

Daily News 10 / 07 / 2019

COLLEGE MEETING: European Commission announces winner of 'Loi 130' architectural competition

Today the Commission announced the results of an architectural competition launched in the spring of 2018 to identify the best solution to replace part of its ageing offices in the European quarter. The winner is a consortium of five companies specialised in the provision of architectural and engineering services: RAFAEL DE LA-HOZ ARQUITECTOS, Spain (Team leader); Perkins+Will UK Limited, UK; Latz + Partner Landscape Architecture Urban Planning, Germany; TECNICA Y PROYECTOS S.A., Spain; and, MC2 ESTUDIO DE INGENIERIA S.L.U., Spain. Commissioner Günther H. **Oettinger** in charge of budget and human resources said: *"Congratulations to the winners of our first international architectural competition in Brussels. The winning design proposes solid, innovative, efficient and forward-looking solutions to replace our old buildings on the Loi 130 site."* Rudi Vervoort, Minister-President of the Brussels-Capital region, said: *"We are very pleased with the outcome of the competition. Thanks to very constructive cooperation between the European Commission and the Brussels-Capital Region, this emblematic competition resulted in a project that represents a significant milestone in the implementation of our own Projet Urbain Loi that aims at finding sustainable, energy efficient solutions for the redevelopment of the European quarter of Brussels"*. The winning project was chosen based on a decision of the competition jury composed of internationally renowned architects and engineers, as well as representatives of the Commission and the Brussels-Capital Region. With the Loi 130 project, the Commission is playing its part in the efforts of the Brussels authorities to make the European quarter a more attractive place to live, work and visit. More information is available in the [press release](#) and [MEMO](#). Visual material is available on the [website of the competition](#) and on [EbS](#). (For more information: Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382; Andreana Stankova – Tel.: +32 2 29 57857)

Summer 2019 Economic Forecast: Growth clouded by external factors

The European economy is set for its seventh consecutive year of growth in 2019, with all Member States' economies due to expand. The near-term outlook for the European economy, however, is clouded by external factors including global trade tensions and significant policy uncertainty. As a result, the forecast for euro area GDP growth in 2019 remains unchanged at 1.2%, while the forecast for 2020 has been lowered slightly to 1.4% following the more moderate pace expected in the rest of this year (spring forecast: 1.5%). The GDP forecast for the EU remains unchanged at 1.4% in 2019 and 1.6% 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 economies are still set to grow this year and next, even if the robust growth in Central and Eastern Europe contrasts with the slowdown in Germany and Italy. The resilience of our economies is being*

tested by persisting manufacturing weakness stemming from trade tensions and policy uncertainty. On the domestic side, a “no deal” Brexit remains a major source of risk.” Pierre **Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, said: “The European economy continues to expand against a difficult global backdrop. All EU countries are set to grow again in both 2019 and 2020, with the strong labour market supporting demand. Given the numerous risks to the outlook, we must intensify efforts to further strengthen the resilience of our economies and of the euro area as a whole.” The full press release is available in all languages [here](#). The full Summer 2019 Economic Forecast is available [here](#). (For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Annikky Lamp – Tel.: +32 229 56151; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 58615)

Juncker Plan supports Finnish renewable energy fund

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is providing up to €60 million in financing to Taaleri’s SolarWind II fund under the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the core element of the Investment Plan for Europe, or Juncker Plan. This contribution, together with additional financing from other sources, will be invested to create approximately 850 megawatts of renewable energy capacity which will offset over one million tonnes of CO₂ annually throughout the 25 year life of the assets. Vice-President of the European Commission Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, and EIB Vice-President Alexander Stubb said: “Our institutions’ support for Taaleri’s renewable energy fund is logical, as the energy transition is a key part of our planet’s sustainable future, and needs strong financial backing. Following the EU’s goal to increase the share of renewable energy, the European Investment Bank has been investing heavily in renewable energy generation. The support of the Investment Plan makes it possible for the EIB to support this goal through fund structures like Taaleri SolarWind II fund.” A press release is available [here](#). As of June 2019, the Juncker Plan has mobilised nearly €410 billion of additional investment, including €8.5 billion in Finland. The Plan is currently supporting 952,000 small and medium businesses across Europe. (For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

200 petites et moyennes entreprises albanaises bénéficieront d’un meilleur accès au financement grâce à l’UE

[COSME](#), le programme européen pour la compétitivité des petites et moyennes entreprises, soutient un accord entre le groupe Banque européenne d’investissement (BEI) et Alpha Bank Albania, qui accordera un meilleur accès au financement à 200 petites et moyennes entreprises albanaises. Il s’agit de la première transaction en Albanie sous COSME. Alpha Bank Albania accordera un financement de 25 millions d’euros aux entreprises albanaises, à des conditions plus favorables grâce à la garantie de prêt de COSME. Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, commissaire chargée du marché intérieur, de l’industrie, de l’entrepreneuriat et des PME, a déclaré: « Les petites et moyennes entreprises ont besoin d’un meilleur accès au financement pour créer des emplois, générer de la croissance et transformer leurs idées en projets concrets. L’Albanie est désormais le 32ème pays où les petites et moyennes

entreprises peuvent avoir accès à un financement par emprunt garanti par l'UE. Je suis très heureuse de constater que plus de 200 entreprises albanaises bénéficieront désormais d'un meilleur accès au financement grâce à l'UE. Globalement, les garanties de prêt de COSME fournissent un financement de plus de 25 milliards d'euros à plus de 450 000 PME européennes. » Vous trouverez plus d'informations sur [le site de la BEI](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tél: +32 229 56182; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tél: +32 229 56169)

