

Daily News 27 / 06 / 2018

COLLEGE MEETING: Commission preparations ahead of the European Council

Today the College of Commissioners met in Brussels in preparation for the European Council meetings on 28 and 29 June. The Commission has now published three notes which form the basis of its contribution to the European Council: 1. On deepening the **Economic and Monetary Union**, providing an overview of what has already been achieved to strengthen the EMU, where we are now, and the way forward to be discussed at the inclusive Euro Summit on 29 June; 2. On the **next long-term EU budget**, recalling the principal features of the Commission's [proposal of 2 May 2018 for a modern and fair long-term budget for the 2021-2027 period](#), and the [proposals for the 37 programmes](#) to implement and support the political priorities around which the new budget is built; 3. On **migration**, providing an overview of the work over the past 3 years on the European Agenda on Migration proposed by the **Juncker** Commission in May 2015, and highlighting the areas in which Leaders can take the debate on migration forward. All three notes are available [here](#). Today President **Juncker** debriefed the College following the informal working meeting on Sunday, which brought together 16 Member States at his initiative. Discussions were positive and constructive, focusing on how no Member State should be left alone or put under disproportionate pressure, be it from primary or secondary movements. There are two factsheets available with more information, on how the future asylum reform will provide solidarity and address secondary movements, and on managing migration: possible areas for advancement at the June European Council, available [here](#). First Vice-President **Timmermans** also debriefed the College following the General Affairs Council on Tuesday 26 June. (*For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524; Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382; Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456*)

COLLEGE MEETING: Commission appoints two female senior managers: a Director to its employment department and a Principal Adviser to its education department

Today, the European Commission decided to appoint Ms Katarina Ivanković Knežević to the position of Director for Social Affairs in its Employment, Social affairs and Inclusion department (DG EMPL) and Ms Irena Andrassy to the function of Principal Adviser in its Education, Youth, Sport and Culture department (DG EAC). Both appointments follow a selection procedure specifically for Croatian nationals, as is customary when a new Member State joins the European Union. Ms Ivanković Knežević is a lawyer by training and has been a State Secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Pension System since 2016. Prior to this, she held several positions in that Ministry as well as in the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship. Ms Andrassy has been Deputy Head of Cabinet of Commissioner Neven Mimica, responsible for International Cooperation and Development since 2014 and for Consumer Policy since July 2013. Before that, she held numerous positions as a diplomat, for example as Representative of Croatia in COREPER I/Council (2011-2013), as well as various other functions, including on Croatia's negotiating team

during the process leading to Croatia's accession. The date of effect for both posts will be determined later. *(For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Pologne: l'UE investit dans des infrastructures modernes de transport

194 millions d'euros des fonds de la politique de Cohésion sont investis dans deux projets de transport en Pologne. 14,2 millions d'euros du [fonds de Cohésion](#) financeront la construction d'une ligne de tramway dans le quartier de Gocław, dans la banlieue Sud-Est de Varsovie. Le projet s'inscrit dans un schéma de transport urbain intégré pour la capitale polonaise, afin d'améliorer la qualité de vie des citoyens qui pourront rejoindre le centre-ville depuis Gocław plus rapidement. Le paquet d'investissement comprend également l'achat de 18 tramways. Le projet devrait être finalisé en octobre 2020. La Commissaire à la politique régionale Corina **Crețu** a commenté: "Ce projet va aider le quartier de Gocław à se développer, en le rendant plus accessible. Mais ce sont tous les Varsoviens, ainsi que les touristes, qui bénéficieront d'une meilleure qualité de l'air grâce à ce projet qui promeut une mobilité propre dans la capitale." Près de 180 millions d'euros du [Fonds européen de développement régional](#) sont ensuite investis pour mieux relier les deux parties de la ville de Świnoujście, traversée par la rivière Świna. Świnoujście est située dans la Poméranie occidentale, dans le Nord-Ouest de la Pologne, à la frontière avec l'Allemagne. Le projet comprend la construction d'un tunnel sous la rivière, d'une route reliant rive gauche et rive droite, ainsi que les connexions routières alentour. Cela permettra aux habitants de Świnoujście de rejoindre plus rapidement l'autre rive, sans dépendre uniquement des services de ferry comme c'est le cas actuellement. Le projet devrait être achevé en avril 2022. *(Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)*

