

Daily News 23 / 10 / 2017

EU pledges additional €30 million for the Rohingya crisis at Geneva donors' conference

The European Union is co-hosting today in Geneva a ['Pledging Conference on the Rohingya Refugee Crisis'](#). Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** has announced the EU's contribution of an additional €30 million for the Rohingya communities in Bangladesh. This comes on the top of over €21 million in overall EU assistance already allocated to Rohingya and host communities in both Bangladesh and Myanmar, bringing total EU support for this year to over €51 million. *"Today, we stand united for the right cause. The cause of stateless people who have suffered for too long: the Rohingya. The Rohingya deserve nothing less than every other human being in the world. They deserve a future. We have a moral duty to give these people hope. Our humanitarian support will work to provide essentials like water, sanitation, food, healthcare, protection, and education"*, said Commissioner **Stylianides**. Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** said: *"Beyond the immediate response, we need to think of long-term solutions for Rohingya and host populations alike. Whilst the focus should remain on creating an enabling environment for safe and dignified voluntary returns of Rohingya to Myanmar, we need to also ensure that local communities, who are already facing enormous challenges, are not left behind and that we provide them medium and long-term development assistance. Any solution has to inevitably include political dialogue with all parties involved."* Commissioner **Stylianides** will travel to Bangladesh next week to meet with Rohingya refugees and visit EU aid projects in the affected areas. Read the full press release [here](#). (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)

Commission proposes €5.4 million from Globalisation Fund for former retail workers in Greece and Finland

Today, the European Commission has proposed to provide Greece with €2.9 million euro and Finland with €2.5 million euro from the [European Globalisation Adjustment Fund \(EGF\)](#) following a significant number of redundancies in the Greek and Finnish retail sector. Marianne **Thyssen**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, commented: *"The retail sector in both Greece and Finland has been hit hard by the economic crisis and changing trade patterns. The proposed support from Europe's Globalisation Adjustment Fund now aims at helping these redundant workers to adapt their skills and facilitate their transition to new jobs or help them set up their own enterprises."* Greece applied for support from the Globalisation Fund following the dismissal of 725 workers in 9 enterprises operating in the retail sector. The redundancies occurred mainly in the Attica region, but ten other regions have also been affected by the layoffs. The measures co-financed by the Globalisation Fund will help the 725 former

retail workers by providing them with occupational guidance and counselling; vocational training; contribution to business start-up; hiring incentives; and job-search and training allowances. Finland, on the other hand, applied for support from the EGF following the dismissal of 1,660 workers in three retail enterprises. Thanks to this financial support, 1,500 Finnish redundant workers will be offered support and guidance to find new jobs, for example through vocational and re-training courses. The proposals now go to the European Parliament and the EU's Council of Ministers for approval. (*For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Sara Soumillion – Tel.: +32 229 67094*)

Publication of latest agri-food trade figures: high performance of EU agri-food exports continues

Published today by the European Commission, the latest monthly trade report shows that European agri-food exports remain strong for August 2017 further increasing the trade balance to €2.4 billion. The European agri-food exports rose to €11.5 billion in August 2017, an 8% increase compared to July 2017. Highest increases of monthly exports were again towards Russia and the USA, with respectively an added €153 million and €108 million compared to 2016. By sector, exports of wine and vermouth and milk powders have increased the most with respectively an extra €130 million and an added €123 million compared to last year. EU agri-food imports have also increased by 4% compared to the same time last year, resulting in a surplus of €2.4 billion in the agri-food trade balance. This month's report focuses on agri-food trade with Russia. After an initial drop, both in banned products and non-banned products, EU exports of non-banned products to Russia resumed growth and reached € 6 299 million in the period September 2016 to August 2017, which represents an increase in value by 14% compared to the previous period. This brings back Russia now to be the 4th biggest export destination for EU agri-food products, just before Japan. The full report is [online](#). (*For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: + 32 229 56185; Clémence Robin – Tel.: +32 229 52509*)

Ahead of Commissioners' participation in Council discussion on Digital Single Market: Commission publishes new study to support 5G roll-out

