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Selon un rapport de la Commission, l'emploi et la situation sociale continuent de s'améliorer dans l'UE

Soutenu par une forte croissance économique, l'emploi dans l'UE a augmenté plus fortement que prévu au cours du troisième trimestre de 2017 et s'accompagne toujours d'un chômage en baisse selon [le dernier rapport trimestriel sur l'évolution de l'emploi et de la situation sociale en Europe](#). La commissaire pour l'emploi, les affaires sociales, les compétences et la mobilité des travailleurs, M^{me} Marianne **Thyssen**, a déclaré: *«La croissance est de retour en Europe. L'emploi dans l'UE atteint le plus haut niveau jamais enregistré, avec plus de 236 millions de personnes ayant un emploi. Quant au chômage, il est en diminution constante. Nous devons profiter au maximum de cette dynamique économique pour donner aux citoyens les droits nouveaux et plus efficaces que nous avons définis dans le socle européen des droits sociaux: des conditions de travail équitables, une égalité d'accès au marché du travail et une protection sociale décente. Il faut maintenant veiller à ce que tous les citoyens et les travailleurs puissent bénéficier de ces évolutions positives du marché du travail.»* Sur un an, l'emploi a augmenté de 1,7% dans l'UE, ce qui représente 4 millions de personnes, dont 2,7 dans la zone euro. Cette hausse est principalement alimentée par des emplois à temps plein et à durée indéterminée. Le taux d'emploi des 20-64 ans de l'UE a constamment augmenté ces trois dernières années pour s'établir à 72,3% au troisième trimestre 2017, soit le plus haut niveau jamais atteint. Toutefois, de grandes disparités subsistent entre les États membres. D'autres indicateurs du marché du travail figurant dans le rapport trimestriel, tel que la productivité du travail et la situation financière des ménages européens confirment aussi l'amélioration de l'économie européenne. Plus d'informations sont disponibles dans [ce communiqué de presse](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094)

Border management: European Border and Coast Guard Agency strengthens operational cooperation with Albania

Today, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** and Fatmir Xhafaj, Minister of Interior of the Republic of Albania, initialled the draft status agreement for operational cooperation between the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and Albania. Once in force, the agreement will allow the Agency to provide assistance in the field of external border management and will enable European Border and Coast Guard Agency teams to be swiftly deployed on Albanian territory in case of a sudden shift in migratory flows. Commissioner **Avramopoulos** said: *“I would like to thank the Albanian authorities for the fruitful negotiations and their commitment to reaching an agreement so quickly. Albania is a frontrunner in the region, and the agreement will serve as a role model for similar arrangements we are negotiating with other partners in the Western Balkans.*

Closer cooperation between Albania and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency will allow us to be quicker and more flexible in the way we respond to any potential migratory challenges. It is an important step forward and is in the best interests of both Albania and the European Union."Announced by President **Juncker** in his 2017 State of the Union address and [adopted](#) by the Commission last week, the strategy for 'A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans' highlighted the significant progress made by Albania on its European path and the European future of the region. Today's draft agreement is the first negotiation to be concluded between the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the EU's partners in the Western Balkans. The agreement with Albania must now be endorsed by Member States and will be formally signed at a later date, once both sides complete the necessary legal procedures. A [press release](#) is available online and the press point by Commissioner **Avramopoulos** and the Albanian Minister of Interior **Fatmir Xhafaj** can be followed on [EBS](#). (For more information: *Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456 ; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 67 64; Markus Lammert – Tel.: +32 229 58602*)

Mergers: Commission clears the extension of the scope of Solunion Seguros' activities

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, a transaction under which Mapfre S.A. of Spain and Allianz Group of Germany, through its affiliate Euler Hermes Group SA of France, enlarge the scope of the activities of their full-function joint venture Solunion Seguros, Compañía Internacional de Seguros y Reaseguros of Spain into bonding insurance in Spain and some Latin American countries. Solunion Seguros is currently active in the provision of delcredere insurance in Spain and certain countries in Latin America. Delcredere insurance protects policy holders against the risk of their clients' insolvency. Mapfre is active in insurance and reinsurance activities worldwide. Allianz is active in the insurance, banking and asset management sectors worldwide and Euler Hermes is mainly active in the commercialisation of trade credit insurance, bonding, guarantees and collections worldwide. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns due to the minor horizontal overlaps or vertical relationships between the companies' activities. 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.8794](#). (For more information: *Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889*)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of sole control over Kuehne + Nagel Drinkflow Logistics by Kuehne + Nagel

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control over Kuehne + Nagel Drinkflow Logistics Holdings Limited and its subsidiary, Kuehne + Nagel Drinkflow Logistics Limited

(together “K+N Drinksflow Logistics”) by Kuehne + Nagel Limited (“K+N”), all of the UK. K+N Drinksflow Logistics, which is currently jointly owned and controlled by K+N and Heineken UK Limited, is active in the provision of drinks distribution services in the UK. K+N is a member of the Kuehne + Nagel International AG Group and provides contract logistics services in the UK. Its business activities include storage, warehousing and distribution of food, beverages and general goods. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the limited impact brought about by the transaction on the market structure. 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.8540](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Orbital ATK by Northrop Grumman

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control over Orbital ATK, Inc. by the Northrop Grumman Corporation, both of the US. Orbital ATK is globally active in the manufacture of aerospace and defence systems, including launch vehicles, propulsion systems, satellites and components, tactical missiles, defence electronics, precision weapons, armament systems and ammunition. Northrop Grumman manufactures security systems, including autonomous systems, spacecraft systems, command, control and communications systems, as well as computers, ISR (intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance) systems worldwide, in addition to providing related services and logistics. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because the companies are active on different product markets. 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.8688](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of sole control over Mátra by EPH