European technology allows fast and secure transfer of data from space to Earth

This morning, the European External Action Service and the European Commission hosted a live demonstration of the European Data Relay System (EDRS), also known as 'Space data highway'. The system is the world's first laser-link in the sky, based on cutting-edge European laser technology. It allows transferring large volume of data, in particular images, from satellites in space to the Earth in quasi real-time. The system is a public-private partnership between the European Space Agency (ESA) and Airbus, and benefits from €90 million of EU funding from the Copernicus Earth Observation programme and through ESA in the 2015-2020 period. Thanks to the system, Copernicus images will be made available up to 7 times faster than currently the case. Copernicus, a leading provider of Earth observation data across the globe, offers high-quality environmental monitoring, helps save lives and manage emergencies, and supports border and maritime security. The EU's Copernicus Satellite system serves as the first long-term customer of the Space data highway. The new services will help Copernicus increase the data download capacities and timeliness and greatly improve its value for a host of time-critical applications. The live demo event was held simultaneously in the EEAS headquarters in Brussels, the European Maritime Safety Agency in Lisbon and the EU Delegation in Tokyo. (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Xavier Cifre Quatresols – Tel.: +32 229 73582; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

Agriculture: the Commission approves new geographical indication from the United Kingdom

Today, the Commission has approved the addition of '[Ayrshire New Potatoes](#)'/'[Ayrshire Earlies](#)' in the register of Protected Geographical Indication (PGI). The newly protected product is planted, grown and harvested in the county of Ayrshire in the South West of Scotland. Ayrshire has been at the heart of the British potato industry since the cultivation of the crop was first reported in Scotland on a commercial basis in 1793. Due to light sandy soil and early warming by the Gulf Stream, farms in Ayrshire, particularly those along the Ayrshire coast have always been able to plant their potato crop a few weeks earlier than in other parts of Scotland which associates them with the start of the new season. The 'Ayrshire New Potatoes/Ayrshire Earlies' are particularly good for boiling and salads. The new denomination will be added to the list of 1,450 products [already protected](#). More information is online on webpages on [quality products](#) and the [DOOR database](#) of protected products. (For more information: Daniel Rosario –

Tel: +32 229 56 185; Clémence Robin – Tel: +32 229)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Sensia by Rockwell and Schlumberger

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Sensia, a newly-created company constituting a joint venture, by Rockwell Automation, Inc. ('Rockwell') and Schlumberger Limited, all of the U.S. Sensia will be active in the provision of fully integrated and digitally enabled surface automation and control solutions to customers in the global oil and gas industry. Rockwell is a global company dedicated to industrial automation and control solutions. Schlumberger is a global supplier of technology, integrated project management and information solutions to customers in the oil and gas industry. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the companies' negligible combined market shares 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.9227](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Eurostat: La population de l'UE en hausse à plus de 513 millions d'habitants au 1er janvier 2019

Au 1er janvier 2019, la population de l'Union européenne était estimée à près de 513,5 millions, contre 512,4 millions au 1er janvier 2018. Au cours de l'année 2018, plus de décès que de naissances ont été enregistrés dans l'UE (5,3 millions de décès et 5,0 millions de naissances), ce qui signifie que la variation naturelle de la population de l'UE a été négative pour une deuxième année consécutive. La variation démographique (positive, avec 1,1 million d'habitants supplémentaires) est donc due à la migration nette. Avec 83,0 millions de résidents (soit 16,2% de la population totale de l'UE au 1er janvier 2019), l'Allemagne est l'État membre de l'UE le plus peuplé, devant la France (67,0 millions, soit 13,1%), le Royaume-Uni (66,6 millions, soit 13,0%), l'Italie (60,4 millions, soit 11,8%), l'Espagne (46,9 millions, soit 9,1%) et la Pologne (38,0 millions, soit 7,4%). S'agissant des autres États membres, quatorze d'entre eux ont une part dans la population totale de l'UE comprise entre 1% et 4%, et huit autres une part inférieure à 1%. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Christian Wigand – Tél.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tél.: +32 229 58659)

Eurostat: Le prix des logements en hausse de 4,0% dans la zone euro ainsi que dans l'UE

Le prix des logements, tel que mesuré par l'indice des prix des logements, a augmenté de 4,0% tant dans la zone euro que dans l'UE au premier trimestre 2019 par rapport au même trimestre de l'année précédente. Ces données proviennent d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. Par rapport au quatrième trimestre 2018, les prix des logements ont progressé au premier trimestre 2019 de 0,3% tant dans la zone euro que dans l'UE. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Christian

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