

# [rescEU assets mobilised to help Greece fight devastating forest fires](#)

Following a request for assistance from Greece on 13 August 2019, rescEU assets have been mobilised to tackle forest fires ravaging several areas of Greece. As an immediate response, the European Union has already helped to mobilise 3 forest fighting planes from rescEU reserve from Italy and Spain to be dispatched swiftly to the affected regions.

[rescEU](#) is the EU's strengthened EU Civil Protection Mechanism, whose [reserve](#) includes firefighting planes and helicopters. Through rescEU, the EU reinforces its collective ability to respond to disasters that affect European countries. This is the first ever deployment of the rescEU assets.

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** said: *"The EU stands in full solidarity with Greece at this difficult time. The planes are already in action, fighting the fires. This immediate response proves the added value of rescEU which makes our response more robust, quick and efficient. Moreover, this is a real example of the common European values on which rescEU is based: solidarity and protection of lives of our European citizens. I am thankful to Italy and Spain for their offers of assistance. We stand ready to provide further assistance."*

Commissioner **Stylianides** is in constant communication with the Greek authorities. Today, the Commissioner is in Athens where he met with Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and visited the Crisis Centre of the Greek Civil Protection to be briefed along with the Minister for the Protection of Citizens Michalis Chrysochoidis and oversee the operation of the rescEU assets.

The [European satellite mapping system Copernicus](#) is helping to provide damage assessment maps of the affected areas.

## **Background**

The [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) strengthens cooperation between Member States/Participating States in the field of civil protection, with a view to improving prevention, preparedness and response to disasters. Through the Mechanism, the European Commission plays a key role in coordinating the response to disasters in Europe and beyond.

When the scale of an emergency overwhelms the response capabilities of a country, it can request assistance via the Mechanism. Once activated, the Mechanism coordinates assistance made available by its Member States/Participating States through spontaneous offers. In addition, the EU has created the [European Civil Protection Pool](#) to have a critical number of readily available civil protection capacities allowing for a stronger and coherent collective response. Should the emergency require additional, life-saving assistance, the new [rescEU reserve](#) can be used as a matter of last

resort.

To date, all EU Member States participate in the Mechanism, as well as Iceland, Norway, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Turkey. Since its inception in 2001, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism has responded to more than 300 requests for assistance inside and outside the EU.

**For more information**

[rescEU](#)

[MEMO – Fighting forest fires in Europe – how it works](#)

[Factsheet – Forest fires](#)

[European Civil Protection Mechanism](#)

[European Civil Protection Pool](#)

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## **GDP and employment flash estimates for the second quarter of 2019 – GDP and employment both up by 0.2% in the euro area – In the EU28, GDP and employment also up by 0.2%**

### **GDP growth in the euro area and EU28**

Seasonally adjusted GDP rose by 0.2% in both the **euro area** (EA19) and in the **EU28** during the second quarter of 2019, compared with the previous quarter, according to a flash estimate published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. In the first quarter of 2019, GDP had grown by 0.4% in the **euro area** and by 0.5% in the **EU28**.

[Full text available on EUROSTAT website](#)

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## **June 2019 compared with May 2019 –**

## Industrial production down by 1.6% in euro area – Down by 1.5% in EU28

In June 2019 compared with May 2019, seasonally adjusted industrial production fell by 1.6% in the **euro area** (EA19) and by 1.5% in the **EU28**, according to estimates from **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. In May 2019, industrial production rose by 0.8% in the **euro area** and by 0.9% in the **EU28**.

[Full text available on EUROSTAT website](#)

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## Daily News 13 / 08 / 2019

