

# Daily News 07 / 02 / 2019

## **Joint statement on behalf of President Juncker and Prime Minister May**

President **Juncker** and Prime Minister May have met today to review the next steps in the UK's withdrawal from the EU. They issued the [following statement](#) afterwards. (For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229-60524; Daniel Ferrie – Tel.: +32 229-86500)

## **Winter 2019 Economic Forecast: growth moderates amid global uncertainties**

The [Winter 2019 Economic Forecast](#) published today shows that the European economy is expected to grow for the seventh year in a row in 2019, with expansion forecast in every Member State. The pace of growth overall is projected to moderate compared to the high rates of recent years and the outlook is subject to large uncertainty. Euro area GDP is now forecast to grow by 1.3% in 2019 and 1.6% in 2020 (Autumn Forecast: 1.9% in 2019; 1.7% in 2020). The EU GDP growth forecast has also been revised down to 1.5% in 2019 and 1.7% in 2020 (Autumn Forecast: 1.9% in 2019; 1.8% in 2020). Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, said: "All EU countries are expected to continue to grow in 2019, which means more jobs and prosperity. Yet our forecast is revised downwards, in particular for the largest euro area economies. This reflects external factors, such as trade tensions and the slowdown in emerging markets, notably in China. Concerns about the sovereign-bank loop and debt sustainability are resurfacing in some euro area countries. The possibility of a disruptive Brexit creates additional uncertainty. Being aware of these mounting risks is half of the job. The other half is choosing the right mix of policies, such as facilitating investment, redoubling efforts to carry out structural reforms and pursuing prudent fiscal policies." Pierre **Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, said: "After its 2017 peak, the EU economy's deceleration is set to continue in 2019, to growth of 1.5%. This slowdown is set to be more pronounced than expected last autumn, especially in the euro area, due to global trade uncertainties and domestic factors in our largest economies. Europe's economic fundamentals remain solid and we continue to see good news particularly on the jobs front. Growth should rebound gradually in the second half of this year and in 2020." The full press release is available in all languages [here](#). The full Winter 2019 Economic Forecast is available [here](#). (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Annikky Lamp – Tel.: +32 229 56151; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 58615)

## **Transparent and predictable working conditions: Commission welcomes the provisional agreement reached today**

Today in the early morning hours, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council have reached a provisional agreement on the

European Commission's proposal for a new Directive to create more transparent and predictable working conditions, in particular for workers in non-standard forms of employment. Marianne **Thyssen**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility welcomed the agreement with the following statement: *"Thanks to our initiative to guarantee transparent and predictable working conditions, we will protect more workers across Europe. Especially the growing number of people who are active in new forms of work, such as 'flexijobs' and on-demand contracts, as well as domestic workers. All workers – no matter for how long their contract runs and how many hours they work – will know from the start of their employment what their rights and obligations are. Workers will have the right to agree with their employer when they remain available, and on the advance notice they are to receive. On-demand workers can no longer be dismissed if they refuse to work at very short notice. Employers can no longer prevent workers with a zero-hour contract to take an extra job with another employer. I would like to thank rapporteur Enrique Calvet Chambon and the shadow rapporteurs who negotiated on behalf of the European Parliament, and the Romanian Presidency of the Council. This agreement should now be confirmed quickly. It will have a very concrete, tangible, and positive effect on about 200 million workers across the EU. This is what social Europe is all about."* The full statement is available [here](#). More information on the agreement is available in [this factsheet](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094)

### **Commissioner Malmström to take part in seventh Expert Group on EU Trade Agreements**

Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** will today participate in the first 2019 meeting of the Expert Group on EU Trade Agreements. The group brings together trade policy specialists from 28 organisations representing various interest groups, including employers' organisations, trade unions, representative associations, socio-economic interest groups (like consumer associations) and other civil society organisations. The meeting will be an opportunity to revisit the issues of EU-US trade relations and reform of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in the presence of the Commissioner. The group had previously discussed both issues in September 2018. The expert group was set up in December 2017 to step up Commission's engagement on trade policy making with the full range of stakeholders and civil society representatives. A 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)

### **La Commission approuve une nouvelle indication géographique protégée française**

La Commission européenne a approuvé la demande d'inscription du « [Bulot de la Baie de Granville](#) » dans le registre des indications géographiques protégées (IGP). Le « Bulot de la Baie de Granville » est un mollusque vendu entier dans sa coquille qui est pêché et débarqué dans la baie de Granville se situant dans la Manche à l'ouest de la presqu'île du Cotentin. Les forts

courants et l'amplitude importante des marées entraînent un renouvellement permanent des masses d'eau par des apports venant du large qui assurent une excellente qualité d'eau et une température d'eau fraîche, propice aux bulots. Ce mollusque fait partie de l'alimentation traditionnelle des populations littorales normandes locales. Il était pêché à la main ou au râteau, à l'occasion des marées. L'essor de la pêche professionnelle du « Bulot de la Baie de Granville » a eu lieu au cours de la seconde moitié du XXe siècle, grâce à l'apparition des matériels permettant de le pêcher en plus grande quantité. Ainsi cette activité est devenue professionnelle, spécifique et rentable. Cette nouvelle appellation va rejoindre plus de 1440 produits déjà protégés dont la liste est disponible dans la base de données [DOOR](#). Pour plus d'informations, voir aussi les pages sur la [politique de qualité](#). (pour plus d'information: Daniel Rosario – Tél: +32 2 29 56 185; Clémence Robin – Tél: +32 229 52 509)

