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Juncker Plan supports €190 million in financing for small and medium businesses in Finland

The European Investment Fund (EIF) and Finland's state-owned specialised financing company Finnvera have signed a deal this morning which will provide growth-seeking SMEs in Finland with nearly €190 million in fresh financing. The EIF will counter-guarantee Finnvera, which will guarantee lending by local banks, including Aktia Bank Plc, Fennia Mutual Insurance Company, Nordea Bank Abp, OP-Services Ltd, Oma Savings Bank Plc and Savings Banks' Union Coop. The agreement is signed under the COSME programme and benefits from the guarantee of the Juncker Plan's European Fund for Strategic Investments. Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, European Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, said: *"Small European businesses that want to grow faster are still facing substantial challenges in obtaining financing. This is why support from EU programmes such as COSME and the Juncker Plan are crucial. I commend Finnvera for taking the initiative in joining forces with the European Investment Fund to help close the financing gap for SMEs in Finland."* A press release is available [here](#). As of July 2019, the Juncker Plan has mobilised €424 billion of additional investment, including €8.7 billion in Finland. The Plan is currently supporting 967,000 small and medium businesses across Europe. (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Siobhan Millbright – Tel.: +32 229 57361)

Romania: better drinking water in Cluj and Sălaj thanks to Cohesion Policy

The Cohesion Fund invests €275.7 million for better drinking water supply and upgraded wastewater collection and treatment services in the Cluj and Sălaj counties, north-west Romania. Thanks to this EU-funded project, almost 240,000 inhabitants will enjoy better drinking water. Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Karmenu **Vella** said: *"Everyone should have access to good drinking water. With this cohesion project, the EU invests for the health and quality of life of our citizens, while protecting the environment and reducing water losses. This is a great example of what the EU can do for you."* The project will increase the local water supply connection rate from 79% to 95%. Works will extend the supply of drinking water using sources that are microbiologically controlled. They also include upgrades at the water treatment plant at Gilău, the rehabilitation of the underground water source Florești in Cluj and the construction or reconstruction of almost 1,550 km of networks. The project should be completed in July 2023. (For more information: Christian Spahr – Tel.: +32 2 295 00 55; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

EU grants €621 million for early-career scientists in order to conduct pioneering research

Today the European Commission has announced the results of this year's competition for the European Research Council (ERC) [Starting Grants](#), which are

part of the EU's Research and Innovation programme [Horizon 2020](#). The grants, worth in total €621 million, have been awarded to 408 early-career scientists to help them build their own teams and conduct pioneering research in a variety of disciplines, at the same time as creating an estimated 2,500 jobs for postdoctoral fellows, PhD students and other staff. The research will cover different topics, including studying how forest foods could provide solutions to world hunger; assessing the intensity, frequency and distribution of extreme sea levels in Europe; investigating how technology companies promote their products and seek consumers' trust; or unravelling the survival skills of single cell organisms. Carlos **Moedas**, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: *"Researchers need freedom and support to follow their scientific curiosity if we are to find answers to the most difficult challenges of our age and our future. This is the strength of the grants that the EU provides through the European Research Council: an opportunity for outstanding scientists to pursue their most daring ideas."* More information is available in the [ERC press release](#). ERC Starting Grants are awarded to early-career researchers of any nationality with two to seven years of experience since completion of their PhD (or equivalent degree) and a strong scientific track record. Calls for proposals are published once a year for each scheme. Application details and deadlines, including about the 2020 round, can be found [here](#). (For more information: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Marietta Grammenou – Tel.: +32 229 83583)

La Commission publie des orientations pour assurer la mise en œuvre efficace du plan d'action pour la nature, les populations et l'économie

La Commission européenne a publié aujourd'hui deux nouveaux documents d'orientation pour la mise en œuvre efficace de son plan d'action pour la nature, les populations et l'économie. Les nouveaux outils sont destinés à aider les planificateurs, les décideurs politiques et les entreprises à résoudre les défis socio-économiques, tout en protégeant et en restaurant la nature en Europe. Le « document d'orientation de l'UE sur les écosystèmes et leurs services dans la prise de décision » met en évidence les nombreux avantages qui découlent de la nature et les moyens possibles de mieux en tenir compte dans le cadre de la politique, de la planification et des décisions d'investissement des entreprises. Le « document d'orientation de l'UE sur les infrastructures vertes et bleues stratégiques au niveau de l'UE » définit des critères et les instruments de soutien technique et financier disponibles qui peuvent aider les planificateurs à intégrer les caractéristiques du paysage naturel dans des « infrastructures vertes et bleues » stratégiques. La nature peut être un puissant allié dans nos efforts pour limiter le changement climatique et ses impacts sur les populations et la planète. Protéger et restaurer la nature constitue également une garantie pour un développement économique durable à long terme, notre qualité de vie et notre prospérité dépendent des « services écosystémiques » – les avantages qui découlent de la nature aux humains. Ces nouveaux documents d'orientation devraient constituer un point de référence important pour l'élaboration d'initiatives futures. Plus d'informations sont disponibles [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Enrico Brivio – Tél .: +32 229 56172; Ana Crespo Parrondo – Tél .: +32 229 81325)