### **L'UE mobilise 9 millions d'euros pour faire face à la crise alimentaire à Haïti**

L'Union européenne a débloqué 9 millions d'euros d'aide humanitaire en réponse à la détérioration de la situation alimentaire et nutritionnelle à Haïti. L'aide humanitaire permettra de couvrir les besoins alimentaires et nutritionnels essentiels de plus de 130,000 personnes vivant dans les zones les plus affectées. *« Pour l'UE, la situation humanitaire à Haïti n'est pas une crise oubliée. Nous sommes déterminés à apporter un soutien vital aux populations victimes de la crise alimentaire et nutritionnelle qui sévit dans le pays. Cette enveloppe vient s'ajouter aux 12 millions d'euros alloués en 2018 pour répondre aux besoins alimentaires et nutritionnels urgents des Haïtiens »*, a déclaré Christos **Stylianides**, commissaire chargé de l'aide humanitaire et de la gestion des crises. Les fonds alloués bénéficieront aux familles vivant dans les zones les plus touchées par la crise ainsi qu'aux enfants souffrant de malnutrition aigüe. Une aide nutritionnelle vitale sera également fournie à plus de 5,000 enfants de moins de 5 ans souffrant de malnutrition aigüe. En même temps, l'UE soutiendra des actions visant à renforcer l'analyse de la situation alimentaire et à améliorer la qualité de la réponse humanitaire. Dans le cadre de l'aide humanitaire de la Commission européenne, une attention particulière est accordée aux victimes de crises oubliées, c'est-à-dire de crises humanitaires graves et prolongées dans lesquelles les populations touchées ne reçoivent pas suffisamment d'aide internationale, comme c'est le cas à Haïti. Avec 404 millions d'euros alloués depuis 1994, Haïti est le principal bénéficiaire d'aide humanitaire de la Commission européenne en Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations : Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela, Tél.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder, Tél.: +32 229 92256)

## **Commission launches call to join eHealth Stakeholder Group to support the digital transformation of healthcare**

Today the Commission has launched a new [call for expression of interest](#) to join the eHealth Stakeholder Group for the period of 2019-2022. As part of the EU's commitment to engage stakeholders in public policymaking, the Group will bring together eHealth experts that will contribute to the implementation of the [Communication on enabling the digital transformation of health and care](#) in the [Digital Single Market](#). They will also provide input on various aspects of digital transformation of healthcare in the EU, for example in the areas of health data, including [access to health data across borders](#), and artificial intelligence in healthcare, as well as cybersecurity, data protection and privacy issues. Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said: *"During the five past years I have engaged with a number of patients, policy makers and stakeholders. We all agree that digital technologies can help us achieve better health for all. This is why I am particularly glad to welcome new members with the skills and expertise to help us implement the [eHealth Action Plan](#) and strengthen health and care across Europe."* Mariya **Gabriel**, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, added: *"We must strive to advance our research on disease prevention, enable personalised care and provide Europeans with secure access to their health data across borders. The Commission will continue its support for the enhanced use of digital technologies in healthcare to benefit citizens around the EU."* The call for expressions of interest will be open until 27 September 2019. More information on the call is available [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel: +32 229 62253; Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Marietta Grammenou – Tel.: +32 229 83583)

## **TRADE: Commission imposes countervailing duties on Indonesian biodiesel**

The European Commission today imposed countervailing duties of 8% to 18% on imports of subsidised biodiesel from Indonesia. The measure aims to restore a level-playing field for EU biodiesel producers. The Commission's in-depth investigation found that Indonesian biodiesel producers benefit from grants, tax benefits and access to raw materials below market prices. This inflicts a threat of economic damage to EU producers. The new import duties are imposed on a provisional basis and the investigation will continue with a possibility to impose definitive measures by mid-December 2019. While the predominant raw material for biodiesel production in Indonesia is palm oil, the focus of the investigation is on the possible subsidisation of biodiesel production, irrespective of the raw material used. The EU biodiesel market is worth an estimated €9 billion a year, with imports from Indonesia of reaching some €400 million. For more information, see the regulation published in the [EU Official Journal](#) and a [page](#) dedicated to the case. (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Kinga Malinowska – Tel.: +32 229 51383)

## **TRADE: Commission started an investigation on dumped hot rolled steel from China, Taiwan and Indonesia**

Yesterday, the Commission initiated an anti-dumping investigation into imports of hot rolled stainless steel sheets and coils from China, Indonesia and Taiwan. The investigation follows a complaint lodged by the European

Steel Association (EUROFER) on the grounds that the imports from these countries are made at dumped prices and hence causing injury to the European producers. The complaint requests to calculate the dumping margin in line with the EU new anti-dumping methodology, i.e. taking into account market distortions and distorted raw material prices in China and Indonesia. The Commission has now up to 8 months to collect evidence and decide whether to impose provisional measures. This new trade defence investigation is part of the larger Commission action aiming shield EU producers from unfair competition from dumped and subsidies products. So far, the Commission put in place trade defence measures on 52 steel products and investigates on another 7. [More information](#) is available in the EU Official Journal. (*For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Kinga Malinowska – Tel.: +32 229 51383*)

