

Statement by Commissioner Günther H. Oettinger on the Recommendation by the European Ombudsman of 4 September 2018 on the European Commission's appointment of a new Secretary-General

The European Commission has received the Recommendation by the Ombudsman on the appointment of the Secretary-General.

While we do not share all aspects of the underlying report, we welcome that the Ombudsman – based on a detailed analysis of some 11,000 pages provided to her – neither contests the legality of the appointment procedure of the Secretary-General, nor the choice of the candidate who is described as a “*competent EU official, highly committed to the European Union*”.

On some aspects, where the Commission has a different factual assessment, we will provide further information to the Ombudsman in due course.

When it comes to the Recommendation of how the Secretary-General should be appointed in the future, at first glance we do not see any reason why the appointment of the Secretary-General should be carried out independently from the appointment of any other Director-General.

Having said this, the Commission will look into the Ombudsman's Recommendation and looks forward to reassessing, together with the European Parliament and the other Institutions, how the application of the current rules and procedures can be improved in the future and applied in the same manner to all Institutions. I have convened an inter-institutional round table which will take place on 25 September 2018, and I hope that these discussions will allow us to guarantee the excellence and independence of the EU civil service, working for the benefit and in the common interest of our citizens.

Daily News 04 / 09 / 2018

Lancement d'une Action Commune européenne sur la vaccination

La réunion de lancement de l'Action Commune européenne sur la vaccination a lieu aujourd'hui à Paris. Cette Action Commune est coordonnée par la France et est principalement financée par le programme de santé de l'Union européenne, à hauteur de 3 500 000 euros sur trois ans, pour un budget total

de 5 800 000 euros. Cette première réunion rassemble 17 États membres de l'UE, la Norvège, la Serbie, la Bosnie-Herzégovine, république de Moldavie, la Commission européenne, les Ministères de la santé, ainsi que des instituts, des organisations et des décideurs internationaux, tels que l'OMS, l'OCDE, l'ECDC, l'EMA, des universités de 20 pays et un large éventail de parties prenantes, y compris des représentants de la société civile et des fabricants, tous travaillant sur les politiques de vaccination. L'objectif de l'Action Commune est de partager des outils permettant de renforcer les réponses nationales aux défis de la vaccination et de favoriser une coopération européenne durable contre les maladies évitables par la vaccination, l'un des objectifs de développement durable des Nations Unies. Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, commissaire européen chargé de la santé et de la sécurité alimentaire, s'est félicité de cette Action Commune: *"En avril, j'ai présenté une initiative visant à augmenter la couverture vaccinale et à garantir que tous les citoyens de l'UE aient accès à des informations pertinentes sur la vaccination, notamment au travers de la création d'un portail européen d'information sur les vaccins, leurs bénéfices et leur sécurité. La vaccination est un acte de solidarité et nous avons besoin d'une approche concertée et stratégique pour lutter contre la réticence aux vaccins et améliorer le taux de vaccination dans l'UE et dans les pays voisins. En effet, les maladies infectieuses ne s'arrêtent pas aux frontières! Aujourd'hui, je suis particulièrement heureux d'annoncer le lancement d'une Action Commune européenne sur la vaccination, qui aidera à sauver des vies en Europe, en particulier celles des groupes les plus vulnérables tels que les enfants."* Pour plus d'informations, voir [ici](#). Suivez-nous sur Twitter: [@V_Andriukaitis](#) [@EU_Health](#) #vaccineswork et #EUvaccines (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

First Eastern Partnership European School opens its doors in Tbilisi

The first Eastern Partnership European School opened today in Tbilisi, Georgia. As one of the Eastern Partnership's [20 deliverables for 2020](#), it will provide students from the EU's six Eastern partner countries, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, with an innovative academic programme while fostering multicultural exchanges and cooperation. The start of the academic year was marked with the official inauguration of the European School by EU Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes **Hahn** and Mamuka Bakhtadze, Prime Minister of Georgia. Commissioner **Hahn** said: *"I'm very proud to be in Tbilisi today to open the first Eastern Partnership European School. It is a project close to my heart and marks a new milestone in the EU's cooperation with its Eastern partners. Offering high quality education to youth is an investment in the future of the students, of their countries, and of our strong and enduring partnership. The school's opening is also proof of our determination to implement the 20 deliverables for 2020, which are at the heart of the Eastern Partnership and will bring tangible benefits to citizens."* The school also constitutes part of the wider €340 million support package for youth and education, endorsed by EU and EaP leaders at the 2017

[Eastern Partnership Summit](#). Open to students aged 16 and 17, graduates will receive an International Baccalaureate Diploma on European Studies. A full press release is available [online](#), while more information on [EU support to youth in Eastern Partnership countries](#) and on the [Eastern Partnership 20 deliverables for 2020](#) is available in dedicated factsheets. Coverage of the Commissioner's visit is available on [EbS](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Adam Kaznowski – Tel: +32 229 89359)