Mergers: Commission clears the creation of a joint venture between OCI and ADNOC

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the creation of a joint venture between OCI N.V. of the Netherlands and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) of the United Arab Emirates. The joint venture will combine OCI's Middle East North Africa natural gas-based fertilizer business and the activities of ADNOC Fertilizers, of the United Arab Emirates. It will produce natural gas-based fertilizers in the Middle East and North Africa for export and distribution. OCI is active in the production and distribution of natural gas-based fertilizers and industrial chemicals used for agricultural and industrial purposes. ADNOC has activities throughout the entire hydrocarbon value chain, including exploration, production, storage, refining and distribution of oil and gas, as well as the development of petrochemical products. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns, because of the very limited horizontal overlaps and vertical links between the activities of the companies. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review process. More information is available on the Commission's [competition website](#), in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9435](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears the creation of a new joint venture by SKT and Comcast

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over a newly established joint venture by SK Holdings Co., Ltd. (SKT) of South Korea and Comcast Corporation (Comcast) of the US. The joint venture will operate a professional team for online multiplayer video game competitions, primarily outside the European Economic Area. SKT is a global media, security, commerce and telecommunications company and operates a mobile network in South Korea. Comcast is a global media, technology and entertainment company, with three primary businesses: Comcast Cable, NBCUniversal and Sky Limited. Comcast is also engaged in the professional sports and live entertainment businesses. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because the companies' activities do not overlap. 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.9482](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Concentrations : La Commission autorise l'acquisition de Webhelp par GBL

La Commission Européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition de Webhelp SAS et ses filiales (« Webhelp »), société basée en France, par le Groupe Bruxelles Lambert (« GBL »), basé en Belgique. Webhelp fournit des services dans le domaine des technologies de l'information et est principalement active dans le domaine de

l'externalisation des processus d'entreprise. GBL est une société holding d'investissement qui effectue des placements dans des sociétés mondiales opérant dans divers secteurs, principalement en Europe. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, dans la mesure où les sociétés ne sont pas actives sur le même marché ou sur des marchés liés ou complémentaires. 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 d'affaire [M.9486](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tél. +32 229 56182; Maria Tsoni – Tél.: +32 229 90526)

Eurostat : Les prix à la production industrielle en hausse de 0,2% dans la zone euro, hausse de 0,3 dans l'UE28 (juillet 2019 comparé à juin 2019)

En juillet 2019 par rapport à juin 2019, les prix à la production industrielle ont augmenté de 0,2% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et de 0,3% dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En juin 2019, les prix avaient diminué de 0,6% dans la zone euro et de 0,7% dans l'UE28. En juillet 2019 par rapport à juillet 2018, les prix à la production industrielle ont augmenté de 0,2% dans la zone euro et de 0,6% dans l'UE28. Vous pouvez trouver plus d'informations dans un [communiqué de presse](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tél.: +32 229 56182; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tél.: +32 229 56169)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Le commissaire Moscovici en visite au Canada pour assister au Toronto Global Forum

Pierre **Moscovici**, commissaire en charge des affaires économiques et financières, de la fiscalité et des douanes, assistera ce mercredi au [Toronto Global Forum](#) sur le thème « Leading the New Economy », à Toronto, Canada. Le Commissaire participera également demain soir à un panel de discussion avec le ministre des Finances du Canada, M. Bill Morneau, sur des sujets politiques et économiques d'actualité en Europe. Jeudi 5 septembre, le commissaire **Moscovici** se rendra à Montréal pour rencontrer notamment M. François Legault, Premier Ministre du Québec. (Pour plus d'informations : Annika Breidhardt – Tél. : +32 229 56153; Vanessa Mock – Tél.: +32 229 56194; Enda McNamara – Tél.: +32 229 64976; Patrick McCullough – Tél.: +32 229 87183)

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

July 2019 compared with June 2019 – Industrial producer prices up by 0.2% in euro area – Up by 0.3% in EU28

In July 2019, compared with June 2019, industrial producer prices rose by 0.2% in the **euro area** (EA19) and by 0.3% in the **EU28**, according to estimates from **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. In June 2019, prices decreased by 0.6% in the **euro area** and by 0.7% in the **EU28**.

