741 000 de ces décès *évitables* auraient pu être évités grâce à des interventions efficaces dans le domaine de la santé publique et de la prévention primaire, et 422 000 *auraient pu être traités* dans le cadre d'interventions en temps utile et efficaces. Les crises cardiaques (174 000 décès), les cancers de la trachée, des bronches et des poumons (168 000 décès) et les accidents vasculaires cérébraux (87 000 décès) ont représenté au total plus d'un tiers (37%) de l'ensemble des causes évitables de décès de personnes âgées de moins de 75 ans. Par rapport à 2011, le nombre de décès évitables en proportion du nombre total de décès a diminué de 1,7 point de pourcentage, passant de 69,7% du total des décès en 2011 à 68,0% en 2016. Un communiqué de presse complet est disponible en ligne. *(Pour plus d'informations: Anca Paduraru – Tél.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tél.: +32 229 87624)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Energy Union: Commissioner Arias Cañete in Oslo to co-host the European high level conference on carbon capture and storage

Today Commissioner Miguel **Arias Cañete** is in Oslo where he is co-hosting the European High-Level Conference on Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) together with Kjell-Børge Freiberg, the Norwegian Minister of Petroleum and Energy. Building on the growing recognition for the necessity of increased climate action and the emerging momentum for low carbon emission technologies in Europe, such as Carbon Capture and Storage, this European high-level conference brings together European Ministers and CEO's from key European industry and energy companies. In the Commission's "Clean Planet for All" Communication, Carbon Capture and Storage was identified as a crucial element to tackle remaining CO2 emissions. Together with the land use sink, it could compensate for remaining greenhouse gas emissions in our economy and help us achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The conference will focus on Europe, and more specifically, on the role of Carbon Capture and Storage in the EU's strategic long-term vision, but will draw upon experiences from other countries with relevant Carbon Capture and Storage activities. More information as well as the webstream of the conference is available here. (*For more information: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel.: +32 229-56186; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel.: +32 229 74959)*

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