

Sajid Javid's speech to local councillors at the LGA conference took no responsibility for the Tory-made crisis that local government is currently facing- Gwynne

Andrew

Gwynne MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, commenting

on Sajid Javid's speech at the LGA Conference, said:

"Sajid Javid's speech to local councillors at the LGA conference took no responsibility for the Tory-made crisis that local government is currently facing.

"There was no acknowledgement of the Tories' 40 per cent cuts to local authorities since 2010, no mention of local government finance reform and still no clarity on the government's plan for reform of business rates.

"Local government need leadership that will stand up for them and invest in local public services. This Tory Government has continually failed local communities – it is now time for a Labour Government that will stand up for the many not the few."

Ends

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European Citizens' Initiative: Commission registers 'Stop TTIP' Initiative

The European Commission has today decided to register a European Citizens' Initiative inviting the Commission "to recommend to the Council to repeal the negotiating mandate for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and not to conclude the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)" ('Stop TTIP' Initiative). The formal registration of this Initiative on 10 July 2017 will start a one-year process of collection of signatures of support by its organisers. This registration follows an initial Commission Decision to refuse to register the 'Stop TTIP' Initiative on 10 September

2014, which was annulled by the General Court of the European Union on 10 May 2017. The Juncker Commission has decided not to appeal the judgment, and has reassessed the proposed Initiative, originally submitted in July 2014, and decided to register it. However, the request for a proposal not to sign CETA has now become devoid of purpose, since it was signed on 30 October 2016. Signatures of support for this Citizens' Initiative may therefore be collected on the understanding that they aim for other legal acts. The Commission's decision to register the Initiative concerns only the legal admissibility of the proposal. The Commission has not analysed the substance at this stage. Should the Initiative receive one million statements of support within one year, from at least seven different Member States, the Commission will have to react within three months. The Commission can decide either to follow the request or not, and in both instances would be required to explain its reasoning. A press release is available [here](#). (*For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tim McPhie – Tel.: +32 229 58602*)

Juncker Plan backs investments totalling EUR 40 million in Portugal, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia

The [Juncker Plan](#) has backed a total of EUR 40 million in investments in two separate operations in Portugal and in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. In Portugal, a EUR 20 million European Investment Bank (EIB) loan to Laboratórios Basi will finance the development of a new production facility for manufacturing medical products in the Municipality of Mortágua, Portugal. The loan will contribute to the establishment of a new unit that will increase the company's production capacity and is expected to create more than 100 new jobs. The Juncker Plan has also supported a EUR 20 million investment by the EIB in the BaltCap Infrastructure Fund, which finances infrastructure development across Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The BaltCap Infrastructure Fund will focus on providing development capital for transport, energy and energy efficiency infrastructure projects, including renewable energy generation such as wind, solar and biomass, and energy efficiency projects such as public lighting. Commenting on the Portuguese transaction, Carlos **Moedas**, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: "*Under the Juncker Plan, operations worth over EUR 1.2 billion have already been approved in Portugal. This is expected to trigger around EUR 4 billion of investments, giving a boost to the economy. This deal shows how EU funding supports innovative companies in Portugal, creates jobs and improves public health*". The Juncker Plan is now expected to trigger EUR 209 billion in investments across Europe. For the latest country-by-country figures, see [here](#). Full press releases are available [here](#). (*For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976*)

Endocrine disruptors: major step towards protecting citizens and environment

Today, Member States' representatives voted in favour of the European Commission's proposal on scientific criteria to identify endocrine disruptors in the field of plant protection products. This is an important step towards

greater protection of citizens from harmful substances. Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, said: *"Today's vote represents our determination to devise a real EU policy on endocrine disruptors. After months of discussion we are advancing in the direction of the first regulatory system in the world with legally binding criteria to define what an endocrine disruptor is. This is a great success. Once implemented, the text will ensure that any active substance used in pesticides which is identified as an endocrine disruptor for people or animals can be assessed and withdrawn from the market. We now count on the support of the European Parliament and the Council, involved in the decision making process, for a smooth adoption and entry into force of the criteria."* A [press release](#) and [fact sheet](#) are available online. (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

