

Daily News 19 / 02 / 2019

Cohesion Policy after 2020: preparing the future of EU investments in health

Today, Commissioners **Crețu** and **Andriukaitis** have brought together health professionals to kick-start the reflection on future EU investments in health under the 2021-2027 Cohesion Policy programmes. In the context of the roundtable held today at the Commission with health associations such as European Health Management Association and EuroHealthNet, the Commissioners launched a pilot project to improve cross-border emergency services in the Pyrenees between the border regions of France, Spain and the Principality of Andorra. They also announced that health will be this year's new category for the [RegioStars Awards](#). In the 2014-2020 programming period, over €8 billion of Cohesion Policy funds, including a €4 billion EU co-financing, has been invested in health. 44.5 million people in the EU should benefit from improved health services over the 2014-2020 period. A full press release and factsheet are available [here](#). You can also watch the Commissioners' press conference from this morning on [EBS](#). (For more information: Christian Spahr – Tél.: +32 2 295 00 55; Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tél.: +32 229 56169; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

Plan Juncker: 50 millions d'euros de financement en soutien à l'industrie chimique française

Le Plan d'Investissement pour l'Europe, ou "[Plan Juncker](#)", soutient un accord entre la Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI) et l'entreprise de chimie française Kem One, deuxième fabricant européen de PVC (Polychlorure de vinyle), présent sur les marchés du bâtiment, de l'automobile, de l'emballage et de la santé. Le prêt de 50 millions d'euros va permettre à Kem one de moderniser ses outils industriels et d'investir dans la recherche et le développement de produits innovants. Pierre **Moscovici**, commissaire européen en charge des affaires économiques et financières, de la fiscalité et des douanes, a déclaré: "Je me réjouis de la signature de ce nouvel accord dans le cadre du Plan Juncker, qui va contribuer à maintenir l'industrie française de la chimie à la pointe de l'innovation. C'est une nouvelle preuve du soutien de l'Europe à l'emploi et à la croissance en France." Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). Le Plan Juncker a déjà mobilisé près de 380 milliards d'euros en Europe, dont près de 62 milliards en France, et soutenu 842 000 petites et moyennes entreprises. (Pour plus d'informations: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229-56153; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

Clean mobility: Commission welcomes first-ever EU standards to reduce pollution from trucks

The European Parliament and the Council this morning reached provisional agreement on a Regulation setting, for the first time in the EU, strict CO2 emission standards for trucks. Today's deal follows the agreement reached in

December on new CO2 emission standards for cars and light vans in the EU for the period after 2020. As part of the sets of [legislative proposals on clean mobility](#) introduced by the Juncker Commission, it is a further stepping stone for modernising the European mobility sector and preparing it for [climate neutrality in the second half of the century](#). Under today's agreement, emissions from new trucks will have to be 30% lower in 2030 compared to the 2019 emissions. The new legislation will help Member States' emission targets, incentivise innovation, promote clean mobility solutions, strengthen the competitiveness of EU industry and stimulate employment, while reducing fuel consumption costs for transport operators and contributing to better air quality. Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel **Arias Cañete** said: *"With the first-ever EU emission standards for trucks agreed, we are completing the legal framework to reach the European target of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030. The European Parliament and Council have reached an ambitious and balanced agreement. The new targets and incentives will help tackle emissions, as well as bring fuel savings to transport operators and cleaner air for all Europeans. For the EU industry, this is an opportunity to embrace innovation towards zero-emission mobility and further strengthen its global leadership in clean vehicles."* The full press release is available [online](#). (For more information: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel.: +32 229 56186; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel.: +32 229 74959)

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

The Commission has approved today the addition of '[The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum](#)' from the United Kingdom in the register of Protected Designation of Origin (PDO). The newly protected product grows in the Vale of Clwyd in Denbighshire in North Wales. The Denbigh plum is the only plum variety native to Wales. Historically, this fertile region has had a tradition and reputation for the production of an array of soft fruit production including plums, all of which would have been exhibited at the Vale of Clwyd Horticultural shows, which were famous annual events since the 1850s. The history of plum production has marked the local area, with streets and houses in Denbigh named after 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum'. An annual 'The Vale of Clwyd Denbigh Plum' Feast is also organised to display the product and its several uses in baking. The new denomination will be added to the list of 1,440 products already protected. This is the 72nd British food product to be protected. More information: webpages on [quality products](#) and [DOOR database](#) of protected products. (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel: +32 229 56185; Clémence Robin – Tel: +32 229 52509)