State aid: Commission publishes the non-confidential version of the final negative decision concluding that Luxembourg granted undue tax benefits worth around €120 million to Engie

Today, the European Commission has published the non-confidential version of the [final negative decision](#) adopted on 20 June 2018 concluding that Luxembourg granted undue tax benefits to Engie of around €120 million. The Commission found that tax rulings granted by Luxembourg had allowed two Engie group companies to avoid paying taxes on almost all their profits for about a decade. This is illegal under EU State aid rules because it gave Engie an undue advantage not available to other companies subject to the same national tax rules. The decision is available under the case number [SA.44888](#) on the [competition](#) website. (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

Eurostat: Les prix à la production industrielle en hausse de 0,4% dans la zone euro, hausse de 0,3% dans l'UE28 (Juillet 2018 comparé à juin 2018)

En juillet 2018 par rapport à juin 2018, les prix à la production industrielle ont augmenté de 0,4% dans la zone euro et de 0,3% dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En juin 2018, les prix avaient augmenté de 0,4% dans la zone euro et de 0,5% dans l'UE28. En juillet 2018 par rapport à juillet 2017, les prix à la production industrielle ont augmenté de 4,0% dans la zone euro et de 4,7% dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse est à votre disposition [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tél.: +32 229 56182; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tél.: +32 229 55040; Mirna Talko – Tél. +32 229 87278)

STATEMENTS

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the European Union". On some aspects, where the Commission has a different factual assessment, we will provide further information to the Ombudsman in due course. When it comes to the Recommendation of how the Secretary-General should be appointed in the future, at first glance we do not see any reason why the appointment of the Secretary-General should be carried out independently from the appointment of any other Director-General. Having said this, the Commission will look into the Ombudsman's Recommendation and looks forward to reassessing, together with the European Parliament and the other Institutions, how the application of the current rules and procedures can be improved in the future and applied in the same manner to all Institutions. I have convened an inter-institutional round table which will take place on 25 September 2018 and I hope that these discussions will allow us to guarantee the excellence and independence of the EU civil service, working for the benefit and in the common interest of our citizens. The statement is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#) and [DE](#). (For more information: Margaritis Schinas – Tel.: +32 229 60524; Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382; Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265)

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

[First Eastern Partnership European School opens its doors in Tbilisi](#)

Today, the first Eastern Partnership European School opened its doors to 30 students from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The start of the academic year was marked with the official inauguration of the European School by EU Commissioner Johannes Hahn and Mamuka Bakhtadze, Prime Minister of Georgia.

Johannes **Hahn**, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, said: "I'm very proud to be in Tbilisi today to open the first Eastern Partnership European School. It is a project close to my heart and marks a new milestone in the EU's cooperation with its Eastern partners. Offering high quality education to youth is an investment in the future of the students, of their countries, and of our strong and enduring partnership. The school's opening is also proof of our determination to implement the 20 deliverables for 2020, which are at the heart of the Eastern Partnership and will bring tangible benefits to citizens.

At the [Eastern Partnership Summit](#) in November 2017, all EU Member States and the six Eastern partner countries endorsed the Eastern Partnership European School as a top priority and as part of the commitment to strengthen support to youth and education in the region. The school is one of the [20 deliverables for 2020](#), endorsed by leaders at the last Summit, and also constitutes part of the wider €340 million support package for youth.

The unique diploma programme offered at the Eastern Partnership European School combines academic excellence with specialised teaching inspired by the European school system. Students aged 16 and 17 will attend classes in a multilingual and multicultural environment to extend and deepen their knowledge about Europe and the European Union. Furthermore, they will have access to a rich extra-curricular programme and have the chance to participate in high-level conferences on EU subjects. The students will graduate with an International Baccalaureate Diploma on European Studies.

Background

The [Eastern Partnership](#) (EaP) is a joint policy initiative that aims to deepen and strengthen relations between the European Union (EU), its Member States and its six Eastern neighbours: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. It is a specific dimension of the [European Neighbourhood Policy](#). The Eastern Partnership aims at building a common area of shared democracy, prosperity, stability and increased cooperation.

For More Information:

[Factsheet on EU support to youth in Eastern Partnership countries](#)

[Factsheet on the Eastern Partnership 20 Deliverables for 2020](#)

[2017 Eastern Partnership Summit: Stronger together](#)

[Website on the Eastern Partnership](#)

[Press Release: European Commission oversight of Member States' application of EU Law to be strengthened, say Auditors](#)

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[Pressemitteilung: Anwendung des Unionsrechts durch die](#)

Mitgliedstaaten: Die diesbezügliche Aufsichtstätigkeit der Europäischen Kommission muss gestärkt werden, so das Fazit des Europäischen Rechnungshofs

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