Commission adopts its Opinion on the updated German Draft Budgetary Plan

The Commission has today adopted its Opinion on the updated Draft Budgetary Plan (DBP) of Germany and found it to be compliant with the requirements for 2018 under the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP). In October last year, Germany submitted a DBP based on unchanged policies, which is an agreed practice for governments without full budgetary powers. The Commission received the updated DBP on 5 June 2018. The Opinion and related documents are available [online](#). *(For more information: Christian Spahr – Tel.: +32 229 50055; Annikky Lamp – Tel.: +32 229 56151)*

Road Safety Awards 2018: Commission rewards initiatives in 5 Member States

The European Commission presented the Excellence in Road Safety Awards 2018 at a ceremony held in Brussels, in presence of Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc**. Six organisations from five Member States were awarded for their notable contribution to improving road safety in Europe. Awards went to VOZIM, an association fighting reckless driving (Slovenia), to the Association Prévention routière (France), to Community Speed Watch Online

(United Kingdom), to the water company Aigua De Rigat SA (Spain), to the City Council of Naron (Spain), and to the research institute KTI (Hungary). Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** said: *“Road safety is a shared responsibility. It requires national and local entities, as well as the civil society and the industry to work in close cooperation to make our roads, vehicles and users safe. Under the European Road Safety Charter, we have gathered concrete actions and good practices to inspire us.”* As part of its [May 2017 ‘Europe on the Move’](#), the Commission put forward measures with strong EU added-value to contribute to safe roads and to a Europe that protects. Actions at all levels are nevertheless indispensable to save lives on European roads. For this reason, the ‘Excellence in Road Safety Award’ acknowledges innovative and inspirational initiatives under the umbrella of the [European Road Safety Charter](#), the largest civil society platform on road safety. More information on the winners is available [here](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Alexis Perier – Tel.: +32 229 69143)

New report shows European maritime economy as driver of economic growth, jobs and innovation

The Commission published today the first [annual report](#) on the state of the EU blue economy which will help identify investment opportunities and provide direction for future policies in this area. Representing 1.3% of the total European Gross Domestic Product, the maritime economy is a dynamically growing sector with a turnover of €566 billion, generating €174 billion of value added and providing jobs for 3 and a half million people in Europe. For the purposes of the report, the blue economy represents all economic activities related to oceans, seas or coastal areas, such as fisheries, aquaculture and tourism as well as emerging industries, like ocean energy and blue biotechnology. Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu **Vella**, said: *“The EU’s blue economy is consistently growing over the last decade and the potential for the future is promising. With investments in innovation and through responsible ocean management, integrating environmental, economic and social aspects, we can double the sector in a sustainable way by 2030.”* Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, responsible for the [Joint Research Centre](#) which co-authored the report, said: *“Thanks to the scientific input provided by the Joint Research Centre we are able to track what drives the blue economy and how it is developing. This report will support policymakers and stakeholders in creating new business opportunities and managing the resources of oceans, seas and coastal resources in a sustainable manner.”* In several EU Member States, including Portugal, Spain and Belgium, the blue economy has grown faster than the national economy in the last decade. Better management of fishing resources, thanks to the EU common fisheries policy, plays an important role in this positive development. More details of the report are available [here](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Iris Petsa – Tel.: +32 229 93321; Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: +32 229 56184)

Dailymotion joins Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online

The IT Companies that signed the [EU Code of conduct on countering hate speech online](#) are organising today in Dublin a workshop bringing together civil society organisations and national authorities to step up the fight against illegal hate speech. On this occasion, [Dailymotion](#) has announced that it will join the Code of conduct. This announcement follows the decision made by Instagram, Google+ and Snapchat earlier this year to join Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Microsoft in their work to fight illegal hate speech. Věra **Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality policy, said: *"The Internet must be a safe place, free from illegal hate speech. By fostering collaboration among IT companies, civil society and national authorities, the Code of Conduct stands out as a valuable tool to respond quickly and efficiently to the spreading of racist and xenophobic speech online. I thank all participants of the Code of Conduct for taking the fight against online hate speech a step further. In the same breath, I am very pleased to welcome Dailymotion on board. Together, we will make a difference for a free, safe and more tolerant online space"*. The workshop, which follows a first event in November 2017, aims at improving the reporting systems, the understanding of national contexts and legal specificities related to hate speech, as well as at promoting positive narratives through awareness raising and education campaigns. The latest monitoring of the Code of Conduct is available [here](#). (For more information Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Melanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

