

Daily News 14 / 12 / 2018

Juncker Plan: development of AI technology and upgrade of the Budapest airport in Hungary and roll-out of the digital TV network in Romania

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has signed three loans in Hungary and Romania, backed by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) – the heart of the Juncker Plan. Hungarian car technology company AIotive will receive a €20 million loan for investment in research and development of artificial intelligence (AI) software for self-driving vehicles. The financing will help the company further develop its technology, to reduce the cost and increase safety of self-driving vehicles and to bring new products to the market. In addition, a €200 million EFSI-backed loan will finance major infrastructure upgrades in the Budapest airport, including the construction of a new terminal. In Romania, a €9.8 million EFSI-backed loan will support the switch-over from analogue to digital TV distribution in the country through 230 broadcasting sites. The roll-out of the digital broadcasting network throughout the country will provide better quality TV for 94% of the population, on 81% of the territory. Press releases are available [here](#). (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

Appel d'urgence E112: Les satellites de l'UE, plus précis, peuvent vous localiser plus rapidement

La Commission a adopté de nouvelles mesures visant à localiser plus précisément les personnes en situation d'urgence et à renforcer l'efficacité des opérations de secours. En vertu des nouvelles règles européennes, tous les smartphones vendus dans l'UE devront envoyer la localisation précise de la personne qui appelle le 112 aux services d'urgence. L'emplacement sera déterminé à l'aide des signaux des systèmes globaux de navigation par satellites (GNSS), notamment du programme européen Galileo (à l'extérieur des bâtiments) et des signaux Wi-Fi (à l'intérieur). La commissaire Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** en charge du marché intérieur, de l'industrie, l'entrepreneuriat et des PME a déclaré: *“Grâce à nos programmes spatiaux, nous pouvons donner des informations plus précises aux équipes de secours et ainsi aider ceux qui en ont besoin plus rapidement et plus efficacement. Le programme européen de navigation par satellite Galileo permettra aux services d'urgence de localiser un lieu à quelques mètres seulement. Cette nouvelle fonction a le potentiel de sauver de nombreuses vies.”* Actuellement, les informations de localisation sont établies grâce à la technologie d'identification basée sur la zone de couverture de la tour du réseau cellulaire. Sa précision moyenne varie de 2 km à 10 km, ce qui peut entraîner des erreurs importantes dans la recherche à la suite d'appels d'urgence. En revanche, les informations de localisation basées sur Galileo fournissent une précision de quelques mètres seulement. Les nouveaux standards deviendront obligatoires pour tous les smartphones 36 mois après l'entrée en vigueur du [règlement](#). La plupart des smartphones disposent déjà de la technologie

nécessaire pour répondre aux nouveaux standards. Plus tôt cette année – le 31 mars 2018 –, un système similaire à l'E112 a été introduit pour tous les nouveaux modèles de voitures (voitures particulières et fourgonnettes). Il s'agit du [système eCall](#), qui appelle automatiquement le 112 en cas d'accident grave et communique la localisation du véhicule aux services d'urgence à l'aide du positionnement par satellite. Les délais d'intervention en cas d'urgence peuvent ainsi être accélérés de 40% en milieu urbain et de 50% à la campagne. Pour en savoir plus sur le programme spatial de l'UE et sur la manière dont la Commission envisage de le développer au cours de la prochaine période budgétaire, consultez les [FAQ](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Victoria Von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040)

Abolition of roaming charges: Europeans make the most of their communications while travelling

The first year and a half since the abolition of roaming charges has seen an immediate and significant increase in mobile calls and data usage by European citizens travelling in the EU, says the Commission's [Interim report](#) on the effects of the end of roaming charges on 15 June 2017 that was published today. According to the report, the use of mobile data has grown five times on average compared to the levels before June 2017, and the number of phone calls made by travellers has roughly doubled compared to the previous period. Andrus **Ansip**, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, said: "One and a half years ago, roaming charges ended when travelling in the EU. Together with other digital rights, such as the end of unjustified geoblocking and the portability of content, this is a good example to demonstrate how the EU can deliver for the benefits of its citizens in their daily life. We also need to continue making Europeans aware of their digital rights so that they can really make the most of the new possibilities." Mariya **Gabriel**, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, added: "Today we can see the tangible benefits following the abolition of roaming charges in the EU. The good news is that Europe is now a reality for people using their mobile phones freely when travelling abroad. I am grateful to operators who manage to turn demands for more data and voice calls into new opportunities." More information is available in this [press release](#) and [factsheet](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Marietta Grammenou- Tel.: +32 229 83583)

EP plenary: Commission welcomes the European Parliament's endorsement of key proposals under the EU's next long-term budget

Yesterday, the European Parliament endorsed key Commission proposals for the next long-term EU budget 2021-2027. The Commission welcomes the adoption of the Parliament's negotiating positions on the EU Space Programme and the Digital Europe Programme, which will now open the way for the negotiations between the co-legislators to begin. In June 2018, the Commission proposed a €16 billion [EU Space Programme](#) to boost EU space leadership beyond 2020 in areas such as the Galileo satellite navigation and the Copernicus Earth

observation systems, but also the development of new security-related components. The Commission's proposal aims to foster a strong and innovative space industry, maintain the EU's autonomous, reliable and cost-effective access to space and ensure a simplified system of governance. Building on the [Digital Single Market strategy](#), launched in May 2015, and its achievements over the past years, the Commission proposed in June 2018 to create the first ever [Digital Europe Programme](#) and invest €9.2 billion in tomorrow's digital technologies. The Digital Europe Programme will focus on concrete areas such as artificial intelligence, high-performance computing, digital skills, cyber security and digital transformation. These votes by the Parliament complement the recent adoption of the Council's negotiating positions. The Commission now calls on the co-legislators to maintain this momentum and ensure a swift start and completion of the negotiations. (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040; Marietta Grammenou- Tel.: +32 229 83583)