Commission takes further steps to make information on retail investment products more consumer-friendly

The Commission has today adopted guidelines that will further help providers and distributors of investment products, funds and investment-insurance policies design their Key Information Document (KID). The KID, introduced by the Regulation on Key Information Documents for Packaged Retail and Insurance-Based Investment Products ([PRIIPs](#)), is a standardised and simple document which has the objective of presenting the main features of an investment product in a consumer-friendly manner. The guidelines will ensure a smooth implementation of the PRIIPs Regulation by retail financial services sectors before it enters into application on 1 January 2018. This is yet another step by the Commission to make today's complex investment environment more understandable for consumers, while increasing their protection along with their trust in the financial services industry. Looking ahead, the ESAs are currently preparing Q&As, which will further clarify how the PRIIPs information rules need to be applied to cater for transparency while ensuring that consumers are not overburdened with information not needed in their decision-making. In particular, the Q&As will address a wide range of technical aspects in relation to, for example, derivatives or multi-option products offering to retail investors multiple underlying investment options (For more information: Vanessa Mock – +32 229 56194; Letizia Lupini – +32 229 51958)

State aid: Commission authorises precautionary recapitalisation of Italian bank Monte dei Paschi di Siena

The European Commission has approved Italy's plan to support a precautionary recapitalisation of Italian bank Monte dei Paschi di Siena under EU rules, on the basis of an effective restructuring plan. This decision follows the [agreement in principle](#) reached on 1 June 2017 between Commissioner **Vestager** and Pier Carlo Padoan, Italy's Minister of Economy and Finance, on the restructuring plan of MPS. Italy's plan enables MPS to meet possible capital needs that would emerge if economic conditions were to worsen (as a precaution). In order to approve the state injection in the amount of €5.4 billion, MPS's shareholders and junior creditors have contributed €4.3 billion to limit the use of taxpayer money as required by EU state aid rules. Furthermore, the bank will undergo in-depth restructuring. This will help

ensure the bank's long-term viability and to ensure the Italian State will be sufficiently remunerated for its investment, whilst limiting competition distortions. Separately, eligible retail bondholders can seek compensation from the bank for having been mis-sold junior bonds. Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *"We have approved Italy's capital injection into MPS in line with EU rules, which will help MPS meet capital needs in case economic conditions were to worsen unexpectedly. To ensure MPS's long-term viability, the bank will re-focus its business model and move more than €26 billion in non-performing loans off its balance sheet. This capital injection could only be approved after junior bondholders and shareholders have contributed to the costs of restructuring, in line with "burden-sharing" requirements under EU state aid rules."* Vice-President Valdis **Dombrovskis**, responsible for financial stability, said: *"Depending on the specific circumstances, Banking Union rules allow different solutions when banks need fresh capital. In any case, the solutions found should protect financial stability in Europe and limit the burden on taxpayers. In the case of MPS the conditions are met for a precautionary recapitalisation. Shareholders and junior bondholders have also participated in the costs."* The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#) and [IT](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of sole control of SAM by Banco Santander

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of sole control over SAM Investment Holding Ltd. ("SAM") by Banco Santander SA. SAM is an asset management company present in nine countries in Europe and Latin America. It is currently jointly controlled by Banco Santander, Warburg Pincus and General Atlantic. Banco Santander is an international banking group operating primarily in Spain, the UK and other European countries, but also in Latin America. Post-transaction, Santander will be the only remaining shareholder of SAM. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given that SAM is already jointly controlled by Banco Santander and the companies' activities do not overlap geographically. 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.8519](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Market Logic Software by Genui, Summit and Sycamore