New report: digital employment platforms gain a foothold in Europe's labour markets

Today, the Commission published a [report on digital platform workers in Europe](#) prepared by the [Joint Research Centre](#), the Commission's science and knowledge hub. It shows that one in every 10 adults has already used online platforms at least once to provide services. While for the majority it remains a sporadic source of secondary income, 2% of the adult population work more than 20 hours a week or earn at least half of their income via online labour platforms. Marianne **Thyssen**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, said: *"Working on platforms is a new and fast-growing reality in the jobs market. We need to ensure that people are well protected, no matter which kind of employment contract they have. That's why we have made proposals to improve working conditions of platform workers as well as their access to social protection, in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights."* Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, responsible for the Joint Research Centre, said: *"Many of us have already used digital platforms as customers, perhaps without realising what a difference they make for workers. This report provides a solid basis to understand how these platforms work and how they affect developments in the labour market so that we can improve EU policies to help people get jobs and to protect them when they use these fora to offer services."* The report is based on a survey of over 32 000 people across 14 Member States. To adjust existing labour market institutions and welfare systems to this new reality, the Commission proposed in December 2017 a [Directive on transparent and predictable working conditions](#) and a [Council](#)

[Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed](#) in the [social fairness package](#) in March 2018. More information is available [online](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659; Joseph Waldstein – Tel. : +32 229 56184)

State aid: Commission approves €10.7 million aid for Erfurt-Weimar Airport in Germany

The European Commission has found that operating aid of €10.7 million to secure the functioning of the Erfurt-Weimar Airport in Germany, is in line with EU State aid rules. The small regional airport, which handles around 230,000 passengers per year, is 100% publicly owned and located in the Land of Thuringia. The operating aid aims to keep the airport running until it is expected to cover its costs, as of 2024. This is on the basis of a new business model, making the airport independent from low cost airlines, and on a strategy to reduce costs. In its assessment, the Commission also took into consideration that part of the airport's operational costs are due to the fact that the airport is used by the fire brigade and the police. The Commission found that the measure is in line with EU State aid rules, in particular the [Aviation Guidelines](#), as it will contribute to improving connections and facilitate regional development in Thuringia, without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [SA.46945](#) once confidentiality issues have been resolved. (Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Concentrations: la Commission autorise l'acquisition de Exclusive France Holding et Exclusive Management SAS par Permira

La Commission Européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition de Exclusive France Holding et Exclusive Management SAS basée en France par Permira VI G.P. Limited basée au Royaume-Uni. Exclusive France Holding et Exclusive Management SAS exercent une activité de distribution en gros de produits informatiques, en particulier de matériel, de logiciels, de solutions d'informatique en nuage et de services dédiés à la sécurité informatique des entreprises et aux centres de données définis par logiciel. Permira VI G.P. Limited est un fonds de capital-investissement. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, compte tenu de son impact très limité sur la structure du marché. L'opération a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée de contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.8919](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Concentrations: la Commission autorise l'acquisition de WFC par BPEA et PAI

La Commission Européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition de GB WFC International S.à.r.l ("WFC"), basée au Luxembourg, par Baring Asia Private Equity Fund VI ("BPEA"), basée aux Îles Caïman, et PAI Partners SAS ("PAI"), basée en France. WFC est active dans le marché de services de gestion de fret aérien. BPEA, contrôlée par Baring Private Equity Asia basée à Hong-Kong, est un fonds d'investissement spécialisé dans des entreprises actives dans les pays d'Asie. PAI est une société de capital investissement qui gère et conseille des fonds détenant des participations dans des entreprises actives dans des domaines variés. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, dans la mesure où les entreprises ne sont pas actives sur le même marché ou sur des marchés liés ou complémentaires. L'opération a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée de contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.8954](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

