

[First quarter of 2018 compared with first quarter of 2017 – House prices up by 4.5% in the euro area – Up by 4.7% in the EU](#)

House prices, as measured by the House Price Index, rose by 4.5% in the **euro area** and by 4.7% in the **EU** in the first quarter of 2018 compared with the same quarter of the previous year. These figures come from **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

[Full text available on EUROSTAT website](#)

[Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU on President Al-Bashir's visits to Djibouti and Uganda](#)

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Mergers: Commission approves acquisition of UPC Austria by T-Mobile Austria

UPC Austria (“UPC”) and T-Mobile Austria (“TMA”) both provide telecommunications services in Austria. UPC’s main activities are related to fixed telecommunications, while TMA is mainly active in mobile telecommunications.

The Commission examined the impact of the proposed transaction in the limited number of markets in the fixed and mobile telecommunications sector in Austria where the activities of TMA and UPC overlap. In particular, both companies are active in the **provision of internet access services for residential customers**, since in Austria internet access at home is often provided through a router connected to a mobile network.

However, the Commission found that the impact of the transaction on this market is likely to be limited, considering in particular that UPC’s fixed internet access products differ considerably from TMA’s mobile broadband products. These products differ both in terms of the underlying technology and product characteristics and as a result are not closely competing.

The Commission also found that the merged entity would continue to face significant competition from other players such as the incumbent A1 Telekom Austria and Hutchison Drei Austria.

Additionally, the Commission examined a number of vertical and conglomerate relationships in the fixed and mobile telecommunications markets in Austria arising as a result of the transaction, in particular concerning **bundled multiple play services**. The Commission concluded that the merged entity would not be able to use its market power to shut out or marginalise its fixed or mobile competitors by bundling fixed and mobile products.

Therefore, following its phase I investigation, the Commission concluded that the transaction would raise no competition concerns in any of the affected telecoms markets and cleared the case unconditionally.

Merger control rules and procedures

The transaction was notified to the Commission on 18 May 2018.

The Commission has the duty to assess mergers and acquisitions involving companies with a turnover above certain thresholds (see Article 1 of the [Merger Regulation](#)) and to prevent concentrations that would significantly impede effective competition in the EEA or any substantial part of it.

The vast majority of mergers do not pose competition problems and are cleared

after a routine review. From the moment a transaction is notified, the Commission generally has a total of 25 working days to decide whether to grant approval (Phase I) or to start an in-depth investigation (Phase II).

More information will be available on the [competition](#) website, in the Commission's [public case register](#) under the case number [M.8808](#).

Presentation of letter of credentials to the President of the European Council Donald Tusk

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Remarks by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the joint press conference on the occasion of the EU-Ukraine Summit with Petro Poroshenko,

President of Ukraine and Donald Tusk, President of the European Council

Mr President Poroshenko,

President Tusk,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome my good friend Petro back to Brussels to attend this 20th Summit between Ukraine and the European Union. It is the fourth time that as a President of the Commission I am attending these meetings. But in fact the first Summit between Ukraine and the European Union took place on 5 September '97 when I was President of the European Council – that existed before you were appearing here, President of the European Council. At least I started this against the intention of the then Commission chaired by a Luxembourger, but that is a different thing. So I am happy that we are meeting again and I am really more than satisfied with the progress we have made over recent years. In the last four years, thanks to the leadership of the Ukrainian President, we have made by far more progress than those we have made in 20 years before. This is proving that the Ukrainian people, a courageous people, a great nation and a leader in charge of the destiny of the Ukrainian nation have delivered.

I am happy that we were able – thanks to the efforts of the President of Ukraine – to have the visa-free travel to the European Union. This was done back in 2017 and I am more than delighted that half a million people from Ukraine have already made the most of this new opportunity. This is bringing people together, this is bringing nations together and this visa-free regime for Ukraine is working without any kind of problems. Those who have visas, they are going back in the indicated time and so we do not have negative side effects and this is proving once again that the Ukrainians are people worth of trust.

We have good results since we signed back in September 2017 the Association Agreement and its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with Ukraine. The bilateral trade went up by almost 25% last year and the number of Ukrainian companies exporting to the European Union is also up by over 40%, going from 10,000 to 14,136, which is an encouraging result and which is helping Ukraine to grow in a steady pace. Of course, the more Ukraine is reforming, the more the support of the European Union will be developed in an adequate and corresponding way.

I am welcoming – because I was insisting on that for years – the reform in the field of the fight against corruption which is a very important issue both for Ukraine – and I know the President is committed to that goal – and for the European Union. We have to perfect, to improve some details of this legislation but it will be done in the next coming days or week.

Since I took office, out of the EUR 12.8 billion pledged to Ukraine, the EU and the European financial institutions have mobilised so far over EUR 11 billion. We have made as a Commission a proposal for the 4th Macro-Financial Assistance programme. It was signed days ago by the Council of Ministers and by the European Parliament. This is a commitment I made under conditions to President Poroshenko personally and it will provide EUR 1 billion to support the continued reform efforts.

I am delighted that earlier today a EUR 75 million loan from the European Investment Bank was signed. This will go towards improving road infrastructure in Kiev and for other cities, amongst which Odessa has to be mentioned, to make life easier for commuters and to improve road safety across the country.

So, all in all I am very happy with the Luxembourgish part of my speech and the following, weaker part in a different language.