

# Joint Statement on the attack against the NGO Save the Children in Afghanistan

*Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Christos Stylianides, the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, and Neven Mimica, the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, issue the following statement:*

Saving lives should not cost lives.

Today's terrorist attack against the NGO Save the Children, whose staff work to help vulnerable children in Afghanistan, is a grave violation of international humanitarian law. It is an affront to all humanitarian organisations, to humanity, and in particular, it demonstrates a blatant disregard for the wellbeing and future of all Afghan children, who rely on the dedicated work of others.

Our condolences go to the families of all those who have been killed, and we wish a speedy recovery to those injured. At this time, our thoughts are also with Save the Children, a longstanding partner of the European Union in Afghanistan and around the world, working tirelessly to save and change peoples' lives for the better.

We will not allow acts of terror to deter our support to those most in need in Afghanistan. The European Union stands by the Afghan authorities and people and remains committed to helping the Afghan people to achieve a peaceful future.

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## Statement by Commissioner Vestager on Commission decision to fine Qualcomm for abuse of market dominance in LTE baseband chipsets

**\*Please check against delivery\***

Today, the Commission has decided to fine Qualcomm 997 million euros for behaviour that is illegal under EU antitrust rules.

Qualcomm has abused its market dominance for a type of chipsets, namely baseband chipsets that comply with the Long-Term Evolution standard – in short “LTE”, or you may know it better as 4G. LTE baseband chipsets are vital components in smartphones and tablets. What they do is enable our phones and tablets to transmit voice and data when we call our friends, share pictures with them or read online news.

For quite some time, Qualcomm has been the world’s largest maker of LTE baseband chipsets. Our decision found that Qualcomm cemented its position by illegally shutting out rivals from the market for over five years. Between 2011 and 2016, Qualcomm paid billions of US Dollars to a key customer, Apple, so that they would not buy from rivals. These payments were not just reductions in price – they were made on the condition that Apple would exclusively use Qualcomm’s baseband chipsets in all its iPhones and iPads. This meant that no one could challenge Qualcomm effectively in the market for LTE baseband chipsets.

So, to be clear, this case is about Qualcomm having taken measures to avoid competition on the merits. Its illegal behaviour denied consumers and other companies the benefits of effective competition, namely more choice and innovation – and this in a sector with a huge demand and potential for innovative technologies.

#### *Why Qualcomm’s behaviour is illegal*

Our investigation showed that Qualcomm has held a dominant position in the market for LTE baseband chipsets. For the majority of the period investigated, more than 90% of these chipsets sold worldwide were produced by Qualcomm. There are significant barriers to enter this market. One reason is that these chipsets are complex products. Companies have to spend large amounts on research and development to be able to make them. They also need to support a variety of technical standards.

Just because Qualcomm has become dominant in this market is not, as such, a problem under EU antitrust rules. We congratulate companies for becoming successful due to their skill and innovation.

However, since competition is already weakened in a market dominated by just one company, such a market needs extra vigilance. That’s why EU antitrust rules put special responsibilities on dominant companies. They are not allowed to abuse their strong market position to hinder competition in the market.

This means that dominant companies may not try to stop their rivals from entering a market, by blocking their access to customers. When a lot of money is at stake for the customer, this strategy can be very effective. And it becomes even more effective, if it is targeted at a large and important customer.

The outcome is that rivals are prevented from challenging dominant companies with new, more innovative products.

And this is what Qualcomm did in this case.

During the period we investigated, Intel was one of Qualcomm's main potential rivals in this market. Intel was of course the dominant company for chips used in computers. But as regards chipsets for smartphones and tablets, Intel was at the time a relatively small player. They were trying to challenge Qualcomm in the market for chipsets used in mobile devices.

And it seems they had the ability to do so: in our investigation we obtained internal documents from Apple, showing that Apple was seriously thinking about switching from Qualcomm to Intel for some of its supplies of baseband chipsets. They did so at various moments between 2011 and 2016.