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control of Market Logic Software AG (MLS) of Germany by Summit Partners L.P (Summit) of the US, Genui GmbH (GENUI) and Sycamore GmbH (Sycamore), both of Germany. MLS is a software company that develops and distributes marketing information systems. Summit is an international equity investment firm and provides services to fund growth, recapitalisations and management buyouts. GENUI is an investment company that holds stakes in medium-sized companies in German speaking countries. Sycamore is a private

equity firm. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns, given the low combined market shares in the Enterprise Application System software market and its segments where MLS and certain Summit portfolio companies are active. 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.8507](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of B&R by ABB

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of Bernecker and Rainer Industrie-Elektronik Gesellschaft m.b.H. of Austria (B&R), by ABB Ltd of Switzerland (ABB), which is the ultimate parent company of the ABB group of companies. B&R provides solutions for machine and factory automation, with a particular focus on motion control products. ABB is mainly active on: electrification products, robotics and motion, industrial automation and power grids globally. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns because there are only limited overlaps between the activities of the companies and their market shares on related markets are moderate. 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.8482](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Stadler Linz by ÖBB TS and Stadler Rail

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control by ÖBB-Technische Services-Gesellschaft GmbH (ÖBB TS), of Austria, and Stadler Rail AG of Switzerland, over Stadler Linz GmbH, of Austria. Stadler Linz is currently solely controlled by Stadler Rail. It provides rail vehicle maintenance. Stadler Rail manufactures, sells and provides maintenance of rail vehicles, including on parts. ÖBB TS is active in the maintenance of rail vehicles, reconditioning of parts and components, construction and operation of rail infrastructure, provision of rail transport services, manufacture and sale of rail vehicles. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns due to the limited activities of Stadler Linz in the Austrian market for the maintenance of rail vehicles. 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.8437](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)*

Commission authorises five genetically modified products for food/ feed uses

Today, the Commission adopted five authorisations for Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) for food/feed use. These GMOs are as follows: cotton 281-24-236 x 3006-210-23 x MON 88913; cotton GHB 119; maize Bt11 x 59122 x MIR604 x 1507 x GA21; maize DAS-40278-9; and the renewal of maize MON 810. The GMOs approved today had gone through a full authorisation procedure, including a favourable scientific assessment by the [European Food Safety Authority](#) (EFSA). The authorisation decisions do not cover cultivation. These GMOs had received “no opinion” votes from the Member States in both the Standing and Appeal Committees and the Commission adopted the pending decisions. The authorisations are valid for 10 years, and any products produced from these GMOs will be subject to the EU’s strict labelling and traceability rules. More information is available [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

Commissioner Jourová met with the Japanese Data protection authority to advance their dialogue on the promotion of high data protection standards

Commissioner Věra **Jourová** met yesterday with the Commissioner of the Personal Information Protection Commission of Japan, Haruhi Kumazawa, to advance their dialogue on data protection as a fundamental right and a central factor of consumer trust in the digital economy. After their meeting, they issued a [joint press statement](#) welcoming the work carried out over the course of the last months. As announced in January in its [Communication](#) on Exchanging and Protecting personal data in a globalised world, the Commission has launched a dialogue with the aim of reaching an “adequacy decision” with Japan. Adequacy decisions allow for the free flow of personal data to countries with “essentially equivalent” data protection rules to those in the EU. (For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

EUROSTAT: Les prix à la production industrielle en baisse de 0,4% tant dans la zone euro que dans l’UE28

En mai 2017 par rapport à avril 2017, les prix à la production industrielle ont diminué de 0,4% dans la zone euro (ZE19) ainsi que dans l’UE28, selon les estimations d’Eurostat, l’office statistique de l’Union européenne. En avril 2017, les prix étaient restés stables dans la zone euro et avaient augmenté de 0,1% dans l’UE28. En mai 2017 par rapport à mai 2016, les prix à la production industrielle ont progressé de 3,3% dans la zone euro et de 3,7% dans l’UE28. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d’informations: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278)

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

Speech by Federica Mogherini on the PREDA report – Addressing h

Check against delivery!

Thank you very much Mr President [of the European Parliament, Antonio Tajani].

