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President Juncker participates in Tripartite Social Summit

Tomorrow, 16 October, President **Juncker** will participate in the [Tripartite Social Summit](#) taking place in Brussels. He will be accompanied by Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, Valdis **Dombrovskis**, and Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**. The Tripartite Social Summit takes place twice a year, ahead of the spring and autumn European Councils. It is an opportunity for a constructive exchange of views between leaders of European employee and employer organisations, the European Commission, the European Council, the EU Heads of State or Government and Employment and Social Affairs Ministers from the countries holding the current and upcoming Council of the EU Presidencies. Tomorrow's edition will focus on reinforcing competitiveness, sustainable job creation and social fairness in the EU. More specifically, participants will have a discussion on the potential of the digital revolution for labour markets and the economy, the roll-out of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) as well as the [next EU long-term budget](#), including [InvestEU](#), the [European Social Fund Plus](#) and the [deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union](#). A press conference will take place following the Summit, foreseen around 15:45, and can be followed [here](#). More information on the Summit can be found [here](#). A joint statement will be made available [here](#). (For more information: Christian Spahr – Tel.: + 32 229 50055; Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: + 32 229 67094)

EU conducts its biggest Civil Protection Mechanism exercise

The 2018 Modex Romania is the largest medical exercise ever conducted in the framework of the [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) and is taking place in Bucharest, Romania until 18 October 2018. The simulation will mobilise over 1000 people and involve medical teams from Austria, Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, Norway and Israel, and experts from other states participating in the Mechanism. *"This exercise is a unique opportunity to assess the functioning of our Civil Protection Mechanism and the common European response to disasters. This Mechanism has proven its value on countless occasions, such as during the devastating forest fires in Southern and Northern Europe this summer. But there is always room for improvement of our capacities and coordination to save lives in Europe and around the world. This is why Modex is so useful and important for us,"* said Christos **Stylianides**, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management. The exercise imagines a scenario where a 7.5 scale earthquake hits Bucharest causing widespread damage to infrastructure, with a large number of wounded. Read the full press release [here](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)

TRADE: The Commission welcomes Council green light for EU-Singapore Trade and Investment Agreements

Today, EU Member States in the Council authorised the signature and conclusion of the trade and investment agreements between the EU and Singapore. Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** said: *"I am very pleased that Member States have given their formal backing to these agreements. Opening new opportunities for European producers, farmers, service providers and investors is a key priority for this Commission. Singapore is an important gateway to the whole Asia-Pacific area, and it is vital that our companies can have a foothold there. These agreements also promote sustainable development, as they include ambitious commitments on the protection of the environment and labour rights and uphold the right to regulate. They are yet another example of the EU's determination to work with like-minded countries to uphold rules-based international trade."* Today's decision follows the proposal made in April of this year by the European Commission. EU and Singapore leaders will sign the agreements on 19 October in Brussels, on the margins of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). After signature, the European Parliament will vote on the agreements. Once approved by the European Parliament, the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement is expected to enter into force in 2019, before the end of the current mandate of the European Commission. The EU-Singapore Investment Protection Agreement will only enter into force following its ratification at EU Member States' level. For more information, see [a dedicated website](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosairo – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel.: +32 229 51383)

Somalia: major step in EU support to state-building

The EU and Somalia signed on 14 October an agreement to provide €100 million to the Somali budget over the next 2.5 years. These funds will support the Federal Government's reforms to build a unified, federal state. Somalia is on a positive track towards stability and growth. The EU's move to budget support is a token of the partnership with Somalia to develop a viable federal system and fostering long-term recovery. The date of signature coincides with the first anniversary of Somalia's worst terror attack, which killed over 500 people in Mogadishu. On this occasion, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica**, said: *"Budget support shows the EU's trust in Somali institutions. It gives the Government resources to implement reforms and build a stronger State able to deliver basic services to its people. Those 100M€ show the EU delivers quickly, a few months after the Somali Partnership Forum. It comes at a time where the Horn of Africa is going through unprecedented changes. And Somalia can seize this momentum for its own domestic transformation. The financing agreement is a €100 million package dedicated to Somalia's state and resilience building, which will also support access to basic services. Up to €92 million will go to the federal government through budget support. The remaining €8 million will support capacity building to the federal and states' governments and oversight institutions. The disbursement of funds will be sequenced and closely monitored through political dialogue, regular assessment of progress achieved against indicators and dedicated safeguard measures. Read the full press release [here](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)*

La Commissaire Gabriel organise une table ronde avec l'industrie sur la transformation numérique des [soins de santé](#)