This would have made a big difference to Intel. Apple is one of the largest makers of smartphones and tablets in the world.

But in the end, Apple decided not to make the change during that time.

Why? Trying out a new chipset supplier would have cost Apple a lot of money. Qualcomm paid billions of US dollars to Apple on the condition that Apple sources exclusively from Qualcomm.

Qualcomm's terms made clear that they would stop these payments, if Apple commercially launched even a single iPhone or iPad model with a chipset not supplied by Qualcomm.

Qualcomm's terms also reduced Apple's incentives to change their mind: if Apple decided to switch suppliers, they wouldn't just forego the future payments to be received from Qualcomm. They would also have had to return some of the payments already received.

So, it wasn't until late in 2016 that Apple started to source some of its input from Intel. In other words, only when the agreements with Qualcomm were about to expire, and switching no longer cost them as much money. And there is evidence that competition in the market is now on the up.

This shows that Qualcomm's payments were decisive to shut out rival chip manufacturers from the market. Qualcomm's behaviour denied rivals the chance to compete effectively, no matter how good their products were. And that denied consumers and other companies the benefits of choice and innovation.

This is why we today fined Qualcomm 997 million euros for having abused its dominant market position. The fine reflects both the seriousness and the duration of the infringement, and is also aimed at deterring market players from engaging in such anti-competitive practices in the future.

### *Impact of Intel judgment*

The internal documents I mentioned are just part of the evidence we relied on to prove our case. Our decision sets out how consumers and competition have suffered as a result of Qualcomm's conduct based on a variety of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Of course, I say this also because this is the Commission's first decision on an abuse of a dominant market position since the Court of Justice ruling on the Intel case last September. This judgment gave guidance on how the Commission has to prove its case and which tools it can rely on. We have carefully examined the ruling and the evidence in our case file, to make sure our decision fully complies with the guidance given by the Court.

As always, we will publish our decision for all to see, as soon as we agree with Qualcomm and third parties on any confidential business secrets that need to be removed.

### *Conclusion*

What our decision today confirms is that dominant companies operating on European markets must compete on the merits. Qualcomm chose to instead shut out competitors from the market. That is illegal under EU antitrust rules. And that's why we have taken today's decision. So that European consumers can enjoy the full benefits of competition and innovation.

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## [Space policy: Galileo Security Monitoring Centre back-up site moves to Spain](#)

The Galileo Security Monitoring Centre (GSMC) is a technical infrastructure which plays a key role in ensuring the security of the EU's satellite navigation programme Galileo, including its Public Regulated Service (PRS). The GSMC has its main and operational location in France and its back-up site in the United Kingdom (Swanwick). As a consequence of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU, the GSMC's back-up site needs to be relocated from the United Kingdom to one of the 27 EU Member States.

Commissioner for the Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** said: *"Europe's satellite navigation system Galileo has already been delivering high quality services for over a year now. With today's decision the Commission is taking the necessary operational steps to ensure business continuity and preserve the security of the Galileo system."*

On 1 August 2017, the Commission launched an open and transparent call for expressions of interest to host the back-up site of the GSMC. Six Member States (Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Spain) submitted proposals which the Commission assessed according to objective technical, security, financial and programmatic criteria on the basis of the rules foreseen in the Galileo Regulation. On 18 January 2018, representatives of 27 Member States in the European Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) Programmes Committee voted in favour of the Commission proposal to relocate

the back-up site to Spain. With today's formal decision, the Commission is launching the process for the transfer of the back-up site from the UK to Spain.

### **Next steps**

The new site will become operational in the coming months, subject to its prior accreditation by the [Security Accreditation Board](#) for European GNSS Systems. The hosting Member State will bear the costs for hosting the back-up site, while the EU will bear the costs of staffing and Galileo equipment. The GNSS Agency in Prague (GSA) will decide on the number of staff to operate the back-up centre.

