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European Commission and European Court of Auditors meet to discuss their cooperation and the future of Europe

European Commission President Jean-Claude **Juncker** and the College are meeting Mr Klaus-Heiner Lehne, President of the European Court of Auditors, and Members of the Court of Auditors (“ECA”) in Luxembourg for the regular meeting between the two institutions. The meeting will begin with a working lunch chaired by President Juncker and President Lehne, followed by discussions between the Commissioners and the Members of the Court of Auditors that will be structured around the Commission’s Reflection Papers on the Future of Europe. The meeting will conclude with a plenary session chaired by President Lehne and First Vice-President **Timmermans**. *(For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Apply now: Lorenzo Natali Media Prize for outstanding journalism in development

Applications for the European Commission’s 2018 Lorenzo Natali Media Prize, which recognises journalists doing outstanding reporting on sustainable development topics, are open from **5 February to 9 March** for online, print and audio-visual works. Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** said: *“In an era of disinformation, fake news and digital algorithms, we need professional and fact-based journalism more than ever. The important work of journalists is not only crucial for democracy across the globe, but also gives visibility and a voice to those who would otherwise not be heard. Through their stories they inform, inspire, and call for much-needed change. With this prize, we thank them for their determination and encourage them to keep up the fight.”* The Prize has two categories based on age groups and for each category there will be a winner from each region: Africa; the Arab World and the Middle East; Asia and the Pacific; Latin America and the Caribbean; and Europe. A “Grand Winner” will be selected among the regional winners, and an additional thematic prize will be awarded for work focused on the elimination of violence against women and girls. Find more information on the [specific rules and criteria](#) online and in our [press release](#). *(For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)*

World Cancer Day: knowing more means helping more

Discussing cancer related issues is never easy. At the same time, given that the disease is still the second leading cause of death in the EU, there is a constant need for a robust, well informed response to it in order to contribute to the prevention, early detection, and adequate treatment. [The European Cancer Information System \(ECIS\)](#) website launched on the occasion of World Cancer Day by the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Commission’s in-house science and knowledge service, allows experts and practitioners to explore geographical patterns and trends. It gathers data

from around 150 European population-based cancer registries covering 25 EU Member States and 7 non-EU European countries providing valuable information on how well national cancer programmes are actually working, and address shortcomings. Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, highlighted: *“Reliable data is an important aspect of the EU’s approach to cancer, along with tackling risk factors such as tobacco, alcohol, pesticides and pollution, screening for diagnosis and treatment, research, and connecting expertise through the European Reference Networks and joint actions “. “The European Cancer Information System is an excellent example of our support for decision-makers and researchers across the EU and beyond. It allows for the assessment and monitoring of the disease across regions and countries, following trends over time and helping to gather information that could lead to a further decrease of cancer rates.”* explained Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, responsible for the Joint Research Centre. EU has been supporting research to fight cancer since 1985 through its research and innovation programmes. These efforts focus on developing patient-oriented strategies to prevent, cure and help people live with cancer. With funding totalling €2.4 billion since 2007, European [#cancer](#) research has been leading personalised medicine approaches and efforts to understanding cancer biology as well as better prevention, treatment and care solutions. You can find more information [here](#) and [here](#). Read some of the success stories of EU funded cancer research [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: [+32 229 91269](#); Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel: [+32 22967083](#); Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: [+32 229 87624](#))

Mozambique joins the Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and Southern African States

The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the European Union and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) became the first regional EPA in Africa to be fully operational after its implementation by Mozambique. Mozambique was the last piece of the SADC-EPA jigsaw to fall into place. The other five countries – Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South-Africa, and Swaziland – have been implementing the agreement since October 2016. Implementing the EPA means that Mozambique will not have to pay customs duties on its exports to the EU. The EU is the largest export market for Africa. Exports to the EU represent 22% of SADC EPA countries’ exports. The EU-SADC EPA provides opportunities for SADC countries to create jobs, attract more investment, industrialise, integrate into global value chains. On the EU side, European businesses are increasingly investing in the region. For its part, Mozambique will progressively, over the course of several years, reduce or eliminate customs duties for many of EU exports. Trade between the EU and Mozambique is currently about €2 billion annually. Mozambican exports to the EU include aluminium and raw cane sugar. For more information see [here](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: [+32 229 56185](#); Kinga Malinowska – Tel: [+32 229 51383](#))

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of De Nederlandse Energie Maatschappij by Waterland

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of De Nederlandse Energie Maatschappij B.V. by Nuts Groep B.V,

ultimately controlled by Waterland Private Equity Investments B.V. (“Waterland”), all of the Netherlands. Nederlandse Energie Maatschappij supplies electricity and gas to small customers in the Netherlands. Nuts Groep is active in the supply of electricity and gas to small customers in the Netherlands and Belgium. Waterland is an independent private equity firm. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the companies’ moderate combined market position resulting from the proposed transaction. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission’s [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.8781](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Eurostat: Décembre 2017 comparé à novembre 2017 – Le volume des ventes du commerce de détail en baisse de 1,1% dans la zone euro, en baisse de 1,0% dans l’UE28

En décembre 2017 par rapport à novembre 2017, le volume des ventes du commerce de détail corrigé des variations saisonnières a diminué de 1,1% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et de 1,0% dans l’UE28, selon les estimations d’Eurostat, l’office statistique de l’Union européenne. En novembre, le commerce de détail avait progressé de 2,0% dans la zone euro et de 2,1% dans l’UE28. En décembre 2017 par rapport à décembre 2016, l’indice des ventes de détail s’est accru de 1,9% dans la zone euro et de 2,4% dans l’UE28. Par rapport à 2016, le volume moyen des ventes de détail a progressé en 2017 de 2,6% tant dans la zone euro que dans l’UE28. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d’informations: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040; Maud Noyon – Tel. +32 229-80379)

Eurostat: Consommation d’énergie en 2016 – La consommation dans l’UE est au-dessus de l’objectif d’efficacité énergétique

L’Union européenne (UE) s’est engagée à réduire sa consommation d’énergie de 20% par rapport aux projections d’ici à 2020. Cet objectif est également connu sous le nom d’«objectif d’efficacité énergétique de 20%». En d’autres termes, l’UE a pris l’engagement de parvenir à une consommation d’énergie primaire inférieure ou égale à 1 483 millions de tonnes équivalent pétrole (Mtep) et une consommation d’énergie finale inférieure ou égale à 1 086 Mtep en 2020. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d’informations: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)

STATEMENTS

Joint Statement on International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation

On International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** and Commissioners Johannes **Hahn**, Neven **Mimica**, and Věra **Jourová**, made the following

statement: "We confirm our firm resolve to put an end to this practice which is painful, traumatic and causes long-term health consequences. A practice that is nearly always carried out on children. A practice that is a fundamental human rights violation and an extreme form of discrimination against women and girls. Despite the efforts of the EU and its partners, 200 million girls are still suffering from this violation, which occurs in all parts of the world. [...] In Europe itself, girls are still today subject to this illegal practice. [...] We have put laws in place, to ensure that there can be no impunity in Europe for this practice. Female genital mutilation is a crime in all EU Member States [...]. At the international level, together with the United Nations, we have launched an unprecedented initiative – the Spotlight Initiative – to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. [...]. Through these actions we provide direct and targeted support to the victims of such harmful practices. The EU will [...] continue building strong partnerships through bilateral, as well as multilateral cooperation. [...] We want a society where women are free from violence and free to change the world." Please read the full statement [here](#) and find more information on EU actions to counter Female Genital Mutilation in a memo [here](#). (for more information: Christian Wigand- Tel.: +32 229 62253; Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322)

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