### **State aid: Commission finds that Eurobank's transaction with former real estate subsidiary Grivalia is in line with State aid commitments**

The European Commission has found that Eurobank's transaction with its former real estate subsidiary Grivalia is in line with Eurobank's commitments under State aid rules. In November 2015, the Commission adopted a decision approving amended restructuring plans for the four systemic Greek banks, including [Eurobank](#). One of the commitments based on which the Commission authorised State aid to Eurobank was that, for a period of five years, Eurobank would not acquire influence in any subsidiary it divested without prior approval by the Commission. On this basis, Greece notified the planned transaction between Eurobank and Grivalia, for its approval under State aid rules. In its assessment, the Commission considered the impact of the transaction on the viability and capital position of Eurobank. The Commission concluded that the transaction would improve the viability of Eurobank and that its improved capital positions would enable it to significantly reduce its stock of non-performing loans over the next years. On this basis, the Commission has approved the transaction, in accordance with the commitments of the 2015 restructuring decision. Today's approval is without prejudice to the merger control assessment, which may still be carried out by the competent competition authorities. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#), under the case number SA.53123. (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

### **Concentrations: La Commission autorise l'acquisition de CEVA par CMA CGM**

La Commission Européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition de CEVA Logistics AG ("CEVA"), basée en Suisse, par le groupe CMA CGM S.A., basé en France. CEVA est une société qui offre des services de transitaire de fret, courtage en douane et d'autres services à valeur ajoutée, ainsi que des services de logistique contractuelle. CMA CGM est un leader mondial du transport maritime. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, compte tenu de son impact limité sur la structure des marchés des services de transitaire de fret, du transport maritime régulier par conteneurs en haute mer et de courte distance. L'opération a été examinée dans le cadre de la

procédure normale du contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.9221](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tél.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tél.: +32 229 90526)

### **Concentrations: la Commission autorise l'acquisition d'un immeuble en Allemagne par EDF et Ares**

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition du contrôle en commun d'un complexe de bureaux situé à Düsseldorf, en Allemagne, par Électricité de France («EDF»), basée en France, et Ares Management Corporation («Ares»), basée aux États-Unis. EDF est une entreprise énergétique intégrée qui exerce des activités dans les domaines de la production, du transport, de la distribution, de la fourniture et du négoce d'énergie en France et à l'international. Ares est un gestionnaire d'actifs non conventionnels au niveau mondial, qui investit notamment dans l'immobilier et possède des biens résidentiels, des locaux commerciaux, des bureaux et des bâtiments industriels en Europe. La Commission a conclu que l'opération envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence en raison de son impact limité sur le marché. L'opération a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée du contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le site internet [concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.9242](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tél.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tél.: +32 229 90526)

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of KMD by NEC**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of KMD Holding APS (“KMD”) of Denmark by NEC Corporation (“NEC”) of Japan. KMD is a supplier of IT services and products for local and central governments primarily in Denmark and other Nordic countries. NEC is a technology group that provides equipment and IT solutions to the public and private sectors. 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.9257](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of sole control of Sunweb by Triton**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control over the group Sunweb of the Netherlands by Triton Managers V Limited of Jersey and Triton Fund V GP S.à r.l. of Luxembourg, both belonging to the group Triton of the Channel Islands. Sunweb is an online tour operator, which provides packaged holidays to more than 20 focal destinations across Europe and the Mediterranean. Triton is a group of

independent European private equity funds and companies, which primarily invest in medium-sized businesses based in Northern Europe and active in business services, industrials and consumer/health. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because there is no horizontal overlap or vertical link between the activities of the companies 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.9249](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