Ahead of tomorrow's Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council that will concentrate on most pertinent Digital Single Market issues, the Commission published today the latest [study on spectrum assignments](#) that will support the EU's work towards successful 5G deployment. The results affirm that licence duration and auction prices influence investments in better network coverage. For example, there is a tendency for higher investment levels in countries that have awarded longer licences. There is additionally evidence that high spectrum prices can be associated with lower 4G availability. These findings will provide supplementary input to the ongoing negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council on the Commission's proposal for new EU telecoms rules – the [European Electronic Communications](#)

[Code](#). Tomorrow's Council meeting in Luxembourg aims to accelerate progress on the Digital Single Market legislative files, in particular on spectrum and 5G deployment. Additionally, the Ministers hold a follow-up debate on cybersecurity following the [European Council conclusions](#), the Tallinn Digital Summit and the [Commission's proposals](#) to scale up the EU's response to cyber-attacks. For the Commission Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus **Ansip**, Commissioner Julian **King** in charge of Security Union, as well as Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** will participate. The European Electronic Communications Code is crucial for creating the Digital Single Market, as it will boost investments in high-speed and quality networks. It provides the necessary basis for the 5G roll-out at the same time all across the EU. Read more about the topic in the [proposal from 2016](#). Further details on the spectrum assignments study can be found [here](#). Spectrum factsheet will be available soon [here](#). Overview factsheets on the Digital Single Market can be found here: [state of play](#), [timeline](#), [cybersecurity](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

Commission publishes report and its proposal on sustainable development following the latest negotiating round with Mercosur

The Commission's [report from the latest round of trade negotiations](#) between the European Union and Mercosur – the block including Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay – is now online. The Commission has also made available online its negotiating proposal on the enforcement of the trade and [sustainable development chapter](#). Both publications come as part of the Commission's commitment to a more transparent trade policy. Other EU negotiating proposals for an agreement with Mercosur are available [here](#). During the round held between 2 and 6 October, all issues were covered and talks advanced in a number of areas. The round report includes details on all of them, including trade in goods and services, technical barriers to trade, government procurement, as well as intellectual property rights (including geographical indications). As regards market access, the EU fulfilled now its commitment by putting on the table the remaining elements of its market access offer in time with a view to reaching a political agreement by the end of the year. This is a well-calibrated offer that takes into account Europe's agricultural sensitivities. The EU remains committed to reaching a comprehensive, balanced and ambitious trade agreement with Mercosur. Both sides agreed to hold the next round in Brasilia from 6 to 10 November. (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel.: +32 229 51383)

Citizens' Initiative: Commission receives organisers of 'Stop Glyphosate' Initiative

This morning, First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** and Commissioner for Health & Food Safety Vytenis **Andriukaitis** received the organisers of the ['Stop Glyphosate' European Citizens' Initiative](#), after they collected and

submitted to the Commission over 1 million signatures in support of their Initiative. This is the 4th successful European Citizens' Initiative so far. The 'Stop Glyphosate' Initiative calls on the European Commission "to propose to member states a ban on glyphosate, to reform the pesticide approval procedure, and to set EU-wide mandatory reduction targets for pesticide use". In line with the Citizens' Initiative regulation, the Commission has invited the organisers to Brussels to present their ideas in more depth. A public hearing will also be arranged in the European Parliament to allow all stakeholders to present their views, and then the Commission will decide, within 3 months of submission of the Initiative (on Friday 6 October 2017), whether to act by proposing legislation, act in some other way to achieve the goals of the Initiative, or not act at all; all three options are possible under Article 11(4) of the Treaty of the European Union. In all cases, the Commission will present a Communication explaining its reasoning. The [European Citizens' Initiative](#) is a valuable tool in the hands of citizens, and allows them to contribute to shaping EU law and policy. The Commission recently presented a [proposed reform](#) of the Citizens' Initiative Regulation, to make the tool even more accessible to citizens and to encourage its wider use. (For more information: *Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Tim McPhie – Tel.: +32 229 58602; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624*)

Maritime Transport: passenger ships will be safer thanks to the EU

The European Commission welcomes the final adoption of a number of legal texts to simplify and improve passenger ship safety rules by the Council of the EU today. Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** said: *"The adoption of these new safety rules is an important deliverable in our EU maritime year. At times when citizens expect the European Union to protect them, we are sending a clear message: your safety is our priority."* The adopted package ensures that the passenger ship safety rules are clear, proportionate and deliver a common level of safety for EU citizens. For example, once fully implemented by Member States, all competent authorities will have immediate access to passenger data in case of emergency and all passenger ships longer than 24 meters made of steel and aluminium will be built according to common European safety standards. The adopted package is a result of proposals made by the European Commission in June 2016, following [recommendations made within the Regulatory Fitness and Performance \(REFIT\) Programme](#). The new rules will enter into force 20 days after the publication in the Official Journal. More information is available [here](#). (For more information: *Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Alexis Perier – Tel.: +32 229 6 91 43*)

