

Daily News 05 / 11 / 2018

EU supports Italy following deadly floods

The Commission's [24/7 Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#) has been in constant contact with the Italian authorities to offer EU support as heavy floods have affected many parts of the country. The EU's [Copernicus](#) satellite mapping service has been activated, at the request of the national authorities, for the affected areas in Sicily and Veneto. Today in Brussels, Commissioner **Stylianides** is meeting with Mr Agostino Miozzo, Director of the Office promotion and integration of the national service of the Italian Civil Protection Department to discuss the current emergency in Italy. *"We stand in solidarity with the Italian people and authorities at this difficult time. Our thoughts are with the victims and all those affected by the deadly floods as well as with the first responders working tirelessly on the ground. The EU has mobilised its satellite mapping service to help the national authorities. We are ready to provide more support if requested"*, said Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management **Stylianides**. [Photos](#) of the Emergency Centre are available, as well as a video of the EU's [Copernicus](#) programme and a [factsheet](#) on the EU's emergency centre. (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz de Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)

WiFi4EU: As of 7 November municipalities in the EU can apply for free Wi-Fi hotspots in public spaces

On 7 November 2018 at 13:00 (CET), the Commission will launch a call for applications for the scheme 'WiFi4EU'. The call, which is open to municipalities or groups of municipalities in the EU, will be open until 17:00 (CET) on 9 November 2018. €120 million will be available for up to 8,000 municipalities across the EU by 2020. In order to process very large numbers of applications across Europe, the application procedure is simple and fully online. Once they have registered in the dedicated [WiFi4EU portal](#), municipalities will be able to apply online for the €15,000 [WiFi4EU scheme](#) voucher with just one click. So far over one in five municipalities all over Europe has registered their details. Municipalities that have not registered and wish to apply for a voucher, can still register on the portal until the start of the call on 7 November. With the voucher, the municipality will be able to set up a Wi-Fi hotspot in public spaces, including town halls, public libraries, museums, public parks or squares. The Commission is selecting projects on a "first-come, first-served" basis. In the upcoming call, the first 2,800 municipalities will get a WiFi4EU voucher, with each EU Member State being guaranteed to receive at least 15 vouchers. **In the coming two years**, three more WiFi4EU calls will be launched, approximately one every 6 months. WiFi4EU-funded networks will be free of charge, free of advertising and free of personal data harvesting. Funding will be provided for networks that do not duplicate existing free private or public offers of a similar quality. More information is available [online](#) in the [factsheet](#) and [video](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: + 32 229 67083)

TRADE: Commission reports on latest negotiating rounds with Indonesia and New Zealand

The Commission today published two reports summarising the progress made during the latest negotiating rounds for the EU-[Indonesia](#) and EU-New [Zealand](#) trade agreements. Both sets of talks were held in a constructive atmosphere. The sixth round of negotiations for an EU-Indonesia free trade agreement took place from 15 to 19 October in Palembang, Indonesia. Negotiators made good progress across the board, particularly on the chapters on customs and trade facilitation, rules related to trade in food, animal and plant products, technical barriers to trade, as well as questions related to sustainable development. The next round is planned for 11 to 15 March in Brussels. The second round of negotiations for an EU-New Zealand free trade agreement took place in Wellington, New Zealand from 8 to 12 October. The discussions allowed for gaps to be bridged between both sides' positions in a number of areas. They also allowed for follow up actions to be clearly identified, which each side has to complete ahead of the third negotiating round, scheduled to take place in Brussels in February. The reports published today provide an overview of the state of discussions in each area. *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)*