### **Background**

Galileo is a key component of the Commission's [Space Strategy](#), which focuses on fostering new services, creating business opportunities, promoting Europe's leadership in space and maintaining Europe's strategic autonomy. The high-precision global satellite navigation system already supports emergency operations, provides more accurate navigation services, offers better time synchronisation for critical infrastructures and ensures secure services for public authorities.

The Galileo Public Regulated Service (PRS) is an encrypted navigation service for government-authorized users, such as civil protection services, customs officers and the police. This system is particularly robust and fully encrypted to provide service continuity for government users during emergencies or crisis situations.

A growing number of companies and innovative start-ups are using Galileo data and enabling their devices, including the newest versions of smartphones (find out if your device is [Galileo-enabled](#)).

Once the constellation is completed, it will improve in-car navigation and mobile phone signals, help road and rail transport become safer and act as a catalyst for R&D and high-tech job creation around Europe.

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## **[Commission to host first ever Education Summit: laying the foundations for a European Education Area](#)**

This Summit follows the [Gothenburg Summit](#) in November 2017 where the Commission set out its vision to create a European Education Area by 2025,

and the [December European Council](#) where Member States expressed a willingness to do more in the area of education. It is an important opportunity for 18 EU Education Ministers, education professionals and representatives from all over Europe to come together and discuss the future of education in Europe. This European Education Summit is the start of a series, with the second one to follow in autumn 2019.

Ahead of the event, Tibor **Navracsics** said, *“Education should equip citizens, young and old, with the competences to lead fulfilling lives and build communities. While education is the responsibility of Member States, we need to step up our cooperation at EU level. We have to use the full potential of education to build resilient societies, create a sense of belonging and enable people to experience European identity in all its diversity. To help achieve this, we want to boost language learning, ensure that your diploma is recognised wherever you are in the Union, that European universities can maximise their cooperation, and that studying in another EU country becomes easier than ever before. This is what a true European Education Area is about, and tomorrow’s Summit is a concrete step towards making it a reality.”*

Under the broad theme **‘Laying the foundations of a European Education Area: for an innovative, inclusive and values-based education’**, the Summit will focus on answering questions such as how quality, inclusive and values-based education can contribute to a successful Europe; what competences are needed for the decades to come; and how we can boost basic, digital and entrepreneurial skills.

The [programme](#) includes over twenty sessions, master classes and high-level panel discussions, with more than 40 speakers. They cover a vast range of issues, including how to engage disadvantaged pupils to ensure no one is left behind, how to best equip teachers, how to boost learning through sport, as well as the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) in education and the role children play in helping to transform societies.

## **Next steps**

Building on the conclusions of the Summit, the Commission will present further initiatives in spring 2018. These will include proposals on the mutual recognition of diplomas, language learning, a quality framework for early childhood education and care, a European Agenda for Culture, and a new EU Youth Strategy. [In Gothenburg](#), President **Juncker** also invited the EU leaders to work towards doubling the number of young people in the EU participating in Erasmus+ by 2025, which will require a budget of €29.4 billion for the period 2021-2027. Furthermore, the Commission will take forward work on a network of European universities and a new EU student card. The latter will make studying in another EU country easier than ever before.

## **Background**

When EU leaders’ met in Gothenburg in November 2017, the Commission presented a [Communication on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture](#). In this [Communication](#), the Commission set out its vision for the

creation of a European Education Area by 2025 to harness the full potential of education as a driver for job creation, economic growth, social fairness as well as a means to experience European identity in all its diversity.