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

The [latest monthly agri-food trade report](#) published today shows that the EU exports remain strong at €11.1 billion in April 2018. This represents an increase of 3.7% compared to April 2017. Monthly imports values decreased on the other hand by 2% compared with last year and amounted to €9.6 billion. This results in an EU trade surplus for agri-food products at €1.5 billion. EU's exports to the USA, Russia, Japan and Turkey particularly increased over the last 12 months. Exports of wine, spirits and liqueurs and infant food keep performing very well. From May 2017 to April 2018, the EU became a net exporter of beet and cane sugar. The [2017 annual report published](#) earlier this month confirmed that the EU remains the largest global exporter and importer of agri-food products. The [monthly report](#) provides a table presenting the trade balance and its development by product category from May 2016 to April 2018. (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Clémence Robin – Tel: +32 229 52509)

Mergers: Commission opens in-depth investigation into proposed acquisition of Solvay's nylon business by BASF

The European Commission has opened an in-depth investigation to assess the proposed acquisition of Solvay's global nylon business by BASF, under the EU Merger Regulation. The Commission is concerned that the merger may reduce competition in the supply of key inputs in the nylon production chain. Solvay and BASF are both active in the nylon industry, and manufacture nylon compounds and nylon fibres. The proposed transaction would create an important player in the nylon compounds market with a market size almost double that of the closest competitor. The merged entity would also control substantial parts of the merchant markets and of the production capacities at all levels of the nylon production chain. Moreover, no other player would be similarly fully integrated in the production chain. Competitors will thus depend on the merged entity to continue to supply them with one or more essential inputs. In addition, there is no indication that competition could

be preserved by new entrants, since access to essential inputs is limited and critical to be able to compete effectively. At this stage, the Commission is concerned that the proposed transaction would reduce competition in the markets where the merged entity would be active. The Commission will now carry out an in-depth investigation into the effects of this transaction to determine whether its initial competition concerns are confirmed.

Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *"Nylon is used in everyday products like clothes, sports shoes and carpets. But it's also an important industrial input, for example contributing to make lighter engines and cars. However, only a few manufacturers provide essential inputs to produce different nylon products, so we need to carefully assess whether the proposed acquisition would lead to higher prices or less choice for European businesses and, ultimately, consumers."* A full press release is available in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

STATEMENTS

Strengthening the European Solidarity Corps: Joint statement by Commissioners Navracsics, Oettinger and Thyssen on the political deal reached by the European Parliament and the Council

The European Parliament and the Council reached a political agreement this morning on the Commission's proposal to provide the [European Solidarity Corps](#) with its own budget and legal framework until 2020. Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, Günther H. **Oettinger**, and Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**, welcomed the agreement with the following statement: *"We are very pleased that the European Parliament and the Council have found a political agreement on the legal framework for the European Solidarity Corps. The European Union is built on solidarity; it is one of our fundamental values connecting European citizens. The Solidarity Corps is a key part of our efforts to empower young people and enable them to become engaged, caring members of our society, playing their part in building a resilient, cohesive Europe for the future. Now that the Corps will have its own legal framework and its own budget of €375.6 million until 2020, we can hold our promise to have 100,000 young people in placements by the end of 2020"*. The [full statement](#) and a [factsheet](#) on the European Solidarity Corps are available online. Once the European Parliament votes on the agreement and the Council formally adopts the text, the Commission can start awarding projects under the European Solidarity Corps. Preparatory steps can already be taken before and the first call for funding is expected this year. (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: +32 229 56184)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Posting of Workers: Parliament and Council sign the final agreement in presence of Commissioner Thyssen

Tomorrow, Commissioner **Thyssen** will participate in the official the signing ceremony of the final agreement on the revision of the Posting of Workers