Eurogroup and ECOFIN meetings, 5 and 6 November 2018

Vice-President **Dombrovskis** and Commissioner **Moscovici** will represent the Commission at today's Eurogroup meeting. The Eurogroup meeting will discuss the ongoing assessment of euro area Member States' draft budgetary plans for 2019, including the Opinion issued by the Commission on Italy's draft budgetary plan. The Eurogroup will be presented with an account of the recent activities of the ECB Supervisory Board and the Single Resolution Board by the Chair of the European Central Bank's Supervisory Board, Danièle Nouy, and the Chair of the Single Resolution Board, Elke König. The Eurogroup will then continue in an inclusive format to discuss the state of play of the ongoing work on the deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). This will include a discussion on establishing a common backstop for the Single Resolution Fund, roadmap for beginning political discussions on the European Deposit Insurance Scheme (EDIS) and how to enhance the effectiveness of the precautionary tools of the European Stability Mechanism. Commissioner **Moscovici** will participate in the press conference following the meeting. At tomorrow's ECOFIN meeting, the Commission will be represented by Vice-President **Dombrovskis** and Commissioner **Moscovici**. Ministers will exchange views and discuss progress achieved in the negotiations of the digital services tax proposed by the Commission to make corporate tax rules fit for the digital age. The Court of Auditors will present its annual report on management of the EU budget. The Council is expected to adopt conclusions on the EU statistics and climate finance for the COP24. A press conference with Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will follow the meeting. *(For more information: Christian Spahr – Tel.: +32 229 50055; Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Letizia Lupini – Tel.: +32 229 51958; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)*

TRADE: Commissioner Malmström consults with civil society at advisory group meeting

This afternoon Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** will participate in the fifth meeting of the Expert Group on EU Trade Agreements. Commissioner Malmström will discuss the state of EU trade and the challenges ahead with trade policy specialists from 28 organisations representing various industrial sectors, including SMEs, trade unions, consumers, and environmental groups. The group was set up in September 2017 to step up Commission's engagement on trade policy making with the full range of stakeholders and civil society representatives. Since its creation, the group has provided valuable input on a range of issues, including consumer issues, ongoing negotiations, the EU's proposals for modernisation of the WTO, as well as the implementation of the EU-Canada trade agreement. More details about the meeting are available [online](#). The report of the meeting will be published in the following days. *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Crayon by OEP

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Crayon Group Holding ASA ("Crayon") of Norway by One Equity Partners of the US. Crayon is active in software licensing and IT consulting services. One Equity Partners is a private equity funds management company. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because of the absence of significant horizontal overlaps or vertical links between the companies. 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.9112](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Radisson by Jin Jiang

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Radisson Holdings of the US and Radisson Hospitality of Sweden (together "Radisson") by Jin Jiang International Holdings ("Jin Jiang") of China. Radisson operates a range of hotel brands. Jin Jiang is a hospitality and travel group that develops and manages hotels in China and the rest of the world. In the European Economic Area (EEA), Jin Jiang is mainly active through Groupe du Louvre hotels. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because of the brand and geographic complementarity between Jin Jiang and Radisson. The transaction was examined under the normal merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9099](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini travels to Montreal for the EU-Canada Joint Ministerial Committee

On 5-6 November, Federica **Mogherini**, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission will co-chair the 2nd EU-Canada Joint Ministerial Committee in Montreal, Canada together with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, Chrystia Freeland. The Joint Ministerial Committee is an annual meeting set up under the [EU-Canada Strategic Partnership Agreement](#), which has been provisionally applied since April 2017. The EU and Canada, as likeminded partners, will review the state of bilateral relations as well as look at how to increase their cooperation in the year ahead in areas as diverse as promoting effective multilateralism, strengthening security and defence cooperation, and tackling climate change. While in Montreal, High Representative/Vice-President Mogherini will have a meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, in order to discuss pressing foreign policy priorities. She will also, along with Foreign Minister Freeland, speak to students at McGill University, delivering an address on “Navigating unchartered waters: the EU and Canada closer than ever”. The two will also attend the “Most Powerful Women International Summit” organised by Fortune, the business journal in Montreal. Coverage of the visit will be provided by [EbS](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Adam Kaznowski – Tel: +32 229 89359)

Lisbon Web Summit: Commissioners Věra Jourová, Margrethe Vestager, Carlos Moedas and Julian King, will present the EU’s strong digital leadership