Only two months after the Gothenburg Summit, on 17 January, the Commission followed up with proposals for new initiatives intended to reduce socio-economic inequalities, whilst sustaining competitiveness in order to build a more united, stronger and more democratic Europe. They are:

- A [Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning](#) and [Annex](#) to improve the development of key competences of people of all ages throughout their lives and to provide guidance to Member States on how to achieve this objective. A particular focus is placed on promoting entrepreneurial drive and innovation-oriented mind-sets in order to unlock personal potential, creativity and self-initiative.
- A [Digital Education Action Plan](#) outlining how the EU can help people, educational institutions and education systems better adapt to life and work in an age of rapid digital change.
- A [Council Recommendation on common values](#), inclusive education and the European dimension of teaching in order to help young people understand the importance of and adhere to common values set out in Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union. It aims at strengthening social cohesion and contributing to fighting the rise of populism, xenophobia, divisive nationalism and the spreading of fake news.

## **For More Information**

[European Education Summit website](#)

The Summit plenary sessions will be [web streamed](#)

[New measures to boost key competences and digital skills, as well as the European dimension of education](#)

[Factsheet on the European Education Area](#)

[Factsheet on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning](#)

[Factsheet on the Digital Education Action Plan](#)

[Factsheet on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching](#)

[Communication on Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture](#)

[Education & Training Monitor 2017](#)

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## Daily News 24 / 01 / 2018

### **COLLEGE MEETING: Commission publishes guidance on upcoming new data protection rules**

The Commission publishes today guidance to facilitate a direct and smooth application of the new [data protection rules](#) across the EU as of 25 May. With just over 100 days left before the application of the new law, the guidance outlines what the European Commission, national data protection authorities and national administrations should still do to bring the preparation to a successful completion. **Andrus Ansip**, European Commission Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, said: "Our digital future can only be built on trust. Everyone's privacy has to be protected. Strengthened EU data protection rules will become a reality on 25 May. It is a major step forward and we are committed to making it a success for everyone." **Věra Jourová**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, added: "*In today's world, the way we handle data will determine to a large extent our economic future and personal safety. We need modern rules to respond to new risks, so we call on EU governments, authorities and businesses to use the remaining time efficiently and fulfil their roles in the preparations for the big day.*" While the new regulation provides for a single set of rules directly applicable in all Member States, it will still require significant adjustments in certain aspects, like amending existing laws by EU governments or setting up the European Data Protection Board by data protection authorities. The guidance recalls the main innovations, opportunities opened up by the new rules, takes stock of the preparatory work already undertaken and outlines the work still ahead of the European Commission, national data protection authorities and national administrations. Today, the Commission also launches a new practical [online tool](#) to help citizens, businesses, in particular SMEs, and other organisations to comply and benefit from the new data protection rules. A [press release](#), [Q&A](#) and [factsheets](#) are available online. Commissioner Jourová's press conference can be followed [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

### **COLLEGE MEETING: Security Union – Commission follows up on terrorist radicalisation**

Today, the European Commission reports on progress made towards an effective and genuine Security Union, including priorities like countering radicalisation, enhancing cybersecurity and protecting public spaces. As security is identified as a key priority in the [Joint Declaration on the EU's legislative priorities for 2018-19](#), the Commission is also setting out a number of measures to be taken over the coming months to strengthen support to Member States and speed up EU work. The Commission will continue to drive



progress ahead of the September informal leaders' meeting on security, announced in the [Leaders' Agenda](#). Commissioner for Home Affairs, Migration and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos** said: "Security remains a key challenge for Europe and a number one priority for the EU, as reflected in the EU Institutions' Joint Declaration for 2018-19. We must continue to make use of this strong momentum and deliver concrete results for our security, collectively. We need to do more to keep European citizens safe both offline and online. Fighting terrorist propaganda online remains an area where there is a clear urgency to act. The Commission will act if needed and all options remain on the table." Commissioner for the Security Union Julian **King** said: "Over the past year we have intensified efforts to close information gaps, fight radicalisation, scale up cyber resilience, and protect our public spaces. This comprehensive approach is bringing results: but we need to keep the momentum going to ensure a genuine, effective Security Union. We must deal with the terrorist problem at its heart – the radicalisation that can drive people in Europe to violent and extremist ideologies. We will continue working with experts, policy makers and internet companies on this vital issue – there is much still to do." A full [press release](#) and [factsheet](#) on the Security Union are available online. (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444)

