

ESMA publishes risk assessment work programme for 2018

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ESMA will further enhance its risk monitoring capacities, generating market descriptive statistics as well as sophisticated risk indicators and metrics on the basis of new proprietary data. Most importantly for 2018, ESMA is planning to complement its ongoing market monitoring through our semi-annual Report on Trends, Risks and Vulnerabilities and our quarterly Risk Dashboards by launching an annual report series on EU derivatives markets, based on EMIR data, as well as an annual report series on EU alternative investment funds, drawing on AIFMD data.

In addition, ESMA will continue to pursue in-depth analyses around key topics, including market and fund liquidity, fund leverage, and the impact of innovation especially in the areas of market infrastructures and investment advice.

The 2018 Risk Assessment Work Programme complements ESMA's other activity reporting documents, most importantly the Single Programming Document, the Regulatory Work Programme, the Supervisory Work Programme and the Supervisory Convergence Work Programme.

Commission reports on progress under global commitments for sustainable urban development

Significant progress has been achieved under the [three commitments](#) since they were presented at the UN Habitat III conference in October 2016, in order to harness the power of rapid urbanisation. City-to-city cooperation is now flourishing across continents, important steps have been taken towards a single definition of cities at global level and the EU is showing the world the way to sustainable urban development with the ongoing implementation of its [Urban Agenda for the EU](#).

Speaking from the World Urban Forum in Malaysia, Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu** said: *“Much like the fight against climate change, the EU*

is ready to lead the way for clean, safe and prosperous cities around the globe. Europe and its partners are delivering fast on these three concrete commitments, which contribute to shaping the cities of tomorrow.”

The [three commitments](#) contribute to the implementation of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the [Paris Agreement](#). They are part of the [New Urban Agenda](#), also presented 15 months ago. Each of these commitments has a specific scope, expected achievements and deliverables. This is what has been achieved since end 2016:

Commitment to deliver the New Urban Agenda through the Urban Agenda for the EU

3 action plans out of 12 have already been drawn up under the [Urban Agenda for the EU](#), on urban poverty, the integration of migrants and air quality. They include policy recommendations, good practices and projects to be replicated across the EU and in the world. All the action plans are expected to be completed by end 2018.

Beyond the thematic action plans, the very methodology of the Urban Agenda for the EU can inspire reforms in the way cities are governed across the globe; it puts an on an equal footing cities, businesses, NGOs and representatives from Member States and EU Institutions, for an integrated and balanced approach to sustainable urban development.

Commitment to develop a global, harmonised definition of cities

To facilitate monitoring, benchmarking and eventually policy-making, it is important that the same definition of cities is used globally. The EU has been working on such a definition, which will be presented to the UN in March 2019, in partnership with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation ([FAO](#)), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD](#)) and the [World Bank](#).

So far, the Commission has gathered estimates of the [level of urbanisation of each country](#) in the world and provided free access to this data to facilitate the comparison with national definitions. At the occasion of the World Urban Forum, the Commission, via its [Joint Research Centre](#), is publishing [the global city centres database](#); it contains data for all 10,000 urban centres scattered across the globe. It is the largest and most comprehensive data on cities ever published.

A survey is currently being carried out in 20 countries to gather feedback on the global definition. Pilot projects are ongoing in 12 countries to compare the global definition with the national ones and assess the differences. In the course of 2018, the Commission and its partners will work on a free online tool to help countries test this definition on their territories.

Commitment to enhance cooperation between cities in the field of sustainable urban development^[1]

The EU's International Urban Cooperation ([IUC](#)) was launched in 2016 to support this commitment and develop city-to-city cooperation around the

globe.

There are currently 35 pairings under the programme, involving 70 cities (35 EU and 35 non-EU). They include Frankfurt (Germany) and Yokohama (Japan); Bologna (Italy) and Austin (USA) and Almada (Portugal) and Belo Horizonte (Brazil). All partnerships are working on local action plans on joint urban priorities, such as access to water, transport or health, sharing knowledge and best practices to reach their common goals.