EU announces €106 million support package for people affected by the crises in Sudan

The European Commission has announced a €106 million support package – €46 million in humanitarian assistance and €60 million for development – to directly assist people in Sudan affected by forced displacement, undernutrition, disease outbreaks and recurrent extreme climatic conditions. Some 4.8 million people in Sudan currently need urgent assistance. The

announcement comes as Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** is currently in Sudan, visiting EU humanitarian aid projects in South Darfur. *“Here in Sudan the humanitarian situation continues to be critical. Millions have been displaced for many years in Darfur. Our new EU funding is crucial to respond to the needs of the increasing numbers of refugees, notably from South Sudan, and internally displaced people, as well as of the hosting communities. The humanitarian aid I am announcing today will help bring life-saving relief to the most vulnerable populations. Full humanitarian access throughout the country is crucial so that humanitarian workers can deliver aid safely to those in need”*, said Commissioner **Stylianides**. Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** said: *“The European Union is committed to directly support the people of Sudan. Our new development aid will boost our ongoing efforts through the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. It addresses the needs of the most vulnerable Sudanese communities and offer livelihood opportunities, by better linking the EU’s humanitarian and development work in Sudan”*. The full press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)

Commission warns Vietnam over insufficient action to fight illegal fishing

The Commission is continuing its fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing worldwide by warning Vietnam, with a “yellow card”, about the risk of it being identified as a non-cooperating country. Today’s decision highlights that Vietnam is not doing enough to fight illegal fishing, due to the lack of an effective sanctioning system to deter IUU fishing activities and the lack of action to address illegal fishing activities conducted by Vietnamese vessels in waters of neighbouring countries, including Pacific Small Island Developing States. Furthermore, Vietnam has a poor system to control landings of fish that is processed locally before being exported to international markets, including the EU. Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu Vella, said: *“With this action today we demonstrate our firm commitment to fight illegal fishing globally. We cannot ignore the impact that illegal activities conducted by Vietnamese vessels are having on marine ecosystems in the Pacific. We invite the Vietnamese authorities to step up their fight so we can reverse this decision quickly. We are offering them our technical support.”* The decision does not, at this stage, entail any measures affecting trade. The “yellow card” is considered as a warning and offers the possibility for Vietnam to take measures to rectify the situation within a reasonable timeframe. To this end the Commission has proposed an action plan to support the country in addressing the identified shortcomings. A press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Iris Petsa – Tel.: +32 229 93321)

La Commission approuve trois nouvelles indications géographiques de Croatie, Danemark et France

La Commission européenne a approuvé la demande d’inscription de trois nouveaux produits dans le registre des indications géographiques: le [«Danbo»](#) (IGP), le [«Kintoa»](#) (AOP) et le [«Varaždinsko zelje»](#) (AOP). Provenant du

Danemark, le Danbo est un fromage affiné à pâte demi-dure élaboré à base de lait de vache. L'appellation Danbo est une combinaison des deux noms danois Dan et Bo. Etymologiquement, Dan est le dérivé scandinave de Danerne, nom désignant le peuple des Danois, tandis que Bo signifie «l'habitant». Le nom Danbo est ainsi l'appellation historique d'un habitant du Danemark. Le Kintoa provient de France et plus particulièrement du Pays basque français. Il s'agit d'une viande de porc issue de la race «Pie noir du Pays basque». Le terme Kintoa trouve son origine dans ce qu'on appelait le droit de quinta: depuis le XIII^{ème} siècle, les rois de Navarre autorisaient les éleveurs de porcs à les emmener en transhumance dans les montagnes royales de Navarre et en échange, ils prélevaient un porc sur cinq, d'où le nom donné à ce droit (quinta). Enfin, le Varaždinsko zelje est un chou de Croatie cultivé dans le département de Varaždin au nord du pays. Les membres de la famille, toutes générations confondues, participent à la récolte et se transmettent ainsi l'expérience et le savoir-faire nécessaires pour effectuer la récolte manuelle du produit. Ces trois appellations vont rejoindre plus de 1405 produits déjà protégés dont la liste est disponible dans la base de données [DOOR](#). Pour plus d'informations, voir aussi les pages sur la [politique de qualité](#). (Pour plus d'information: Daniel Rosario – Tel: +32 2 29 56185; Clémence Robin – Tel: +32 229 52 509)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of legal support service firm CPA by LGP