Mergers: Commission clears joint venture by Blackstone and Sretaw

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed creation of a joint venture by The Blackstone Group L.P. ("Blackstone") of the US and Sretaw 2 Limited ("Sretaw") of Ireland. The joint venture ("Beauparc") operates primarily in the waste recycling and utilities sectors in Ireland, the UK and the Netherlands. Blackstone is a global alternative asset manager. Sretaw currently holds 100% of Beauparc.

The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns because the two companies are not active in the same 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.9219](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears the creation of a joint venture by the Schwarz group and NWD

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the creation of a joint venture by GreenCycle Holding GmbH & Co. KG (“GreenCycle”) and Nord-Westdeutsche Papierrohstoff GmbH & Co. KG (“NWD”), all of Germany. The joint venture will operate an online trading platform for recyclable and waste materials. GreenCycle is active in the collection, trade and supply of recyclable materials and belongs to the Schwarz group, which is predominantly active in the food retail sector worldwide through its Lidl and Kaufland divisions. NWD is active in the collection and recycling of waste paper and belongs to the international WEIG group, producing different types of cardboards. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the limited activities of the joint venture in the European Economic Area. 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.9265](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Eurostat: La production dans le secteur de la construction en baisse de 0,4% dans la zone euro, en baisse de 0,9% dans l'UE28

En décembre 2018 par rapport à novembre 2018, la production dans le secteur de la construction, corrigée des variations saisonnières, a diminué de 0,4% dans la zone euro et de 0,9% dans l'UE28, selon les premières estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En novembre 2018, la production dans le secteur de la construction avait augmenté de 0,3% dans la zone euro et de 0,4% dans l'UE28. En décembre 2018 par rapport à décembre 2017, la production dans le secteur de la construction a augmenté de 0,7% dans la zone euro et de 0,5% dans l'UE28. Par rapport à 2017, la production moyenne de l'année 2018 dans le secteur de la construction a augmenté de 1,7% dans la zone euro et de 2,0% dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse complet est disponible [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tél.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tél.: +32 229 87278)

European Union and Southern African Development Community hold their first joint council under Economic Partnership Agreement

The first meeting of the Joint Council under the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) took place in Cape Town today. Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström**, who co-chairs the meeting, said: “Trade is a powerful tool for development and I am very pleased to see this development-oriented agreement

bearing its first fruit. We need to focus now on putting into practice all remaining aspects of the agreement so that citizens and businesses on both sides can benefit fully from the opportunities provided by our partnership. The decisions taken today by the Joint Council make us advance in the right direction.” In today’s meeting the EU and SADC representatives have adopted decisions that will ensure an efficient functioning of all institutions created by the EPA. The meeting also focusses on the important role that non-state actors should play in the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the agreement. The EU signed an [Economic Partnership Agreement](#) (EPA) on 10 June 2016 with the SADC EPA Group comprising Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. The agreement became the first regional EPA in Africa to be fully operational after Mozambique joined in February 2018. The EU’s Economic Partnership Agreements aim at promoting trade with participating countries, and ultimately contribute, through trade and investment, to sustainable development and poverty reduction. The EU-SADC EPA is also one of the building blocks towards the future African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). *(For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)*

Migration: Commission welcomes provisional agreement reached on European network of immigration liaison officers