Let me first of all thank our colleague, Christian [Dan Preda] for the work done leading to this report.

Let me also mention, Mr President, that I got used to the night sessions of this plenary – still I do not find it completely normal that we are running more than two hours late. I will be here also tomorrow night – diligently – but still I think that this plenary can work maybe in a more time-efficient manner.

Our work to prevent and address human rights violations is not only – as some of you pointed out – a matter of humanity and values. It is also a matter of interests and strategy for us.

Crimes against humanity can spark the next war, propagate conflict, or the next refugee crises. In a conflict situation, war crimes make post-conflict reconciliation much harder to achieve and our work more difficult also in the post-conflict phase. They destroy the very fabric of society, they spread fear and mistrust, opening wounds that may take decades and a lot, a lot of work to heal.

For all these reasons, our responsibility to protect and the prevention of atrocities are now part of all our main European Union policies. I agree very much with your report's strong focus on prevention – and in these very weeks we have worked to set up a better early warning system inside the European External Action Service, which also focuses on crimes against humanity. Our military and civilian missions have a very special role to play in this regard. Because, if we want to prevent human rights violations, we also must engage with security forces in our partner countries, building their capabilities and training them on the respect of human rights.

I am also glad to see that your report does not forget to address a very important element of what we are working on here: sexual and gender-based violence. Last year alone, the European Union's aid for the prevention and response to this kind of violence reached almost 3,5 million women, men, girls and boys. And let me just mention, our last package in support of the Syrian refugees strengthens the access to protection from gender-based violence for at least 700 000 Syrians, both inside and outside the country.

But beyond prevention, we know that war crimes and crimes against humanity happen today, and that we have a duty to address their consequences. And justice is the only effective and sustainable response to such violence. Because impunity generates more hatred, it often leads to revenge and to more suffering. So, justice is for us the only way towards reconciliation and sustainable peace.

To achieve this goal, we are bringing into play a combination of different elements – criminal justice, reparations, truth-seeking and institutional reforms. So, I will just mention a few cases where we are currently at work to prevent impunity, and achieve justice.

In Syria, we are working for the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to be fully operational as soon as possible and the European Union is mobilising funds to support this Mechanism with up to 1,5 million euros. I know Member States are doing their part; I count on them and also on your support to have an even stronger support from Member States' side.

In Iraq, as new areas are liberated from Da'esh, it is important to assess any war crimes and violation of human rights. And we welcome the commitments made by the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, to swiftly investigate all allegations about crimes committed by the Iraqi forces.

Beyond Syria and Iraq, last year we led a resolution at the UN Human Rights Council to establish a Commission of Inquiry in Burundi. And we fully support the African Group resolution, tabled in Geneva last month, which created an international investigation mechanism for the Kasai region in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I welcome very much your acknowledgement of our strong work and support of the International Criminal Court. This is a key element of our strategy. Since 2000, we have committed 37 million euros in direct support of the International Criminal Court. Last Saturday, we marked 15 years since the Rome Statute [of the International Criminal Court] entered into force and for all these 15 years, the European Union has promoted the universal ratification of the Rome Statute.

And last year – as you well remember – we faced a crisis. We have kept close contacts with many African states after the Gambia, South Africa and Burundi notified their withdrawal from the Rome Statute. And today two of these decisions have been revoked. This is an important achievement – achieved also thanks to the work we have done diplomatically – but we know very well that the work is not over yet. We are currently working on how to further improve the promotion of the universal ratification of the Rome Statute.

To finish, let me mention that this is a complex moment for the multilateral system at large, for the United Nations and the UN system in particular, which has come under attack from many corners.

So, let me conclude by saying that there is, there will be, and there cannot be any doubt about the EU's full support to a multilateral global governance,

based on international law, on human rights, and on strong international institutions. The European Union will continue to be a strong, reliable and indispensable partner for the UN, and for all who believe that violence must be met with justice, and reconciliation. And our work together with the [European] Parliament will continue in this direction.

Thank you very much.

