

# Launch of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare: Q&A on Animal Welfare policy

Today, European Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis officially inaugurates the kick-off meeting of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare (the Platform). The Platform will gather 75 representatives from stakeholders, NGOs, scientists, Member States, EEA (European Economic Area) countries, international organisations and EFSA (European Food Safety Authority). This is the 1<sup>st</sup> time that all key EU players will gather to exchange experiences and contribute to improving the welfare of animals.

## **Why is the Commission launching this Platform?**

As indicated by the Eurobarometer survey published in March 2016, an absolute majority of Europeans considers the protection of animal welfare very important and would like to see improvements in the way the welfare of animals is protected.

Improving animal welfare is not only a matter of legislation. And the Platform is not a forum for developing new legislation. As stated in the motto of the [EU animal welfare strategy](#) adopted in 2012 “**Everyone is responsible**“. To get concrete results, mutual understanding and trust between all players as well as concrete engagement by each actor is an essential first step and it is one of the key objectives of the Platform.

The Platform aims to promote dialogue among competent authorities, businesses, civil society and scientists on animal welfare issues that are relevant for EU citizens.

The Platform will assist the Commission with the development and exchange of coordinated actions on animal welfare with focus on:

1. better application of EU rules on animal welfare, through exchanges of information, best practices and the direct involvement of stakeholders,
2. the development and use of voluntary commitments by businesses,
3. the promotion of EU animal welfare standards at the global level.

## **Who are the members of the Platform?**

The Platform is made up of 75 members.

Forty (40) members have been appointed by the Director General for Health and Food Safety following a call for applications to represent business and professional organisations, organisations from civil society and independent experts from research institutes. Both organisations and experts had to demonstrate the relevance of their activities and expertise for the tasks of

the Platform. In particular their work has to be relevant for animal welfare in an EU context and covering several Member States.

### **How are the members of the Platform selected?**

The different members have been selected with the aim to ensure a fair representation between various sectors and activities as well as geographical and gender balance.

Thirty five (35) members represent public institutions such as competent authorities (28 Member States and 3 EEA countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway), international organisations working on animal welfare (World Organisation for Animal Health, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and the World Bank) and the European Food Safety Authority.

The Platform may also appoint a maximum of five observers. Switzerland has been granted an observer status in the Platform.

### **How the platform will work in the practice?**

The Platform will meet twice a year. At its first meeting the Commission intends to identify priority areas of work for its members but also resources that members are ready to share. Based on the results of the first meeting the Commission will then propose specific areas of work and if necessary sub-groups will be established.

The Platform will regularly invite other forums or stakeholders to present their initiatives and activities. This will not only enrich its debates but facilitate the dissemination of knowledge, initiatives and experiences that could be used by members. It will also facilitate coordination and complementarity between initiatives taken in different forums.

### **Which subjects will be addressed first?**

In the inaugural meeting of the Platform, the Commission will promote discussions on its priority areas in three sessions:

-How the Platform can contribute to better application and understanding of the EU legislation on animal welfare?

-How the Platform can contribute to promote EU animal welfare standards globally?

- How the Platform can facilitate the use of voluntary commitments and promote market value of animal welfare friendly products?

Based on the debates and commitments by members the Commission will identify EU relevant areas of work of common interest .that are sufficiently concrete and achievable.

### **Which outcome can be expected from the work of the Platform?**

Platform represents a great opportunity for all stakeholders to contribute to improving the welfare of animals through cooperation and networking. Hence, the outcome of the Platform will greatly depend on the active and constructive participation of each member.

The Platform is first of all a forum to share information and experience. It is also an opportunity to increase understanding, develop trust and cooperation between its members.

The Platform will also be the ideal place for all specialised forums/groups working on animal welfare to present their activities and projects and to agree on specific voluntary commitments. There are indeed various spheres where animal welfare is today debated at international level, such as the European Food Safety Authority, the organisation [EuroFAWC](#) or the [World Organisation for Animal Health](#). The Platform could therefore play the role of a hub for connecting these various forums/groups and contribute to improving the overall results.