#### **COLLEGE MEETING: Space policy: Galileo Security Monitoring Centre back-up site moves to Spain**

Today the Commission adopted a decision to transfer the back-up site of the Galileo Security Monitoring Centre from the United Kingdom to Spain. The Galileo Security Monitoring Centre (GSMC) is a technical infrastructure which plays a key role in ensuring the security of the EU's satellite navigation programme Galileo, including its Public Regulated Service (PRS). As a consequence of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU, the GSMC's back-up site needs to be relocated. Commissioner for the Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** said: "Europe's satellite navigation system Galileo has already been delivering high quality services for over a year now. With today's decision the Commission is taking the necessary operational steps to ensure business continuity and preserve the security of the Galileo system." Six Member States (Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Spain) submitted proposals which the Commission assessed according to objective technical, security, financial and programmatic criteria. On 18 January 2018, representatives of 27 Member States in the European Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) Programmes Committee voted in favour of the Commission proposal to relocate the back-up site to Spain. With today's formal decision, the Commission is launching the process for the transfer. The new site will become operational in the coming months. [Galileo](#) is a key component of the Commission's [Space Strategy](#), as underlined by Commissioner **Bieńkowska** in her [speech](#) at the [10<sup>th</sup> Conference on EU Space Policy](#). The strategy focuses on fostering new services, creating business opportunities, promoting Europe's leadership in space and maintaining Europe's strategic autonomy. More details are available in a

press release in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#) and [ES](#). Further information on the Galileo programme can be found in several [videos](#) and [publications](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040; Maud Noyon – Tel. +32 229-80379)

### **Latest developments in Romania: President Juncker and First Vice-President Timmermans express concerns**

President **Juncker** and First Vice-President **Timmermans** have today issued a public [statement](#) on the latest developments in Romania regarding the independence of Romania's judicial system and its capacity to fight corruption. The Commission statement notes, *"The independence of Romania's judicial system and its capacity to fight corruption effectively are essential cornerstones of a strong Romania in the European Union. The irreversibility of the progress achieved so far under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism is an essential condition to phase out the Mechanism...the Government and the Parliament should ensure full transparency and take proper account of consultations in the legislative process on the justice laws... a process in which the judicial independence and the opinion of the judiciary is valued and given due account, also drawing on the opinion of the Venice Commission, is a prerequisite for sustainability of the reforms and an important element in fulfilling the CVM benchmarks...The Commission calls on the Romanian Parliament to rethink the course of action proposed, to open up the debate in line with the Commission's recommendations and to build a broad consensus on the way forward. The Commission reiterates its readiness to cooperate with and support the Romanian authorities in this process...The Commission warns again against backtracking and will look thoroughly at the final amendments to the justice law, the criminal codes and laws on conflict of interest and corruption to determine the impact on efforts to safeguard the independence of the judiciary and combat corruption."* The full statement is available online in [English](#) and [Romanian](#). (For more information: Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382; Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Tim McPhie– Tel. +32 229 58602)

### **Antitrust: Commission fines Qualcomm €997 million for abuse of dominant market position**

The European Commission has fined Qualcomm €997 million for abusing its market dominance in LTE baseband chipsets. Baseband chipsets enable smartphones and tablets to connect to cellular networks and are used both for voice and data transmission. LTE baseband chipsets comply with the 4G Long-Term Evolution (LTE) standard. Today's decision concludes that Qualcomm held a dominant position in the global market for LTEbaseband chipsets over the period investigated (i.e. between at least 2011 and 2016). **Qualcomm has abused this market dominance by** preventing rivals from competing in the market. It did so by making significant payments to a key customer on condition that it would exclusively use Qualcomm chipsets. This is illegal under EU antitrust rules. Commissioner **Margrethe Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *"Qualcomm illegally shut out rivals from the market for LTE baseband chipsets for over five years, thereby cementing its market*