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The Commission has reassessed the proposed Initiative, which was originally submitted in July 2014, and decided to register it. However, the request for a proposal not to sign CETA has now become devoid of purpose, since it was signed on 30 October 2016. Signatures of support for this Citizens' Initiative may therefore be collected on the understanding that they aim for other legal acts.

The Commission's decision to register the Initiative concerns only the legal admissibility of the proposal. The Commission has not analysed the substance at this stage. Should the Initiative receive one million statements of support within one year, from at least seven different Member States, the Commission will have to react within three months. The Commission can decide either to follow the request or not, and in both instances would be required to explain its reasoning.

Background

European Citizens' Initiatives were introduced with the Lisbon Treaty and launched as an agenda-setting tool in the hands of citizens in April 2012, upon the entry into force of the European Citizens' Initiative Regulation

which implements the Treaty provisions.

Once formally registered, a European Citizens' Initiative allows one million citizens from at least one quarter of EU Member States to invite the European Commission to propose a legal act in areas where the Commission has the power to do so.

The conditions for admissibility, as foreseen by the European Citizens' Initiative Regulation, are that the proposed action does not manifestly fall outside the framework of the Commission's powers to submit a proposal for a legal act, that it is not manifestly abusive, frivolous or vexatious and that it is not manifestly contrary to the values of the Union.

The Juncker Commission has taken an open approach to the registration of European Citizens' Initiatives, allowing when justified the partial registration of initiatives in order to stimulate citizen participation at EU level.

For more information

[Full text of the proposed "Stop TTIP" ECI](#)

[Stop TTIP Organisers' Website](#)

[Other ECIs currently collecting signatures](#)

[ECI website](#)

[ECI Regulation](#)

Press release: Warning for owners of unregistered boats after skippers prosecuted in Northamptonshire

Boat owners are being urged to make sure their vessels are registered – or face paying hefty fines.

The call comes after Environment Agency inspectors found two boats moored without their registration plates on the rivers Great Ouse and Nene.

The discovery resulted in the vessels' owners being prosecuted and ordered to forfeit a combined total of more than £1,200.

Boats must be registered

It is a legal requirement for boaters to [register any craft](#) they keep, use or let for hire on Environment Agency waterways, and to clearly display a valid registration plate. Not doing so carries a maximum fine of £1,000, as well as a criminal record.

Mr Kevin Sagers of Lyn Road, Ely, and Mr Christopher King of Riverside Mead, Peterborough, both failed to register their vessels as required by law.

Mr Sagers, whose unregistered boat, named Lazy Lady, was found on 9 December 2016 on the Great Ouse at Littleport in Cambridgeshire, was proved guilty in absence and ordered to pay penalties totalling £734. Mr King, whose vessel, called Little Jo Larkin, was discovered on 26 July 2016 on the Nene at Stanground Marina in Peterborough, pleaded guilty and had to pay £493.

Their cases were heard at Peterborough Magistrates' Court on 14 June and 22 June, respectively.

Offenders face £1,000 fines

Nathan Arnold, partnerships and development team leader at the Environment Agency said:

Our historic and precious waterways are an important part of our nation's heritage and are enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of people every year.

A significant part of caring for them, protecting them, and ensuring people continue to enjoy them is funded by boaters paying their way. Those who don't contribute as they should are threatening the future of our waterways – and we won't hesitate to take action against them.

Unregistered boats are hazardous

As well as not contributing to the upkeep of waterways, unregistered boats can be unsafe, hazardous to other river users, and a pollution risk to the local environment.

The Environment Agency looks after 353 miles of navigable waterways in the [Anglian network](#), which includes the Ancholme, Black Sluice, Glen, Welland, Nene, Great Ouse and Stour, as well as associated locks and navigation facilities like moorings, showers and toilets.

More information about boating and waterways, including registering vessels, is available via www.gov.uk/ea. If you suspect a boat is illegal, please contact the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 or email waterways.enforcementanglian@environment-agency.gov.uk.