WTO sides with the EU in appeal on Brazil's industrial tax measures

The Appellate Body of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) sided yesterday with the EU's arguments concerning Brazil's industrial tax measures that disadvantage EU companies. The WTO Appellate Body confirmed the initial ruling of August 2017 that numerous Brazilian tax programmes are not in line with WTO rules as they favour domestic products. The programmes disadvantage EU automotive, and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) products by granting tax advantages based on the local content embedded in products. As a consequence of the ruling, Brazil will now have to bring its tax programmes in compliance with WTO rules and remove the prohibited measures without delay. Brazil is an important trade partner for the EU with machinery and appliances, chemical products and transport equipment making up the bulk of EU exports to Brazil. However, Brazil's restrictive trade policies have resulted in a decline in EU exports of goods to Brazil, from a peak of €40 billion in 2013 to €32.2 billion in 2017. For more information see the full [press release](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel.: +32 229 51383)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Candy by Haier

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of Candy of Italy by Haier of the People's Republic of China. Both Haier and Candy are active in the manufacture and sale of electric domestic appliances, such as cooking appliances, microwaves, refrigerators and freezers in Europe and worldwide. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because of Haier's limited presence on the European markets for electric domestic appliances, which are characterised by the presence of a large number of competitors all over Europe. The operation was examined under the normal merger review procedure. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition website](#), in the [public case register](#) under the case number [M.9139](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32

Eurostat: Troisième trimestre 2018 – La croissance annuelle des coûts de la main-d'œuvre à 2,5% dans la zone euro – À 2,7% dans l'UE28

Les coûts horaires de la main-d'œuvre ont augmenté de 2,5% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et de 2,7% dans l'UE28 au troisième trimestre 2018, par rapport au même trimestre de l'année précédente. Au deuxième trimestre 2018, les coûts horaires de la main-d'œuvre avaient progressé de 2,3% et 2,7% respectivement. Un communiqué de presse Eurostat est disponible [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: +32 229 67094)

Eurostat: Troisième trimestre 2018 – Le taux d'emplois vacants à 2,1% dans la zone euro – À 2,2% dans l'UE28

Le taux d'emplois vacants s'est établi à 2,1% dans la zone euro (ZE19) au troisième trimestre 2018, stable par rapport au trimestre précédent et en hausse par rapport au taux de 1,9% relevé au troisième trimestre 2017, selon les chiffres publiés par Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. Le taux d'emplois vacants dans l'UE28 s'est quant à lui établi à 2,2% au troisième trimestre 2018, stable par rapport au trimestre précédent et en hausse par rapport au taux de 2,0% enregistré au troisième trimestre 2017. Un communiqué de presse Eurostat est disponible [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: +32 229 67094)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Jourová hosts 12th EU-Israel High-level Seminar on combatting racism, xenophobia and antisemitism

On 17 and 18 December, Commissioner **Jourová** is hosting the 12th EU-Israel High Level Seminar on combating racism, xenophobia and antisemitism in Brussels. This seminar brings together every year European and Israeli civil servants, policymakers, companies, international organisations and civil society to discuss best practices and ways forward in addressing racism, xenophobia and antisemitism. Věra **Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, said: "One week ago, we published the results of a survey of European Jews, which deeply saddened me: 9 out of 10 Jews in Europe say that Antisemitism has increased over the past five years. On a daily basis, Jews have to hide their religion and fear to be harassed on the streets and online. Fighting the scourge of Antisemitism is a joint endeavour of the European Union and the State of Israel. The voices of European Jews are at the centre of our efforts when fighting Antisemitism." The forum will

discuss thematic priorities to address Antisemitism, data collection on antisemitic incidents and experiences of Jewish communities, security of Jewish communities, hate speech online and eventually education and training to counter Antisemitism. The forum takes place this year following the unanimous [declaration](#) by all 28 EU Member States on combating Antisemitism and protecting Jewish communities, adopted on 6 December. Last week, the Commission presented its response to Antisemitism and [a survey on Antisemitism in Europe](#). Commissioner **Jourová**'s opening remarks can be viewed on [EbS](#) at 11:00 on Monday and the programme can be found [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.:+32 229 5865)

Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič meets industry to discuss challenges linked to raw materials for batteries

Commission Vice-President Maroš **Šefčovič** in charge of the Energy Union meets today (14 December) CEOs of raw materials processing and refining companies as well as the European Investment Bank. The meeting, under the umbrella of the European Battery Alliance, is aimed at addressing existing challenges linked to raw materials part of the battery value chain and in particular, processing and refining capacity in the EU. A secure, sustainable and socially responsible supply of raw materials will define Europe's leadership not only in batteries production but also in the clean energy industrial revolution as such. *"With Europe fully embarking on the low-carbon transition, raw materials are becoming highly strategic. Europe must reduce its external dependence on these assets, so they do not become the 'new oil'. This requires bold collective action and that is why I have convened this meeting to see how we can step up our game,"* Vice-President **Šefčovič** has said. Following our Strategic Plan on Sustainable Batteries, the Commission has already issued recommendations to the Member States to help boost exploration, second use and refining capacity of raw materials in Europe. (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel.: +32 229 74959)

[CALENDAR](#): Commissioner's weekly activities

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