dominance. Qualcomm paid billions of US Dollars to a key customer, Apple, so that it would not buy from rivals. These payments were not just reductions in price – they were made on the condition that Apple would exclusively use Qualcomm’s baseband chipsets in all its iPhones and iPads. This meant that no rival could effectively challenge Qualcomm in this market, no matter how good their products were. Qualcomm’s behaviour denied consumers and other companies more choice and innovation – and this in a sector with a huge demand and potential for innovative technologies. This is illegal under EU antitrust rules and why we have taken today’s decision.” Commissioner Vestager’s press conference can be watched [here](#). A press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#) and [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

### **Integration of migrants: Commission presents toolkit to help Member States make the best use of EU funds**

Today the Commission is publishing a [toolkit](#) to help national and regional authorities design strategies and projects to integrate migrants and identify available EU resources. It will help set up local integration strategies supported by EU resources used in synergy, still in the current 2014-2020 budget period. The toolkit identifies five priorities for holistic and efficient long-term integration strategies: reception; education; employment; housing; and access to public services. It lists the most pressing challenges under these five priorities and suggests adequate support measures, each one of them matched with the right EU fund. Member States and regions have a wide range of EU funding instruments at their disposal that can support different types of projects in the field of integration – from providing language classes and healthcare upon arrival to helping migrants find a job, a home to live in and a place in society. A full press release is available [here](#). The toolkit will be presented this afternoon in the European Economic and Social Committee, in the presence of Commissioner for Regional policy Corina Crețu. The programme of the event, which is open to the press, is available [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

### **Slovaquie: une initiative de la Commission aide une région à bas revenus à rattraper son retard**

Aujourd’hui la Commission lance [l’Initiative pour les régions accusant un retard](#) à Prešov, une région à bas revenus du Nord-Est de la Slovaquie. Sur le terrain, les experts de la Commission et de la Banque mondiale apporteront un soutien personnalisé à la région pour surmonter les principaux obstacles qui freinent son développement économique (fuite des cerveaux, chômage des jeunes, manque de coopération entre les acteurs privés et les centres de recherche publics dans le domaine de l’innovation) et l’aider à davantage capitaliser sur ses atouts compétitifs. Grâce à ce soutien, la région concevra et mettra en place un plan d’action pour transformer son économie et créer un environnement propice aux investissements d’ici début 2019. La

Commissaire à la politique régionale Corina **Crețu** a déclaré: *“La politique de cohésion fait en sorte qu’aucune région ne soit laissée pour compte. Nous travaillons en étroite collaboration avec les gouvernements et les citoyens pour les aider à mener à bien leurs réformes économiques et améliorer leur qualité de vie. L’initiative d’aujourd’hui met ce principe en pratique: la région de Prešov bénéficiera d’un soutien sur mesure pour bâtir une économie solide pour les générations futures.”* Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d’informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