Yesterday, the European Parliament and the Council reached a provisional agreement on the Commission’s [proposal](#) to strengthen coordination between immigration liaison officers deployed to non-EU countries. The new legislation forms part of the EU’s efforts to reduce irregular migration and provide for orderly and legal migration pathways. Welcoming the agreement, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said *“Member States’ immigration liaison officers have unique operational expertise, strong relationships with their host country’s authorities and first-hand knowledge that can play a key role in preventing and combatting irregular migration and smuggling, facilitating the return of irregular migrants and managing legal migration. The new rules agreed today will improve critical information exchange towards those efforts between Member States, the EU and its Agencies. This will ensure that operational and policy decisions are made based on a more accurate understanding of the situation on the ground in non-EU countries.”* Currently, EU Member States, the EU and the EU Agencies deploy more than 450 immigration liaison officers in non-EU countries. The European Parliament and the Council now have to formally adopt the revised rules before they can enter into force. *(For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Markus Lammert – Tel.: +32 229 80423)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Vella and Commissioner Arias Cañete participate in the High-

Level Conference on Climate Action and Oceans Preservation

Today, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu **Vella**, and Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy, Miguel **Arias Cañete** are participating in a [High Level Conference on Climate Change and Oceans Preservation](#), in Brussels. High-level panellists including Ministers for Environment, Energy and Sustainable Development from several countries will join Commissioner **Vella** and Commissioner **Arias Cañete** in two panels on “Climate change and impact on Ocean biodiversity”, and “How to conciliate Ocean energy with Marine conservation”. Commissioner **Vella** said: *“Climate change is the most important challenge of this century. We need to work together to address the impacts of climate change in the ocean. And we need to turn to the oceans to mitigate the impact of climate change. This is a top political priority for the EU. And our policy for better international ocean governance brings that priority to the highest political levels. For the first time, we are addressing ocean challenges across departments and across institutions.”* As well as taking stock of current issues related to climate change and oceans preservations, countries, sectors and organisations will be given the opportunity at the conference to sign the [Brussels Declaration](#), reaffirming their commitment to future generations. The EU is committed to further advance the ocean and climate issue, including in the context of the implementation of the Paris Agreement. This is in line with the Commission’s strategic long-term vision, approved November last year, for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate neutral economy by 2050 – [A Clean Planet for all](#). The Commission’s vision for a climate neutral future covers nearly all EU policies and shows how Europe can lead the way to climate neutrality. The speech by Commissioner Vella can be found [here](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel: +32 229-56186; Daniela Stoycheva – Tel.: +32 229 53664; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel: +32 229-74959)

Migration: Commissioner Avramopoulos in Istanbul for Ministerial conference on migration cooperation with Silk Route countries

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** is travelling to Istanbul where he will open the 6th Ministerial conference of the [Budapest process](#) tomorrow morning. Created over 25 years ago, the Budapest process is a regional cooperation framework fostering dialogue on migration and focusing on countries along the Silk Route. It gathers over 50 countries, including the Silk Route countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran and Iraq), as well as 10 international organisations. The Ministerial conference aims at promoting cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination to better manage migration flows and counter irregular migration. Such partnerships are a key component of the external dimension of the EU’s migration policy. Commissioner Avramopoulos’ opening speech will be available on [EbS](#). (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Markus Lammert – Tel.: +32 229 58602)

Commissioner Arias Cañete in Spain to present the strategy for a climate neutral Europe by 2050

On 20-22 February, Climate Action and Energy Commissioner, Miguel **Arias**

Cañete, will be in Spain to present [the European Commission's strategic long-term vision for a prosperous, modern, competitive and climate-neutral economy by 2050](#), published by the Commission last November. On Wednesday 20 February, he will appear in front of the Mixed Committee for the European Union at the Spanish Congress of Deputies to present the Commission's vision for a climate-neutral Europe. Later that day, Commissioner **Arias Cañete** will meet the Spanish business community to discuss the opportunities for European industry in the modernisation and transformation of the European economy towards a climate neutral economy. On Thursday 21 February, the Commissioner will meet with Teresa Ribera Rodríguez, Minister for Ecological Transition, to discuss climate neutrality objectives. The Commissioner will also meet representatives from the environmental organizations in Spain. This is the second of a number of visits that the Commissioner is planning in the coming weeks and months to highlight the EU's long-term vision, aligned with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. (*For more information: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel.: +32 229 56186; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel.: +32 229 74959*)

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