A new call was launched at the World Urban Forum to create at least 25 new pairings; cities can apply [online](#) until 9 March.

More information:

[World Urban Forum](#)

[Habitat III Conference](#)

[EU Urban Policy](#)

[The Joint Research Centre's Urban Data Platform](#)

[The Joint Research Centre's Territorial Dashboard](#)

[1] The scope of the commitment covers cities in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Canada, China, India, Japan, the United States and the European Union.

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Commissioner Crețu at the 9th World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Opening Speech by Commissioner **Crețu**, in charge of Regional Policy, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, at the Opening Plenary of the 9th World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (7-13 February 2018)

Mister Minister, Madame Executive Director and distinguished delegates,

It is my privilege to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

First of all I would like to congratulate Ms Dato' Maimunah Mohd Sharif on her appointment as the new UN Habitat Executive Director. Mindful of the role of the UN Habitat as the leading agency on urban issues, we wish her all the best and would like to assure her of the full cooperation of the European Union and its Member States in carrying out her duties and the upcoming reform of the organisation.

The adoption of the New Urban Agenda at the Habitat III conference in Quito was a crucial step forward in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also a cornerstone for other key agendas of 2015, in particular the Paris Agreement and the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The European Union sees the New Urban Agenda as a collective instrument that will empower both the international community and local governments to turn global urban challenges into great opportunities. As former Secretary General Ban Ki Moon noted, "Our Struggle for Global Sustainability will be won or lost in cities".

The New Urban agenda ambitiously sets the work ahead for thousands of cities on all five continents. The European Union is strongly committed to its implementation, all the more since it reflects well Europe's own vision for sustainable urbanisation. Indeed, we call for an integrated, people-centred and place-based approach that takes into account the diversity of cities and their wider territorial context, while building on urban-rural linkages. The

European Union and its Member States can pride themselves on having been instrumental in shaping the New Urban Agenda.

As we have now moved into implementation, the European Union and its Member States intends to continue playing a leading role by taking forward its commitment.

We adopted the Urban Agenda for the European Union which encompasses many similar approaches and fundamental principles to the global New Urban Agenda.

The Urban Agenda for the European Union is based on a partnership approach involving local governments and other stakeholders. It aims at strengthening the urban dimension in European policies. This means involving and mobilising cities in the design and delivery of these policies.

The European approach seeks to promote a better knowledge base and an effective exchange process, leading to more integrated policy-making, more effective and efficient regulations and needs-oriented funding.

Altogether, this entails a significant change to policy-making, within and for urban areas, based on a renewed commitment to strengthening the capacity of sub-national and local governments in all aspects of governance. I can assure you of our will to support them, in particular regarding revenue generation and access to finance, including data and statistical capacities.

In addition to implementing its Urban Agenda, the European Union and its Member States is also providing substantial external cooperation support to partner countries and cities to take the New Urban Agenda forward. This not only includes the newly launched European External Investment Plan, but also a wide range projects and of initiatives by the EU and its Member States in support of sustainable urbanisation and urban resilience.

Notably, city to city cooperation has proven its worth and value. We will continue to promote this efficient tool. The political ownership of countries and cities in embracing and promoting the New Urban Agenda is key; the European Union and its Member States stands ready to share experiences and provide concrete support.

The European Union and its Member States is also committed to engaging with partners around the globe to promote inclusive and sustainable urban development. Actions should target the specific needs of persons and groups in a marginalised and vulnerable situation, including persons with disabilities, forcibly displaced persons, asylum seekers and refugees as well as those living in informal settlements and slums.