Mariya **Gabriel**, commissaire chargée de l'économie et de la société numériques, organise aujourd'hui une table ronde de haut niveau réunissant acteurs publics et privés autour du thème des nouvelles technologies dans le domaine de la santé. *"L'application des nouvelles technologies et leurs innovations façonneront l'avenir du secteur de la santé dans l'Union Européenne. Dans cette perspective, nous devons travailler ensemble pour le bénéfice de tous. Les gouvernements doivent mettre en place un cadre offrant un juste équilibre entre les préoccupations des individus, les contraintes des systèmes de santé et le potentiel d'innovation nécessaire en matière de santé."* La Commission européenne entendra les participants issus des secteurs pharmaceutique, biotechnologique, de technologie médicale, ainsi que d'autres organisations liées au secteur de la santé au sujet de sa stratégie définie dans [la Communication sur la transformation numérique de la santé et des soins de santé](#) présentée en avril 2018. La table ronde organisée aujourd'hui est l'occasion de débattre sur des sujets-clés tels que la prochaine recommandation sur l'interopérabilité des systèmes de dossiers informatisés et le potentiel de nouvelles technologies comme l'intelligence artificielle et le calcul à haute performance. D'autre part, les Pays-Bas sont récemment devenus le 18^{ème} Etat membre de l'UE à signer la déclaration sur le mécanisme de coordination volontaire pour le partage des [données génomiques](#) à des fins de recherche et de prévention des maladies. La Déclaration a été initialement lancée le 10 avril 2018 lors de la Journée du numérique et a depuis été signée par l'Autriche, la Bulgarie, la Croatie, la République tchèque, Chypre, l'Estonie, l'Espagne, la Finlande, la Grèce, l'Italie, la Lituanie, le Luxembourg, Malte, le Portugal, la Slovaquie, Suède et Royaume-Uni. (Pour plus d'informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: [+32 229 67083](#); Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: [+32 229 56184](#))

Education & training in Europe: where do we stand?

Tomorrow, the European Commission will publish the 2018 edition of the Education and Training Monitor, which analyses and compares the main challenges for European education systems. Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics**, will unveil this annual flagship publication at a launch seminar at European Commission headquarters in Brussels. This will be followed by a debate on the findings of the Monitor on progress towards main EU educational objectives for equity and attainment; latest trends in education policies and challenges in Member States; and a review of educational policies for citizenship education, including their implications for future EU cooperation in this area. The seminar can be followed live [here](#). A press release in all EU languages, an EU-level factsheet and country-specific factsheets will be available [online](#) at 10.30 CET tomorrow. (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: [+32 229 67083](#); Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: [+32 229 56184](#))

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of sole control over Esure by Bain Capital

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the

acquisition of sole control over the Esure Group plc (“Esure”) by Bain Capital Private Equity, LP and its affiliates (“Bain Capital”) also of the UK. Esure is active in the provision and distribution of insurance services. Bain Capital is a private equity investment firm active in a wide-range of industries globally. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns given the absence of any horizontal overlaps and the lack of 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 case number [M.9104](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Concentrations: la Commission autorise l’acquisition du contrôle conjoint de Vallourec Umbilicals par Bpifrance Investissement et Vallourec Tubes

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l’acquisition du contrôle conjoint de Vallourec Umbilicals par Bpifrance Investissement et Vallourec Tubes, toutes trois basées en France. Vallourec Umbilicals est active dans la fabrication des tubes roulés soudés en acier inoxydable à destination des ombilicaux des champs pétroliers et gaziers offshore. Bpifrance Investissement est un fonds de capital investissement ayant pour mission d’investir dans des projets structurants pour l’industrie française. Vallourec Tubes est active dans la fabrication de tubes en acier sans soudure et de solutions tubulaires. La Commission a conclu que l’opération envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence compte tenu de son impact limité sur la structure du marché. En outre, les activités des sociétés ne se chevauchent pas et il n’y a pas de liens verticaux entre elles. La transaction a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée du contrôle des concentrations. Pour de plus amples informations, veuillez consulter le [registre public des affaires de concurrence](#) sur le site web de la Commission consacré à la [concurrence](#), sous le numéro [M.9096](#). (Pour plus d’informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of CA by Broadcom

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of CA, Inc. by Broadcom Inc., both of the US. CA develops software that assists customers in developing, operating, testing, deploying and securing their business applications and databases. Broadcom manufactures semiconductors and hardware for communications, storage and industrial applications. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because CA and Broadcom are not engaged in business activities in the same or related markets. 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.9054](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Concardis by Hellman & Friedman

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Concardis Payment Group GmbH (“Concardis”) of Germany by Hellman & Friedman LLC of the US. Concardis is a provider of merchant acquiring services in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Hellman & Friedman is a private equity fund. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because of its limited impact on the market structure. 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.9089](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Tampnet by 3i and ATP

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Brent Holding AS (operating under the name “Tampnet”) of Norway by 3i Group plc (“3i”) of the UK and Arbejdsmarkedets Tillægspension (“ATP”) of Denmark. Tampnet provides communication infrastructure and services to the offshore industry. 3i is an international investor and investment management business. ATP is a public pension provider with an investment arm to manage its assets. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the absence of horizontal overlaps or vertical links between the activities of 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.9086](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Avramopoulos in Ankara