The Commission believes that the Platform should work on concrete and achievable objectives with the aim of having long term effects on how animal welfare issues are addressed.

The Platform could work on specific projects to help the Commission in its objectives which include a better implementation of the EU animal welfare legislation or the promotion of EU standards at the global level. While these matters remain primarily under the responsibility of the Member States and the EU institutions, stakeholders can bring their experience and expertise to support and complement these activities through various angles and means (applied research, education, vocational training, conferences, etc.).

The Platform could also develop activities where there is no specific EU legislation or activities in order to promote good animal welfare practices. This could be done by the production of guidance documents on specific issues (like phasing out the castration of piglets) or on more general topics (e.g. animal welfare labelling).

### **How is animal welfare tackled at EU level? What is the existing legislation?**

The first EU legislation on animal welfare was adopted in 1974<sup>[1]</sup> which referred to the protection of animals in slaughterhouses. Since then, the EU has adopted legal texts to protect farm and laboratory animals. There are also EU provisions on the keeping of animals in zoos with animal welfare references. The EU has also banned the use of leghold traps for the capture of wild animals.

Farm animals are protected by a general set of EU rules on farming as well as specific provisions on transport and slaughter/killing. Furthermore, specific additional rules exist for the keeping of laying hens, chickens for meat production, pigs and calves.

The EU also integrates animal welfare requirements into the rules for

agriculture subsidies (cross-compliance and rural development programmes) as well as for organic farming.

Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU requires the Union and the Member States to pay full regard to their welfare requirements when they prepare or implement certain Union policies, since animals are sentient beings.

However, this obligation does not constitute a legal base for the Union to legislate on any animal welfare issues. Some of them remain under the sole competence of the Member States (see later question on wild animals).

Within this scope, the Commission activities on animal welfare are not limited to legislation. While implementation of EU rules is mainly under the responsibility of the Member States, the Commission also carries out regular audits to check that competent authorities are performing official controls appropriately.

Moreover the Commission is actively involved in promoting EU animal welfare standards at international level through global standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health and through bilateral agreements/cooperation with non-EU countries.

Finally, the Commission organises regular training activities on animal welfare for officials from Member States and non-EU countries. In the near future the Commission will also designate reference centres on animal welfare (see below).

### **Who's in charge of applying these rules?**

Member States have an important role to play in all cases because they are responsible for the implementation of EU rules through various means which include official controls, but also the development and the implementation of instructions, guidelines and information campaigns to officials and stakeholders. Such development may also imply financing research programmes at national level.

In particular, many pieces of EU animal welfare legislation contain the obligation for the Member States to provide and validate training for people dealing with animals. Member States must therefore dedicate the appropriate resources to ensure that operators are competent when handling and keeping animals.

### **What about animals not covered by EU's laws and wild animals?**

In the EU treaties, animal welfare represents an issue to be considered within the framework of certain EU policies such as agriculture or internal market. The EU has no mandate to tackle all animal welfare issues (see above).

This is the case for example for the welfare of stray dogs/cats or the use of

animals in shows or competitions (corridas, rodeos, circuses, racing dogs or horses, etc.). While the Commission is frequently asked to act on these issues, it has no legal power to intervene.

The Union has also very limited competence on the welfare of wild animals.

As regards the welfare of wild animals kept in captivity, a [directive on zoos and aquaria](#) contains references to the welfare requirements of animals. Other wild animals kept in captivity are not subject to EU animal welfare rules (like circuses or pet shops).

Except for the prohibition of the use of leg hold traps, the Union has no legislation to protect animals living in the wild.

### **Will new rules be adopted in the near future?**

At this point, the Commission's priority is to ensure that EU existing rules are fully implemented. Indeed, there is no point adopting new requirements if the current ones still need to be better applied.

This does not mean that the Commission does not act on animal welfare issues which are under the remit of the Union.