The European Union will support partners to improve the delivery of basic services and social support schemes, reinforce capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies, crises and humanitarian disasters to ensure dignity, including equitable access to food security and decent and affordable housing, and to improve the quality of life of fast-growing urban populations. In line with the New Urban Agenda, the European Union and its Member States will promote sustainable spatial planning, equitable management

of land and real estate markets, sustainable urban mobility and low-emission infrastructure networks and buildings. It will also support smart, safe and resilient cities that make use of opportunities from digitalisation, innovation and new technologies.

To conclude, I wish to emphasise that the New Urban Agenda is the outcome of our joint efforts to come forward with a truly transformative agenda. It contains all elements needed to go beyond business as usual, and to localise the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this respect, the World Urban Forum represents a great opportunity to reiterate our commitment to making the New Urban Agenda a key implementing tool to reach the targets and goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Being the first session to focus on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, we expect the World Urban Forum to concretely contribute to the first report on its implementation.

Together we can turn the global challenges of sustainable urbanisation into global assets for all. The New Urban Agenda is a once-in-a-generation opportunity; let us not miss this historical moment.

Thank you very much.

[Annex: 10 new projects under the LIFE funding programme for the Environment and Climate Action](#)

LIFE Integrated Projects Environment (3 projects – total budget €62.4 million)

FRANCE (FR) (1 project – total budget €34.2 million)

Towards a circular economy in the South of France (LIFE-IP SMART WASTE PACA)

Households in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region of France produce a lot more waste than the national average. Around 400 kg of domestic waste per inhabitant ends up being burned or in landfill. By supporting innovation in waste prevention and management and fostering expertise and skills, this project will lead to around 30 % more organic waste being collected. As well as significantly reducing the amount of landfilled household waste, it will support the development of the circular economy in the region.

[Project summary](#)

MALTA (MT) (1 project – total budget €17 million)

Reducing water demand through sustainable planning (LIFE-IP RBMP-MALTA)

Water scarcity, low rainfall and high population density are major challenges of sustainably managing Malta's freshwater resources. This project will optimise the use of precious water and build the capacity of Maltese institutions to implement the country's river basin management plan. The integrated approach will also involve water audits, investment in water treatment and greater reuse of water. Increasing islanders' awareness of the need to use water better is expected to lead to a reduction in domestic water use and an increase in available groundwater.

[Project summary](#)

SPAIN (ES) (1 project – total budget €11.2 million)

Designing integrated tools for water management (LIFE-IP RBMP-DUERO)

The Duero/Duoro river basin runs between Spain and Portugal and is a climate change hotspot. As an indicator of future changes across Europe, the river basin can be a test lab for adaptation in the management of water resources. This project will enable better governance of water resources and greater public participation in water management. Other actions will involve the development of natural ways of retaining water and tools to put a value on services provided by watersheds, such as flood prevention. The project will also create synergies between water policy and agricultural and other policies in support of its goal of implementing a river basin management plan.

[Project summary](#)

LIFE Integrated Projects Nature (5 projects – €90.4 million total budget)

DENMARK (DK) (1 project – total budget €17.4 million)

Making nature management a sound branch of farming (LIFE IP NATUREMAN)

As a result of intensive farming practices, natural areas in the Danish countryside are small, disconnected and dispersed among cultivated farmland. This project aims to reverse that trend by creating and testing incentives for farmers to manage their land in a more environmentally-friendly way. The goal is to make it financially attractive for farms to graze or harvest biomass from natural areas through the development of high-value specialty products, sold at a premium of at least 25 %. This initiative is also expected to improve the condition of protected fens, springs and grasslands and provide a template for the widespread implementation of a more holistic approach to nature and water management.

[Project summary](#)

FRANCE (FR) (1 project – total budget €22.3 million)

Getting protected marine habitats in good condition (LIFE IP MarHa)

The waters around mainland France and Corsica are home to a remarkable diversity of marine habitats, from reefs to coastal lagoons. Many of these are included in the French marine Natura 2000 network of protected areas. However, the network is in its early stages and there is significant scope to improve the condition of habitats, for instance by having a better understanding of the impact of human activities. This wide-ranging project will ensure effective and transparent site management that integrates marine users and activities. By 2025, the project will enable the status of all the marine habitats around mainland France and Corsica to be known. This will contribute to the long-term goal of ensuring that all of those habitats are in good condition ('favourable conservation status') by 2040.