Several Commissioners will participate in this year’s Lisbon Web Summit starting today in the Portuguese capital, where they will highlight the important role of technology for our democracy and our economy, as well as in promoting gender equality in our society. Commissioners Věra **Jourová**, responsible for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality and Carlos **Moedas**, responsible for Research, Science and Innovation will attend tonight’s opening hosted by António Costa, the Portuguese Prime Minister. Tomorrow, the two Commissioners will start the EU’s programme with a Facebook Live launch of the [2019 EU Prize for Women Innovators](#). Commissioner **Moedas** will also announce the winner of the [EU’s iCapital award](#) for the most innovative city in Europe, accept recommendations for social innovation policy by an EU supported project, sign a new project funding agreement with Innofin/COSME support and attend several talks and panel debates. Also on Tuesday, Commissioner **Jourová** will participate in panel debates on technology’s impact on democracy and on gender equality at the workplace. In addition, Commissioner Julian **King**, responsible for the Security Union, will take part in a panel discussion on the risks from online extremism and disinformation. On Wednesday, Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, responsible for Competition policy, will deliver a keynote speech on building a fairer digital economy at the Web Summit’s Centre Stage. Commissioners **Jourová** and **Vestager** and **Moedas** will also hold press conferences at the event [broadcasts will be confirmed on [EbS](#)]. The Commission will also set up a dedicated EU stand at the Web Summit under the #InvestEU banner to promote EU funding and investment

opportunities for European and global technology companies. The EU, together with the [European Investment Bank \(EIB\)](#), has already provided significant investment to support the development of new digital technologies, including through the EU Investment Plan and EU's Research and Innovation funding programme Horizon 2020. More information about the EU presence at the Web Summit is also available through this [Facebook page](#) and via the Twitter hashtag #EUatWebsummit. *(For more information: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel: +32 2 29 87278)*

Le Commissaire Avramopoulos à Paris

Dimitris **Avramopoulos**, le Commissaire européen pour la migration, les affaires intérieures et la citoyenneté, sera à Paris cet après-midi, où il rencontrera le nouveau Ministre de l'intérieur, Christophe Castaner. Ils discuteront des questions relatives à la politique migratoire, la gestion des frontières extérieures de l'UE et la sécurité. *(Pour plus d'informations: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Markus Lammert – Tel.: +32 229 80423)*

Commissioner Vella awarded the Ocean Prize for protecting the oceans from overuse and littering

Commissioner Karmenu **Vella**, responsible for Environment, Maritime affairs and Fisheries receives today the German Ocean Award as recognition for his work for protecting and preserving the ocean, and making it part of our economy in a sustainable way. The award comes after the European Commission committed last week another [€300 million for clean, healthy and safe oceans](#) during the [Our Ocean conference in Bali](#). Commissioner **Vella** said: *"This award is not about me. It is about the coordinated response the European Commission has developed to protect and sustainably use our ocean. It is a reflection of our world leading plastics strategy, which will reduce marine litter, of our global efforts for better ocean governance, of our work with governments around the planet to stop illegal fishing, of our promotion of renewable ocean energy, and of our efforts to lead the way at home on sustainable fishing. This is an award for a European wide effort for the promotion of sustainable ocean use"*. Two years ahead of the initial deadline set, 10% of all EU waters have already been designated as Marine Protected Areas, which with effective management, adequate funding and robust enforcement can have both conservation and economic benefits. Over the last 6 years the number of stocks that are fished at sustainable levels has risen from 20 to 54 – out of 76 for which such advice was available from the [International Council on the Exploration of the Seas](#). The Award also follows the overwhelming support of the European Parliament to the Commission's [Single-Use Plastics proposal](#). The German Ocean Award, under the patronage of the Minister-President of Schleswig-Holstein, is awarded to well-known individuals who have shown special commitment to the cause of preserving and protecting the world's oceans. *(For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Daniela Stoycheva – Tel.: +32 229 53664)*

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