The welfare of animals can be substantially improved through various non legislative activities which the Commission is presently developing (see next question).

### **Will the Commission adopt a new animal welfare strategy? If not, what will the Commission do for animal welfare?**

In 2012, the Commission adopted an EU Strategy on Animal Welfare which listed a series of actions to be performed.

The Commission first wants to complete the outstanding actions which consist of six studies and reports. Some of them are technical, others are more strategic but they are all important to feed our future reflections on animal welfare. Some of them will also contribute to improving implementation through the production of guidance documents (best practices on animal transport, best practice on slaughter/killing of animals).

It is therefore a priority for the Commission to make sure that, by the end of 2017, all these actions are finalised in order to have all the needed information for the future.

This is why, for the time being, the Commission is not working on another strategy.

Besides completing the 2012 strategy, the Commission is working on four priorities:

1. better application of EU rules on animal welfare,
2. developing stakeholders' dialogue,
3. promoting EU standards at the global level,
4. designation of EU reference centres on animal welfare.

On better application of EU rules, the Commission has focused its actions on specific projects following the results of previous audits. Priority has been given in particular to the welfare of pigs, where wide non-compliance still exists as regards the prohibition on routine tail docking and the provision of manipulable materials for pigs. The Commission is also actively supporting the Member States to improve the implementation of the legislation on transport with a specific focus on live export to non-EU countries.

Stakeholders' dialogue will be developed through the activities of the Platform. The Commission adopted a decision to create the Platform in January 2017 and it is foreseen that at least two meetings will take place every year.

Promoting EU standards at global level is achieved by various long term activities such as the negotiation of international standards at the World Organisation for Animal Health (today there are 13 international animal welfare standards thanks to the EU impulse) and including animal welfare in bilateral free trade agreements.

The designation of EU reference centres will be established within one year after the entry into force of the new Official Controls regulation (see below).

#### **How will animal welfare be addressed in the new Official Controls Regulation?**

The Regulation requires the Union to designate EU Reference Centres for animal welfare. They will assist EU countries in their official controls by carrying out scientific and technical studies, conducting training courses and disseminating research findings and information on technical innovations. The EU Reference Centres will also provide the scientific and technical expertise on methods to assess and improve the welfare of animals.

The Regulation also applies to official controls on animal welfare rules, e.g. on transport, slaughter and farming, and allows the adoption of Commission legislation to adjust official control requirements to meet the specific needs of animal welfare such as the introduction of animal welfare indicators.

Regulation (EU) No 2017/265 entered into force on 27 April 2017 and the designation of the EU Reference Centres will have to be completed within one year after that date.

For more information:

[https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/welfare\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/welfare_en)

[1] [Council Directive 74/577/EEC of 18 November 1974 on stunning of animals before slaughter](#) OJ L 316, 26.11.1974, p. 10

---

## State aid: Commission endorses new €101 million Croatian national broadband scheme for 2017-2023

Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *“Croatia’s broadband scheme will bring faster internet to consumers and businesses that currently do not have it. It will help Croatia to put in place the necessary infrastructure for an information society and contribute to creating a Digital Single Market within the EU.”*

Croatia’s current broadband market is characterised by high prices and low take-up rates compared to the EU average. This scheme aims to significantly improve the situation and help Croatia increase its connectivity and meet the targets set out by the Commission in the context of the Digital Single Market.

Backhaul networks, such as the Next Generation Network (NGN) in Croatia, provide the backbone of internet networks and can be thought of as information highways. Next Generation Access (NGA) networks, which can be thought of as more local roads, connect into the NGN.

The previous Croatian broadband scheme, the National Broadband Plan, was [approved by the Commission](#) in January 2016 and supported the roll-out of NGA networks in unserved or underserved areas. The purpose of the new measure is to provide sufficient upstream capacity to sustain the previously approved scheme in rural areas.