[Project summary](#)

GREECE (GR) (1 project – total budget €17 million)

Wide-ranging action for nature management (LIFE-IP 4 NATURA)

There are over 600 protected areas for nature in Greece, yet fewer than 2 % have a management plan. Action plans have been approved for only three of the country's protected species. This wide-ranging project will formulate and implement site management plans and species action plans in four regions. It will also develop innovations such as a comprehensive database of Natura 2000 network sites and a tool to help users visualise ecosystem services. This will improve the capacity of competent authorities to effectively conserve Greek nature. The project will also help mobilise complementary funding to draft a five-year plan of action for the entire network of protected areas in Greece.

[Project summary](#)

LITHUANIA (LT) (1 project – total budget €17 million)

Achieving priorities for a positive impact on nature (LIFE-IP PAF-NATURALIT)

Nature conservation has developed rapidly in Lithuania since EU membership in 2004. However, significant threats to habitats, species and biodiversity remain. Lithuania has drawn up a framework of priority actions that can be integrated into relevant EU funding streams. This project will help implement that framework throughout the country. It will use a common approach to improve the efficiency of management, surveillance and analysis processes and integrate nature conservation into the forestry, agriculture and tourism sectors. The benefits of an ecosystem-based approach to conservation will be shown at selected sites, representing different geographical and natural conditions.

[Project summary](#)

SWEDEN (SE) (1 project – total budget €16.7 million)

Model conservation of watercourses and wetlands (GRIP on LIFE IP)

Sweden's watercourses and wetlands are important for nature and provide a

range of ecosystem services, including carbon storage, improved water quality and flood control. To improve the condition of habitats and help those services work to their full potential, this project will foster greater communication and cooperation between different stakeholders. It will also make more coordinated use of available funds. Working on a landscape scale, rather than just focusing on the conservation of individual sites, will ensure that priority actions for nature conservation are carried out effectively. By demonstrating the success of this approach with one type of habitat, the project will serve as a model for the wider implementation of the country's priority actions for nature conservation.

[Project summary](#)

LIFE Integrated Projects Climate Action (2 projects – total budget €29.4 million)

BELGIUM (1 project – total budget €13.9 million)

Renovating for energy efficient living (LIFE IP CA 16 BE-REEL!)

Belgian homes use 70% more energy than the European average, mainly because much of the housing stock is old. By supporting regional cooperation between Flanders and Wallonia, this project will help to implement renovation and retrofitting policies that vastly improve energy efficiency. Measures will include capacity building and training for administrators and stakeholders, guidelines for the construction sector, innovative techniques and new financial instruments. More than 8 500 homes in Ghent, Antwerp, Mechelen, Mouscron and La Louvière will be fully renovated, giving a practical demonstration of the energy efficiency strategies. This project will put Belgium on the path to renovating its existing housing, mobilising more than €700 million of complementary funding.

[Project summary](#)

SPAIN (ES) (1 project – total budget €15.6 million)

Coherent climate change adaptation in the region of Navarre (LIFE-IP Nadapta-CC)

Navarre is typical of many regions in Spain, in that it has adopted a climate change adaptation strategy but has not been able to implement that strategy. By breaking down divisions between sectors and involving key stakeholders, this project is an opportunity to overcome barriers to implementation and serve as a model for other regions in a similar position. Actions will include a new task force and indicators for climate monitoring, early warning systems for river floods and emergencies involving wastewater treatment. Other measures include adaptive management of water, forestry, agriculture, health, infrastructure and territorial planning. Mobilising more than €370 million of complementary funding will enable the implementation of Navarre's 2030 climate change adaptation goals.

[Project summary](#)