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control over Mátrai Erőmű Zrt. (“Mátra”) of Hungary by Energetický a průmyslový holding, a.s. (“EPH”) of the Czech Republic. Mátra owns and operates a 966 MW, mainly lignite-fired power plant in Visonta, Hungary. It also produces electricity from a biomass and solar plant. Furthermore, it owns and operates two open pit mines in Hungary. EPH is a utility company engaged in lignite extraction, electricity and heat production, distribution and supply, as well as gas transmission, distribution and storage. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the limited overlaps between the companies’ activities. 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.8760](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Ansip in Zagreb to discuss Digital Single Market and digital transformation in Croatia

Vice-President Andrus **Ansip** in charge of the [Digital Single Market](#) will be in Zagreb, Croatia tomorrow to participate in the conference “Digital Single Market – Challenges of Digital Transformation of Business Sector” and meet representatives of the government and business community active on digital developments. He will hold a [Citizens’ Dialogue](#) focused on the Digital Single Market. In the morning, the Vice-President will meet Prime Minister Andrej Plenković and State Secretary in charge of the Development of the Digital Society Bernard Gršić. They will notably discuss the need to develop high-speed infrastructures and e-government services in the country and in the EU. The Croatian Prime Minister will visit Brussels the day after. The Citizens’ Dialogue is expected to focus on the digital transformation in Croatia, the rollout of broadband networks, e-government, and the development of the new generation of supercomputers in Europe (Croatia joined the [EU’s cooperation](#) in November 2017). In the afternoon, Vice-President **Ansip** will visit together with President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović the Izidora Kršnjavoga school. He will then end the visit with meeting the Members of the Croatian Parliament from Committees on the European Affairs, Regional Development, Economy and on Information, Computerisation and the Media to discuss the digital upgrade of the Croatian economy, IT in schools, digital skills, and e-government projects. The Citizens’ Dialogue can be watched tomorrow at 11:00 live [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel. +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

Commissioner Hogan participates in a Citizens’ Dialogue on the future of food and farming in Seville, Spain

Commissioner for Agriculture Phil **Hogan** is today in Seville, Spain where he took part in a [Citizens’ Dialogue on the future of food](#). It is the second time this year that the Commissioner engages with civil society in this kind of event, following his visit to the Netherlands last month. The meeting was an opportunity to exchange views on the reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy and the future of EU farming, taking into account the specific conditions of the farming sector in South of Spain. Whilst in Seville, Commissioner **Hogan** also meets with Ms Isabel García Tejerina, the Minister of Agriculture, Fishery, Nutrition and Environment of Spain, as well as the President of the region of Andalucía, Susana Díaz, and delivers a speech at a [conference marking the 40th anniversary of the Spanish Young Farmers’ Association](#) (ASAJA). The Citizens’ Dialogue can be watched online [here](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel + 32 229 56185; Clémence Robin – Tel.: +32 229 52509)

Commissioner Bulc in Lithuania for high-level meetings and a citizens’ dialogue

Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** is today and tomorrow in Vilnius to discuss the future of Europe and its transport policy. She will meet with Mr Rokas Masiulis, Minister of Transport and Communications, and they will together participate in a Citizens’ Dialogue held at the Vilnius Gediminas Technical University. It will be livestreamed [here](#) as of 14:00 CET. Tomorrow,

Commissioner **Bulc** will meet with Mr Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Lithuanian Parliament (Seimas), and with members of the Seimas Parliamentary committee on European Affairs. Later in the day, she will meet with Mr Saulius Skvernelis, Prime Minister of Lithuania. *(For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Alexis Perier – Tel.: +32 229 69143)*

Commissioner Navracsics launches European Year of Cultural Heritage in Spain

Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics**, will be in Palencia tomorrow, [13 February](#), to launch the [European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018](#) in Spain. He will deliver a keynote speech alongside Spanish Minister of Education, Culture and Sport, Iñigo Méndez de Vigo. The Commissioner will underline the importance of this unique opportunity to strengthen awareness of Europe's cultural heritage and its positive contribution to Europe's identity, economy and social development. Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy will also join the programme in Palencia and deliver a speech. The Year will see a series of initiatives and events, with some 100 European-level events and thousands of national and regional events taking place all over Europe. More information on the [European Year of Cultural Heritage](#) and the [results of a Special Eurobarometer](#) on cultural heritage with national factsheets for each EU Member State are available online. *(For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tél .: +32 229 56184)*

Commissaire Avramopoulos à Paris

Dimitris **Avramopoulos**, Commissaire européen pour la migration, les affaires intérieures et la citoyenneté, sera à Paris ce mardi, 13 février, où il rencontrera le Ministre de l'intérieur, Gérard Collomb ainsi que le Secrétaire général de l'Élysée Alexis Kohler pour discuter des questions relatives aux défis actuels de la migration et de la sécurité. Le Commissaire se rendra aussi au Sénat pour être entendu par les Commissions des affaires européennes et des affaires étrangères ainsi que par la Commission des lois. Il s'exprimera ensuite devant la Commission des affaires européennes de l'Assemblée nationale. A cette occasion, il aura aussi un entretien avec Marielle de Sarnez, la Présidente de la commission des affaires étrangères de l'Assemblée nationale. *(Pour plus d'informations: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Markus Lammert – Tel.: +32 229 80423)*

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