Today, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** is in Ankara, Turkey to meet with the President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as well as with Minister of Interior Süleyman Soylu. Today’s discussions focus on the implementation of the EU-Turkey statement in all its aspects and on cooperation on migration and security, more broadly. (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Markus Lammert – Tel.: +32 229 58602)

Vice-President Ansip in Tallinn for the Digital Summit

Tomorrow, Andrus **Ansip**, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market will be in Tallinn, Estonia for the [Digital Summit 2018](#), gathering heads of government, ministers, tech community leaders and influential thinkers to

discuss implications of digitisation on governments, economies and societies. At last year's Summit President Jean-Claude **Juncker** used the occasion to urge Member States to complete the Digital Single Market. In October 2017, Member States had only adopted 6 legislative proposals out of 24 the Commission had put forward a year ago. Ahead of this year's Summit, Vice-President **Ansip** stressed *"When it comes to completing the Digital Single Market, the good news is that we are not starting from scratch. We have achieved quite a lot. More than two-thirds of our proposals have now been agreed. But in the digital era, where digitisation drives innovation, there is no time for complacency. We need to do more than pledge our commitments, but act and agree on the remaining proposals, such as e-privacy, cybersecurity and copyright, if we want to stay competitive and create sustained growth and jobs in Europe."* This year's summit will focus on how artificial intelligence (AI) and free-moving data can be wielded in the service of digital states, economies and societies. The Commission presented its [European approach on AI](#) in April 2018, and is now working with Member States on a coordinated plan to be presented by the end of the year. Member States are encouraged to develop their national strategy, to open data and to increase investment in order to make the most of this strategic technology. An overview of the Digital Single Market is available [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: +32 229 56184)

Commissioner Stylianides meets German Ministers to discuss rescEU, the EU's comprehensive plan to strengthen its emergency response

Today Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** welcomes German Interior Ministers from four German Länder to visit the European Commission's [Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#), the emergency response hub of the EU to monitor and coordinate a fast response to disasters. Mr Boris Pistorius, Minister of Interior and Sport of Lower Saxony, Hamburg Senator for Interior Affairs and Sports Mr Andy Grote, and Mr Georg Maier, Minister of Interior of Thuringia, as well as Mr Torsten Akmann, Berlin State Secretary, will have the opportunity to see how the Emergency Response Coordination Centre operates around-the-clock. The meeting comes timely for Commissioner **Stylianides** to address [rescEU](#) – the Commission's comprehensive plan to strengthen Europe's emergency response to disasters which is currently in the last phase of negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament. The proposal foresees to reinforce the existing [Union Civil Protection Mechanism](#) to better prevent, be better prepared and respond more effectively to natural and man-made hazards more effectively in Europe. In an emergency situation national authorities will be able to request, as a matter of last resort, additional support from the EU to save lives or protect the environment. (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)

Commissioner Jourová calls for greater diversity in the workplace at the EU Diversity Charters' Annual Conference

Today, Commissioner **Jourová** opened the 9th EU Diversity Charters' Forum, bringing together businesses, civil society and experts from all EU countries

to improve diversity in the workplace. Commissioner **Jourová**, said: *“We live in a diverse Europe. To have an organisation that is diverse and inclusive requires intentional, committed and often courageous leaders. I am happy to see, that we have at least 10,000 private and public organisations which have joined the Diversity Charter.”* Since 2010, the European Commission has been funding the EU-level Diversity Charters Platform. 22 Diversity Charters have now been established nationally, with Romania and Lithuania launching their Diversity charters earlier this year. The Forum brings together members of the Platform to exchange best practices and discuss obstacles. This year’s Forum has the title *“Diversity in Diverse Europe”* and is focussing on “worries” and stereotypes, how to communicate on values, and the importance of story-telling. Four international companies, [Puls Power](#), [Brown Forman](#), [ICZ Group](#), and the [British Council](#) are taking the opportunity of today’s Forum to sign the Czech Diversity Charter. Now, there are over 10,000 companies, covering 15 million employees, who have signed a Diversity charter and committed themselves to promote and protect equality and diversity. You can find more information about [the Forum](#) and on the [Diversity Charters](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

Transport Commissioner Bulc participates in a Citizens’ Dialogue in Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Ms Violeta **Bulc** is in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, where she will take part in the [1070th Citizens’ Dialogue](#) organised by the Juncker Commission in the EU and the 21st in The Netherlands. The Commissioner will engage with almost 200 students and their professors at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam. The European Commissioner for Transport will not only engage with the students in discussions on the future of Europe and the future of transport, but also talk about the Erasmus and [Erasmus+](#) programmes. While in Rotterdam, Violeta **Bulc** will also attend the [88th International Session of the European Youth Parliament](#). The conference ‘Rotterdam 2018’ is a key conference of the European Youth Parliament programme which organises events in 40 countries with the aim to engage with young Europeans. During the event, the Commissioner will discuss current affairs under the conference’s theme ‘Discovering Global Europe’ with more than 300 young people. (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Stephan Meder – Tel.: +32 229 1 39 17)

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