Directive. The agreement will be signed by European Parliament President Antonio Tajani and Minister Lilyana Pavlova, representing the Bulgarian Presidency. Commissioner Marianne **Thyssen** responsible for Employment, Social affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility said *"Today, Europe has taken an important step towards building a fairer single market. Thanks to our joint determination and a shared spirit of compromise, we have forged a balanced agreement on the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive that substantially improves the rules of the 1996 Directive. The text signed today implements the principle of equal pay for equal work in the same place and enshrines the principle of fair competition between companies. Now we need to make sure that the new rules are implemented on the ground. The Commission will follow this closely and support Member States in this exercise. We also need to ensure that the rules are applied. The new European Labour Authority will be crucial in this respect"*. This signature ceremony follows the adoption of the revised Directive by the Parliament on 29 May and by the Council on 21 June. The adopted text maintains the main elements of the Commission's proposal from March 2016. The ceremony will take place in the European Parliament at 11:30. The ceremony can be followed on [EbS](#). More information about the Posting of Workers Directive is available [online](#). (For more information Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Melanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

La Commissaire Crețu à Paris pour les Assises des Outre-Mer et le futur de la politique de Cohésion

Aujourd'hui et demain la Commissaire à la politique régionale Corina **Crețu** est à Paris. Ce soir, la Commissaire participera à un événement en l'honneur des élus français d'Outre-Mer à l'Élysée en présence du Président Emmanuel Macron, après s'être entretenue avec le ministre de la Cohésion des Territoires Jacques Mézard et avoir présenté [la proposition de la Commission](#) pour la politique de Cohésion 2021-2027 devant le Sénat. Demain la Commissaire participera aux Assises des Outre-Mer à l'Élysée, avec la Ministre des Outre-Mer Annick Girardin, la Ministre chargée des Affaires européennes Nathalie Loiseau et les élus français des Outre-Mer. Le Président Macron prononcera le discours de clôture de ces Assises. La Commissaire **Crețu** a commenté: *"Comme l'a dit le Président **Juncker**, les régions ultrapériphériques sont les parties les plus nobles de l'Europe, et cette Commission leur accorde une attention toute particulière, avec un accompagnement personnalisé vers la croissance et l'emploi, notamment pour les jeunes. Notre proposition pour le prochain budget pluriannuel de l'UE, particulièrement la future politique de Cohésion, offre de nombreuses opportunités pour les habitants de ces régions."* Des informations sur ce que la Commission propose pour les régions ultrapériphérique dans sa proposition pour le budget européen 2021-2027, ainsi que sur ses actions en faveur de ces régions depuis le début du mandat du Président **Juncker**, sont disponibles dans cette [fiche d'information](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

Commissioner Avramopoulos to visit EuropoL

Tomorrow Commissioner **Avramopoulos** will be in The Hague, Netherlands, where he will pay a visit to Europol, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, which has been considerably reinforced in the last years to help to address the current and new security challenges. Commissioner Avramopoulos will meet Ms Catherine De Bolle, the new Executive Director. He will also participate in a discussion with Europol's three operational teams: the European Migrant Smuggling Centre, the European Counter Terrorism Centre, and the European Cybercrime Centre. A joint press conference with Commissioner **Avramopoulos** and Executive Director De Bolle will take place at 9:45 and will be available to follow on [EbS](#). (For more information: *Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 2 296 74 56; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Katarzyna Kolanko –Tel.: +32 229 63444*)

Commissioner Mimica and German Minister for Development Müller discuss common development policy priorities

Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** is in Berlin today, addressing the Committee for Economic Cooperation and Development of the German Bundestag, and meeting with the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Dr. Gerd Müller. Commissioner **Mimica** discussed key elements of the EU's future external policy budget, which the [Commission proposed on 14 June](#). The Commission proposed not only to increase the EU's external action budget for the period 2021-2027 by 30%, compared to the previous period, but also to significantly simplify its structure, including through merging several funding instruments into [one broad instrument](#). Particular priority will be given to the EU's relations and cooperation with **Africa and Europe's neighbourhood**, as well as to promoting **peace, human rights, democracy, civil society and climate change**. Delivering a speech to the German Parliament's Committee for Economic Cooperation and Development, Commissioner **Mimica** said: *"The European Union continues to show global leadership in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I know that I can count on Germany's continued support and leadership on our development efforts – especially in view of Germany's Presidency of the European Union in 2020."* (For more information: *Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel. : +32 229 92256*)

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