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of CPA Global Group (CPA) of the UK by Leonard Green & Partner, L.P. (LGP) of the US. CPA is active in the legal support services sector, more specifically in patent renewal and related services. LGP is a private equity investment firm, which primarily focuses on companies providing services, including consumer, business and healthcare services, as well as retail. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because the companies are not active on 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.8650](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Eurostat: Transmission des données du déficit et de la dette pour 2016 – 2^{ème} notification, déficit public de la zone euro et de l'UE28 respectivement de 1,5% et 1,7% du PIB, dette publique à 88,9% et 83,2%

Le déficit ainsi que la dette publique se sont réduits en termes relatifs en 2016 par rapport à 2015, tant dans la zone euro (ZE19) que dans l'UE28. Le ratio du déficit public par rapport au PIB a baissé dans la zone euro, passant de 2,1% en 2015 à 1,5% en 2016, ainsi que dans l'UE28, de 2,4% à 1,7%. Le ratio de la dette publique par rapport au PIB a reculé dans la zone euro, passant de 89,9% à la fin de l'année 2015 à 88,9% à la fin de l'année 2016, ainsi que dans l'UE28, de 84,5% à 83,2%. Dans ce communiqué de presse, Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne, fournit les données relatives au déficit et à la dette des administrations publiques, sur la base des chiffres déclarés par les États membres lors de la deuxième notification

de 2017 pour les années 2013 à 2016, dans le cadre de l'application de la procédure concernant les déficits excessifs (PDE). Cette notification est fondée sur le système des comptes nationaux SEC 2010. Ce communiqué de presse inclut également des données sur les dépenses et recettes des administrations publiques. Le communiqué EUROSTAT est [disponible en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Šefčovič in Luxembourg for second Energy Union Tour

On Monday 23 October, Commission Vice-President for Energy Union Maroš **Šefčovič** will be in Luxembourg for the second [Energy Union Tour](#). The Vice-President will meet Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy Etienne Schneider as well as the Minister for the Environment and Climate Carole Dieschbourg. Vice-President **Šefčovič** will promote the different components of the Energy Union stressing the need for investment in the clean energy transition which is at the heart of the Clean Energy for All Europeans proposals. Further he will call on the Luxembourgish authorities to use its forward-looking “Third Industrial Revolution” Strategy and its new “Climate Pact” to meet the goals of the Energy Union. The Vice-President will also visit the LuxÉnergie biomass co-generation plant. Ahead of his visit, Vice-President **Šefčovič** said: “Luxembourg is making good progress towards its 2020 climate and energy targets, as its emissions decreased by 16 percent between 2005 and 2016. I believe that the recently adopted “Climate Pact” between the state and municipalities is an excellent way forward and even a model for others. Local involvement and leadership is vital for our success in this area.” information on the 2017 Energy Union tour are available [here](#). More information on the Energy Union is available [here](#). More information on the Commission’s website [here](#) (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.:+32 229 52589)

Vice-President Jyrki Katainen in Facebook live chat

European Commission Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, will participate today Monday 23 October at 15.00 CET in a Facebook live chat on “Trade and the Global Economy” on the [European Commission’s Facebook page](#). Following the State of the Union speech by President Jean-Claude Juncker, the Commission unveiled in September a progressive and ambitious trade package. Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen** said: “Global trade needs to be proactively shaped and managed to ensure it is fair, projects values and remains firmly anchored in a rules-based system. With the rising threat of protectionism and weakened commitment of large players to global trade governance, the EU must step up to take the lead. Our approach is balanced and responsible: we open markets, but we also set high rules and standards to govern globalisation, and we make sure there is a level playing-field. Trade enables EU’s industry to thrive, it creates opportunities for SMEs to export and allows them to create jobs.” (For more

information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)

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