Croatia’s NGN will be rolled out partly in areas where either no NGN backhaul network exists, or areas where the backhaul infrastructure is insufficient to meet projected needs. No operator has shown any interest to invest commercially in the scheme’s target areas, which were identified by Croatia through a detailed mapping exercise and two public consultations.

The scheme aims to increase the coverage of high speed broadband and provide speeds of 100 Mbit/s symmetrical (i.e. upload and download). It will run until 31 December 2023. The new infrastructure will be financed mainly through the [European Regional Development Fund](#) and partly by national funds, and the network will remain in public ownership.

The management of the scheme is attributed to a public undertaking, OiV, which will offer long term leasing agreements on the infrastructure to all interested operators. These operators will subsequently be able to offer connection services to local access providers, which in turn serve end consumers. In this way, the new NGN backhaul network will support the NGA networks previously approved under EU state aid rules.

The Commission assessed the measure under EU state aid rules, in particular its [2013 Broadband Guidelines](#). These guidelines aim to ensure, amongst other things, that public funding does not take the place of private investment. They also ensure that other service providers can use the publicly funded infrastructure on a non-discriminatory basis. This protects effective competition, which is a key driver for investment and better prices and quality for consumers and businesses.

The Commission concluded that the positive effects on competition in the Croatian broadband market outweigh possible distortive effects on already established operators. It therefore found the Croatian NGN scheme to be in line with EU state aid rules.

## **Background**

In its Communication on [Connectivity for a Competitive Digital Single Market – Towards a Gigabit Society 2025](#), the Commission set a target of internet connections with download/upload speeds of 1 Gigabit of data per second by 2025 for all schools, transport hubs and main providers of public services, as well as digitally intensive enterprises. In addition, all European households should have access to networks offering a download speed of at least 100 Mbps, which can be upgraded to 1 Gigabit already by 2020.

As part of its [Digital Single Market strategy](#), the Commission aims to encourage broadband roll-out, especially in underserved areas, and to ensure a high level of connectivity in the EU. As regards connectivity, Croatia ranks last of the 28 EU Member States. NGA networks are available to 60% of the Croatian households, compared to an average of 76% in the EU, according to the Commission's [Digital Economy and Society Index](#). On average, only 10% of Croatian households subscribe to it, compared to an EU average of 37%.

The [2013 Broadband Guidelines](#), which entered into force on 26 January 2013, offer stability and legal certainty for broadband investment. In particular, they reconcile the aims of, on the one hand, encouraging the rapid roll-out of broadband infrastructure with public funds and, on the other hand, minimising the risk of crowding out private investment and creating monopolies. They therefore complement other existing EU and Member States policies in this regard.

The non-confidential version of the current decision will be published under the case number [SA.41065](#) in the [State Aid Register](#) on the Commission's [competition website](#) once any confidentiality issues have been resolved. The [State Aid Weekly e-News](#) lists new publications of state aid decisions on the internet and in the EU Official Journal.

---



# Antitrust: Commission opens formal investigation into distribution practices of clothing company Guess

Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy said: *“The Commission has information indicating that Guess, in its distribution agreements, may ban cross-border sales to consumers. One of the key benefits of the EU’s Single Market is that consumers can shop around for a better deal. We are going to investigate Guess’ practices further to ensure that it’s playing by the rules and not preventing consumers from buying products across borders.”*

Guess designs, distributes and licenses clothing and accessories. Guess’ apparel is marketed under numerous trademarks, including “GUESS?” and “MARCIANO”.

The Commission will investigate information indicating that Guess’ distribution agreements may restrict authorised retailers from selling online to consumers or to retailers in other Member States. They may also restrict wholesalers from selling to retailers in other Member States.

Companies are generally free to set up the distribution system that best serves them. However these systems must comply with EU competition rules. In particular, consumers must be free to purchase from any retailer authorised by a manufacturer, including across national borders.

Guess’s agreements under investigation may be in breach of EU competition rules (Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union), which prohibit agreements between companies that prevent, restrict or distort competition within the EU’s Single Market.