### **Eurostat: La consommation d'énergie dans l'UE a augmenté de 1% en 2017**

En 2017, la consommation d'énergie dans l'Union européenne a continué d'augmenter pour la troisième année consécutive, s'éloignant ainsi des objectifs d'efficacité énergétique. La consommation d'énergie primaire s'est élevée à 1 561 millions de tonnes équivalent pétrole (Mtep), tandis que la consommation d'énergie finale a atteint 1 222 Mtep. Par rapport à l'an dernier, les deux niveaux ont augmenté d'environ 1%. L'UE s'est engagée à atteindre l'objectif d'efficacité énergétique de réduire de 20% la consommation d'énergie d'ici 2020. La consommation d'énergie primaire ne devrait pas dépasser 1 483 Mtep et la consommation d'énergie finale ne devrait pas dépasser 1 086 Mtep en 2020. La directive révisée relative à l'efficacité énergétique prévoit un nouvel objectif d'efficacité énergétique pour 2030: une consommation d'énergie primaire inférieure ou égale à 1 273 Mtep et une consommation d'énergie finale inférieure ou égale à 956 Mtep (équivalent à une réduction de 32,5%). Un communiqué de presse Eurostat est à votre disposition [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tél.: +32 229 56186; Lynn Rietdorf – Tél.: +32 229 74959)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Inaugural meeting of the International Contact Group on Venezuela**

Today in Montevideo, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica **Mogherini**, will co-chair together with the President of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Tabaré Vázquez, [the inaugural meeting of the International Contact Group on Venezuela](#). The High Representative/Vice-President and President Vázquez will deliver opening remarks at the meeting's opening session, foreseen for 11:30 Uruguay Standard Time (UST), 15:30 Central European Standard Time (CET). Coverage of the opening remarks will be available on [Europe by Satellite](#) (EbS). High Representative/Vice-President **Mogherini** will address the press at a joint press conference following the conclusion of the International Contact Group meeting, foreseen for 14:30 UST, 18:30 CET. Live coverage of the joint press conference will be provided by [EbS](#). Federica **Mogherini** will have a number of bilateral meetings in the margins of the International Contact Group meeting. Audiovisual coverage of these meetings will be

available online with a short delay on the [EbS website](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Adam Kaznowski – Tel: +32 229 89359)

### **Commissioners Jourová and Vestager attend the International Conference Digital Czech Republic 2019**

Vera **Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, is in Prague today to deliver a keynote speech at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference [Digital Czech Republic 2019](#). She will also participate in a panel discussion on “Czech Republic as AI Heart of Europe”. On Friday, Margrethe **Vestager**, Commissioner for Competition will deliver a keynote speech at this conference. (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

### **Commissioner Hogan visits Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Dubai**

From 7 to 19 February, Commissioner for agriculture, Phil **Hogan**, will be on a high-level trip to several countries across the globe to engage with political and industrial agricultural representatives. In Singapore (7-8 February), Commissioner **Hogan** will meet Mr Chan Chun Sing and Mr Vivian Balakrishnan, respectively Minister for Trade and Industry and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore. During his time in Australia (9-13 February), Commissioner **Hogan** will deliver a keynote speech at the University of Sydney Institute of agriculture and will participate in a roundtable with the European Australian Business Council. On 14 and 15 February, while in New Zealand, Commissioner **Hogan** has a meeting with Mr David Parker, Minister for trade and export growth; with Mr Damien O’Connor, Minister of agriculture; and with several members of parliament. He will take part in a roundtable meeting with New Zealand agriculture industry leaders and will visit several farms, including a dairy farm. On the last leg of his journey in Dubai, the Commissioner will be joined by a [business delegation](#) of senior representatives from the European agri-food sector. They will attend the opening of the [Gulfood 2019](#) fair in Dubai, where the EU will be present with its own pavilion, focused on activities complementing EU Member States’ presence at the fair. This business trip is a direct continuation of Commissioner Hogan’s “diplomatic offensive” started in 2016 which already led him to visit Colombia, Mexico, China, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Canada, the United States, Iran and Saudi Arabia. The European Union’s promotion policy for agri-food products is designed to help producers sell their EU farm products in an increasingly competitive global marketplace, at the same time as delivering jobs and growth at home. (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: + 32 229 56185; Clémence Robin – Tel.: +32 229 52509)

### **Commissioners Andriukaitis and Vella hosting Citizens’ Dialogue in Lithuania**

On 8 February, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis **Andriukaitis** and Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Karmenu **Vella**, will be in Klaipėda, Lithuania. In the morning they will visit the ship recycling company site ‘Vakarų Refonda’ and host a [Citizens’ Dialogue](#). Among other topics, they will discuss the intrinsic link between the

environment and health, as well as its importance in debates on the future of the EU. Whilst in Klaipėda, they will also visit the Maritime Research Institute. Ahead of the visit, Commissioner **Andriukaitis** said: “400 000 people die prematurely every year due to poor air quality, this is no random number – the effect that the environment has on our health is undeniable. So I am glad to be hosting this Dialogue with my colleague Commissioner Vella, to continue highlighting how important it is to keep health at the forefront of all discussions on environmental policy.” Commissioner **Vella** added: “I couldn’t agree more with what Commissioner Andriukaitis just said. Environment policy isn’t just about protecting nature. It’s about protecting all our citizens and above all the vulnerable population on whose health environmental damage has the strongest negative impact. Most fundamentally this protection is based on clear scientific evidence.” (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

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