### **Concentrations: La Commission autorise l'acquisition d'E2M par EDF**

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition de la société Energy2Market ("E2M"), basée en Allemagne, par la société EDF Pulse Croissance Holding SAS, contrôlée par Électricité de France SA ("EDF"), basée en France. E2M est spécialisée dans la vente directe d'électricité issue de sources d'énergie renouvelables. EDF est active dans la production, la fourniture et le transport d'électricité, principalement en France mais également en dehors. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulevait pas de problème de concurrence en raison de son impact limité sur le marché. La transaction a été examinée en vertu 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.9441](#). (*Pour plus d'informations : Vanessa Mock – Tél : +32 229 56194 ; Giulia Astuti – Tél : +32 229 55344*)

### **State aid: Commission approves new prolongation of Polish credit union liquidation scheme**

The European Commission has authorised, under EU State aid rules, the ninth prolongation of the Polish credit union liquidation scheme until 15 July 2020. The measure will continue to be available for credit unions that are member-owned entities and provide loans, savings accounts and payment services only to their membership. Credit unions fall outside the scope of the bank resolution regime in Poland. The Commission found the prolongation of the scheme to be in line with EU State aid rules, in particular its [2013 Banking Communication](#). This is because it is well targeted, proportionate and limited in time and scope. The scheme, initially [approved in February 2014](#), has been prolonged several times since then, the last time in [August 2018](#). More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website in the public [case register](#) under the case number SA.54734 once any confidentiality issues have been resolved. (*For more information: Vanessa Mock – Tel : +32 229 56194 ; Giulia Astuti – Tel : +32 229 55344*)

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

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## EU mobilises €9 million to tackle the food crisis in Haiti

The European Union has released €9 million in humanitarian aid in response to the deteriorating food and nutrition situation in Haiti. The humanitarian aid will cover the basic food and nutritional needs of more than 130,000 people living in the worst affected areas.

*'For the EU, the humanitarian situation in Haiti is not a forgotten crisis. We are committed to providing vital support to the people hit by the food and nutrition crisis in the country. This assistance comes on top of the €12 million allocated in 2018 to address the urgent food and nutrition needs of Haitians,'* said Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos **Stylianides**.

The funds provided will benefit families living in the areas worst affected by the crisis and children suffering from acute malnutrition. Life-saving nutritional support will also be provided to over 5,000 children under the age of 5 who are suffering from acute malnutrition. In parallel, the EU will back measures to strengthen the analysis of the food situation and to improve the quality of the humanitarian response.

The European Commission's humanitarian assistance pays special attention to victims of forgotten crises, i.e. severe, protracted humanitarian crises where the people affected do not receive sufficient international aid, as is the case in Haiti. Haiti is the main beneficiary of the European Commission's humanitarian aid to Latin America and the Caribbean, having received €404 million in support since 1994.

### **Background**

Due to its vulnerability to natural hazards and its high levels of poverty, Haiti has limited capacity to cope with recurring emergencies such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and prolonged droughts.

In recent months, the humanitarian situation in Haiti has deteriorated dramatically and the country is facing serious food shortages. Between 2018 and 2019, the number of people in crisis situations or facing food emergencies doubled to 2.6 million, i.e. 25 % of the population. Furthermore, the prevalence of acute malnutrition among children under the age of five remains high, and above World Health Organization (WHO) emergency levels in several locations, including the Nord-Ouest department.

[€3 million were earmarked at the end of July 2019](#) for disaster risk reduction.

In Haiti, particular emphasis is being placed on establishing an effective

link between relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) to facilitate the transition between emergency relief work and structural development assistance in the country. More specifically, in terms of development cooperation, the amount of EU funding allocated to Haiti is the highest in the region, standing at €420 million for the period 2014-2020. These funds are intended to support development and the fight against poverty in the country by focusing on four key sectors: strengthening and modernising public administration, education, urban development and infrastructure, and food and nutrition security.

**For more information:**

[Press release: EU announces €18.5 million humanitarian aid package for Latin America and the Caribbean](#)

[Factsheet – Haiti](#)