In its recent [final report on the e-commerce sector inquiry](#) the Commission found that more than one in ten surveyed retailers experienced cross-border sales restrictions in their distribution agreements. Such restrictions limit their ability to sell online to consumers in other Member States.

The formal investigation launched today concerning Guess is a stand-alone procedure that is separate from the e-commerce sector inquiry but follows up on one of the issues identified in the inquiry’s final report.

## **Background**

### *The e-commerce sector inquiry and other investigations*

The Commission adopted the final report on the e-commerce sector inquiry on 10 May 2017 in the context of its [Digital Single Market strategy mid-term review](#). During the inquiry, the Commission gathered evidence from nearly 1 900 companies operating in e-commerce of consumer goods and digital content and analysed around 8 000 distribution and license contracts.

The insight gained from the [sector inquiry](#) will allow the Commission to target EU antitrust enforcement in European e-commerce markets on the most widespread, problematic business practices that have emerged or evolved as a result of the growth of e-commerce and that may negatively impact competition and cross-border trade and hence the functioning of the EU's Digital Single Market.

The full text of the final report can be found [here](#).

In February 2017, the Commission launched [three separate investigations](#) to assess if certain online sales practices prevent, in breach of EU antitrust rules, consumers from enjoying cross-border choice and being able to buy consumer electronics, video games and hotel accommodation at competitive prices. These investigations are ongoing.

### *Procedural background*

Article 101 TFEU prohibits agreements between undertakings and decisions of associations of undertakings that prevent, restrict or distort competition within the EU's Single Market.

There is no legal deadline for bringing an antitrust investigation to an end. The duration of an investigation depends on a number of factors, including the complexity of the case, the cooperation of the companies with the Commission and the exercise of the rights of defence.

The opening of formal proceedings does not prejudice the outcome of the investigation. It relieves the competition authorities of EU Member States of their competence to apply EU competition rules to the practices concerned.

More information on the investigation will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [40428](#).

---

## **Daily News 06/06/2017**

### **Launch of the European Drug Report 2017**

Today, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos**, together with Laura d'Arrigo, Chair of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) Management Board, and EMCDDA Director Alexis Goosdeel, will launch the European Drug Report 2017. Commissioner Avramopoulos said: *"The impact of the drugs problem continues to be a significant challenge for European societies. The annual European Drug Report gives us the necessary analysis, guidance and tools to tackle this threat together across Europe, not just to protect the health of our citizens, but also to stop huge profits from drugs ending up in the pockets of organised crime groups in Europe and beyond."* The European Drug Report

provides a comprehensive analysis of recent trends in the drug situation in Europe, including developments in the European drug market, drug use among young Europeans and the threats posed by new substances. The report will be accompanied by 30 Country Drug Reports presenting summaries of national drug phenomena in the EU28, Turkey and Norway. The European Drug Report 2017 and the full press release is available online in 24 languages on the EMCDDA [website](#). A press point will take place in the VIP corner at 13:00 CET and will be streamed live on [EBS](#). (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 2 298 67 64; Katarzyna Kolanko: +32 2 296 34 44)