[Full text available on EUROSTAT website](#)

Baudoin Thouvenot becomes new French National Member at Eurojust

From satisfied Eurojust ‘client’ to eager new French National Member

The Hague, 02 September 2019

Baudoin Thouvenot became the new National Member for France at Eurojust on 1 September, replacing Frédéric Baab. Mr Thouvenot is a career investigative judge. He was 12 years old when he decided on his future professional path, and he never changed course. His first appointment as an investigative judge was with the Court of Dunkerque in 1991, followed by several posts in the jurisdictions of the Court of Paris. His last appointment was as Dean of the Investigative Judges for the Court of Paris. For 10 of his 15 years as an investigative judge for the Court of Paris, Mr Thouvenot was associated with the JIRS of Paris (Interregional specialised jurisdiction, dealing with organised crime).



In that role, he began attending Eurojust coordination meetings starting in 2003, and became familiar with its work. Mr Thouvenot became a convinced ‘client’ of Eurojust over the years, pleasantly surprised and satisfied with what could be achieved in a case, even after a one-day coordination meeting. He said, *‘Eurojust is a practical and efficient means for judicial cooperation’*.

In 2006, Mr Thouvenot became involved in a three-part documentary film project on ‘Judicial Europe’, focusing on cases concerning trafficked women, and demonstrating judicial cooperation in action, based on his own expertise

and experiences.

Mr Thouvenot sees his mandate as French National Member at Eurojust as a logical step in his career. He said, *'I am eager to enrich my knowledge by learning about the different judicial systems and feel strongly that, in terms of judicial cooperation, there are no "small countries"; there are only magistrates fighting crime across borders. I am looking forward to working hand-in-hand with all my colleagues and imparting a strong European spirit in the College'*.

Photo © Eurojust

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Photo © Eurojust

[Setting up of judicial counter-terrorism register at Eurojust](#)

The Hague, 20 June 2019

□Eurojust's proposal to the EU Member States on the implementation and functioning of the [European judicial counter-terrorism register](#) on the basis of Council Decision 2005/671/JHA was presented to the national correspondents for terrorism at the annual Eurojust meeting on counter-terrorism. Following the initiative of France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, the setting up of the register was supported by the Special Committee on Terrorism of the European Parliament, whose Chair, Ms Nathalie Griesbeck, was present at the meeting. The proposal also received strong support from the European Commission and the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator (CTC).

The national experts agreed on practical steps in the implementation of the register, which will be launched on 1 September 2019. The register will centralise judicial information on counter-terrorism proceedings from all EU Member States. It will allow Eurojust to proactively support the national judicial authorities by identifying links between investigations and assisting Member States in coordinating more efficiently. Complementary to the criminal analysis carried out by Europol, the register will contribute to reinforcing the judicial response to terrorist threats in the EU Member States.



Mr Ladislav Hamran, President of Eurojust, said: *'To respond to the persistent terrorist threat that concerns the whole of the European territory, strong cooperation between judicial authorities within the European Union and beyond is required. For Eurojust, the register is the first step in a broader endeavour to create tools that will lead to a fast, reliable and secure IT infrastructure called Digital Criminal Justice, which was first presented to the JHA Council in December last year. To face the new challenges posed by technological development and the evolving security threat landscape, prosecutors in the Member States need tools to interact*

efficiently with their counterparts, as well as with Eurojust.'

Mr Frédéric Baab, National Member for France and Head of the Counter-Terrorism Team at Eurojust, stated: *'After the terrorist attacks of 13 November 2015, the French Desk at Eurojust opened a case involving 14 Member States and the USA. In such a case, in which multilateral coordination is needed at EU level, a complete overview of all ongoing investigations in the countries involved is indispensable. For this reason, we worked on the implementation of a counter-terrorism register at Eurojust, which will centralise and cross-check this information and give feedback to the national authorities.'*

Ms Nathalie Griesbeck, Chair of the Special Committee on Terrorism of the European Parliament, pointed out: *'Eurojust is a key actor in the reinforcement of our area of Justice and Security. As Chair of the special committee on terrorism, I am very happy to witness the progress made toward the creation of the European judicial counter-terrorism register. This concrete tool, which the European Parliament strongly supports, will foster the exchange of information and therefore help to make crucial links that could prevent attacks.'*

✘ During the two-day Eurojust meeting on counter-terrorism, the experts also exchanged experience and lessons learned in addressing extreme right- and left-wing groups in Europe. They concluded that the evolving threat from non-jihadist terrorism should not be underestimated and should be addressed efficiently at judicial level.

The participants also discussed how EU Member States and some third States deal with foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and their families, particularly those currently detained in Syria. They highlighted the benefits of sharing experience among the national authorities but also with Eurojust, Europol, the EU CTC and the European Commission.

This year's meeting was attended by judicial and law enforcement experts from various EU Member States, acting as national correspondents for Eurojust for counter-terrorism, the Liaison Prosecutors and national experts from North Macedonia, Norway, Switzerland, Ukraine and the USA, the EU CTC, the European Commission and the European Parliament, as well as Europol, Frontex and INTERPOL.

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