### **Capital Markets Union: Banks to provide feedback to SMEs on access to funding**

As the Commission gears up to publish the Mid-Term Review of the Capital Markets Union (CMU) Action Plan on 8 June, it is intensifying its efforts to improve the funding environment for small businesses. Currently, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) often fail to get funding from banks yet they do not receive proper feedback as to the reason why, which hampers future attempts. The Commission has been working to address this problem by getting the financial industry to do more to help small businesses navigate the complex financial landscape. Five major EU banking federations have now agreed to providing SMEs with the feedback they need so that they can ultimately increase their chances of getting loans. Vice-President Valdis **Dombrovskis**, responsible for Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union, said: *“Small businesses are the lifeblood of the EU economy. That’s why the financial system must better respond to their varied needs: from start-ups looking for better access to capital to ambitious scale-ups in need of risk finance. Thanks to today’s agreement, SMEs will receive clear feedback on the reasons why their request for financing has been rejected, which will help them to better understand how to actually access the financing they need.”* The Commission today is also publishing a report that maps national and regional initiatives to help small businesses identify a wider range of sources of finance, as well as providing investors and lenders with reliable information about companies. In a bid to help tackle information barriers in the SME funding market and improve access by innovative SMEs to alternative forms of finance, the Commission has also launched [a call for proposals](#) for a maximum amount of € 2.5 million under the Horizon 2020 programme. This Call for Proposals will allow to support capacity-building projects to address information barriers in the SME funding market and increase the range of financing opportunities by drawing on these successful national initiatives. Further information on the feedback to SMEs initiative is available [here](#). (For more information: Vanessa Mock – Tel.: +32 229 64976; Letizia Lupini- Tel.: +32 229 51958)

### **State aid: Commission and China start dialogue on state aid control**

European Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, and He Lifeng, Chairman of China’s National Development and Reform Commission, have signed on Friday, 2 June in Brussels a Memorandum of Understanding to start a dialogue on state aid control. The State aid dialogue creates a mechanism of consultation, cooperation and transparency

between China and the EU in the field of state aid control. The dialogue will be used to share with China the European experience in enforcing state aid control. It will also be used to learn more about the implementation of the newly adopted Fair Competition Review in China. This new State aid cooperation dialogue will further the EU's and China's mutual interest and joint work to promote fair global competition. It is part of the Commission's broader strategy to address the distortion that national subsidies policies put on the promotion of a global level playing field where companies can compete on their merits. Commissioner **Vestager** commented: *"Decisions by one country to grant a subsidy to a company that operates globally may affect competition elsewhere. The European Commission is pleased to start a discussion with China on how to best handle state intervention in the economy."* More information on the Commission's [website](#). A full press release is available online in [EN](#), [DE](#) and [FR](#) (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

### **State aid: Commission endorses new €101 million Croatian national broadband scheme for 2017-2023**

The European Commission has found that Croatia's €101.4 million Next Generation Network (NGN) Broadband plan is in line with EU state aid rules. This scheme aims to provide fast internet access where it is currently not available, in particular in rural areas. Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *"Croatia's broadband scheme will bring faster internet to consumers and businesses that currently do not have it. It will help Croatia to put in place the necessary infrastructure for an information society and contribute to creating a Digital Single Market within the EU."* The scheme aims to increase the coverage of high speed broadband and provide speeds of 100 Mbit/s symmetrical (i.e. upload and download). It will run until 31 December 2023. The new infrastructure will be financed mainly through the [European Regional Development Fund](#) and partly by national funds, and the network will remain in public ownership. The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#) and [HR](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

### **Antitrust: Commission opens formal investigation into distribution practices of clothing company Guess**

The European Commission has opened a formal antitrust investigation into the distribution agreements and practices of clothing manufacturer and retailer Guess. The Commission will investigate information indicating that Guess' distribution agreements may restrict authorised retailers from selling online to consumers or to retailers in other Member States. They may also restrict wholesalers from selling to retailers in other Member States. Companies are generally free to set up the distribution system that best serves them. However these systems must comply with EU competition rules. In particular, consumers must be free to purchase from any retailer authorised by a manufacturer, including across national borders. The Commission will examine whether Guess illegally restricts retailers from selling cross-border to consumers within the EU Single Market. Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in

charge of competition policy said: *“The Commission has information indicating that Guess, in its distribution agreements, may ban cross-border sales to consumers. One of the key benefits of the EU’s Single Market is that consumers can shop around for a better deal. We are going to investigate Guess’ practices further to ensure that it’s playing by the rules and not preventing consumers from buying products across borders.”* A full press release is available online in [EN](#), [DE](#) and [FR](#) (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

### **Mergers: Commission clears joint venture between General Electric and ATI**

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control over a newly created joint venture by General Electric and ATI, both of the US. The joint venture will develop novel titanium alloy production processes. General Electric is a global, diversified manufacturing, technology and services company. ATI is a worldwide producer of specialty materials and components, including titanium and titanium alloys, nickel-based alloys and other specialty steels and alloys. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would not raise competition concerns as the joint venture does not have activities in the European Economic Area. The operation was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information will be available on the Commission’s [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#) under the case number [M.8301](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

### **Le volume des ventes du commerce de détail en hausse de 0,1% dans la zone euro**

En avril 2017 par rapport à mars 2017, le volume des ventes du commerce de détail corrigé des variations saisonnières a augmenté de 0,1% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et de 0,5% dans l’UE28, selon les estimations d’Eurostat, l’office statistique de l’Union européenne. En mars, le commerce de détail avait progressé de 0,2% dans la zone euro, tandis qu’il avait reculé de 0,1% 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; Maud Noyon – Tel.: +32 229 80379)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **European Development Days focus on “Investing in Development” – #EDD17**

The [11th edition of European Development Days](#) opens tomorrow, 7 June, with a specific focus on investing in development. Europe’s leading forum on international cooperation and development promises to be the biggest ever with some 7,000 participants expected. The event’s debates, panels, and special events will provide insights into the most pressing development challenges facing the world, and various approaches to dealing with these challenges. A key moment of the European Development Days will be the signature of the European Consensus on Development, a strategic document,

outlining the future of European development policy. For the first time, the Consensus will apply in its entirety to all EU Institutions and all Member States, who are committed to work more closely together. During the European Development Days, discussions will bring together Heads of State or Government, business leaders and stakeholders to debate and share new insights into sustainability, inclusivity, peace and prosperity, focusing on the roles of youth, women and the private sector in development cooperation. (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)

### **Commissioner Oettinger participates in Citizens' Dialogue in Germany**

Following the debates and dialogues taking place across the Union on the future of Europe and the presentation of the Commission's [White Paper on the Future of Europe](#), Commissioner Günther H. **Oettinger**, in charge of budget and human resources will participate in a [Citizens' Dialogue](#) on 6 June April in Mainz, Germany. Commissioner **Oettinger** will discuss the future of Europe. The dialogue will start at 19:00 CET and can be followed live on [Facebook](#). (For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

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

---

## **[The true scale of the secret Tory plan for cuts and closures across the NHS has been revealed by the Health Service Journal – Ashworth](#)**

**Jonathan Ashworth, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary,**

responding to leaked reports in the Health Service Journal said:

“With 48 hours to go until the General Election the true scale of the secret Tory plan for cuts and closures across the NHS has been revealed by the Health Service Journal.

“We now know if the Tories are re-elected on Thursday we'll see hospital wards closed, waiting times growing, treatments rationed and staff cut.

“The fact that NHS bosses have

described this as the 'most extreme and difficult NHS finance process they had experienced' and would 'challenge the value basis of the NHS' will make chilling reading for patients and their families who deserve the very best levels of care.

"Every single day the Tories are in power hospitals are being left to crumble, staff are being let down, waiting lists are growing and patients are being denied the care they need and deserve.

"Let's be clear: these new, secret Tory plans will only be stopped by electing a Labour Government on Thursday.

"The NHS cannot survive five more years of a Tory government. That is why, Labour will pledge to bring the health service back from the brink with a multi-billion pound rescue package. The British people deserve nothing less."

**Ends**

**Notes to editors**

.

'Exclusive:

New national savings drive will 'challenge the values' of NHS leaders'

[[www.hsj.co.uk/topics/finance-and-efficiency/exclusive-new-national-savings-drive-will-challenge-the-values-of-nhs-leaders/7018461.article?blocktitle=News&contentID=15303](http://www.hsj.co.uk/topics/finance-and-efficiency/exclusive-new-national-savings-drive-will-challenge-the-values-of-nhs-leaders/7018461.article?blocktitle=News&contentID=15303)]