## **MEDIA programme: EU funded films nominated for Oscars; second EU Film Contest Launched**

Seven EU-funded films will compete in the 90<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards ceremony. In the last years, many films supported by the [EU’s Creative Europe MEDIA](#) programme brought home Oscars, including *Amour*, *La Grande Bellezza*, *Ida*, *Son of Saul* or *Slumdog Millionaire*. This year once again the EU-funded films are present across the various categories. MEDIA supported film *Call me by your name* directed by Luca Guadagnino is nominated in four categories including “Best Picture” and “Actor in a leading role”. Amongst the five EU supported films shortlisted in the “Foreign Language Film” category, two received a nomination: *The Square* and *On Body and Soul* (*Teströl és lélekröl*). MEDIA programme supported the distribution of the Palm d’Or winner *The Square* in 30 countries with over €1 million. The development and distribution of the Berlin Golden Bear winner *On Body and Soul* was supported with €700,000. In the “Animated Feature Film” category, *Loving Vincent* and *The Breadwinner* will compete; while *Revolt Rhymes* is nominated in the “Short Film Animated” category and *Faces Places* (*Visages Villages*) is nominated in the “Documentary” category. By its innovative techniques, *Loving Vincent* is the world’s first fully painted feature film. Every one of the 65,000 frames of the film has been hand-painted by 115 professional oil painters to bring the paintings of Van Gogh to life. The Oscars awards ceremony will be held in Hollywood on 4 March 2018. Read the full overview of MEDIA programme related Oscar nominations [here](#). The MEDIA programme launched yesterday additionally the second edition of the [EU Film Contest](#) to promote Europe’s unique diversity of films in an accessible way to a wide audience. Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** said: *“I am proud to see that the MEDIA programme is bearing fruits and European films are so well recognised. Through the EU Film Contest I hope that we will reach many people, among them the next generation of filmmakers, who will continue this tradition and create many new European masterpieces.”* Participants can [test](#) how much they know about European films for a chance to experience the behind the scenes of Cannes Film Festival and discover the European audiovisual industry at work. More information is available [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

**La Commission approuve une nouvelle indication géographique protégée de**

## Slovénie

La Commission européenne a approuvé la demande d'inscription du [«Jajca izpod Kamniških planin»](#) dans le registre des indications géographiques protégées (IGP). Les «Jajca izpod Kamniških planin» sont des œufs de poules élevées autour des Alpes de Kamnik-Savinja dans le nord de la Slovénie. La réputation de ces œufs remonte à la fin du XIXe siècle, à l'époque où de nombreuses fermières de Kamnik fournissaient cette denrée appréciée aux cuisines et marchés de Ljubljana. Comparés à d'autres œufs, les «Jajca izpod Kamniških planin» contiennent au moins deux fois plus d'acides gras oméga-3 grâce aux graines de lin dont se nourrissent les poules pondeuses. Cette nouvelle appellation va rejoindre plus de 1420 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 refers the acquisition of Pini Polonia by Smithfield to the Polish competition authority**

The European Commission has referred the proposed transaction between Smithfield Foods of the US and Pini Polonia of Poland to the Polish Office of Competition and Consumer Protection (UOKiK) at its request. Both companies are active in the slaughtering of pigs in Poland. On 27 November 2017, Smithfield and Pini Polonia notified the proposed transaction to the Commission. On 15 December 2017, UOKiK requested that the Commission refer to it the assessment of the proposed transaction. The evidence gathered by the Commission confirmed that the proposed transaction would only affect competition as regards the slaughtering of pigs in Poland, where Smithfield and Pini Polonia are currently the two largest market players. The Commission therefore decided to refer the proposed transaction to UOKiK, which will deal with the case under Polish national law. A full press release is available in [PL](#), [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

## **Concentrations: La Commission autorise la prise de contrôle exclusif d'Emin Leydier par SAICA**

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, le projet d'acquisition du contrôle exclusif d'Emin Leydier (France) par SAICA (Espagne). Emin Leydier est un fabricant de matériaux ondulés et de solutions d'emballage, principalement actif en France. SAICA est actif dans la collection et la fourniture de papiers recyclés ainsi que dans la fabrication de matériaux ondulés et emballages, et opère dans plusieurs pays Européens. La Commission a conclu que l'opération envisagée ne poserait pas de problèmes de concurrence dans la mesure où les entreprises occupent une position limitée sur les marchés où leurs activités se chevauchent. Plus d'informations sont disponibles sur le site [concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre d'affaires](#) public, sous le numéro d'affaire [M.8692](#). For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)



## **Eurostat: Le tourisme dans l'UE – Augmentation du nombre de nuitées dans l'UE en 2017... et plus particulièrement en Lettonie, en Slovénie et en Croatie**

En 2017, le nombre de nuitées passées dans des établissements d'hébergement touristique dans l'Union européenne (UE) devrait avoir atteint plus de 3,2 milliards, ce qui représente une progression de 5,1% par rapport à 2016. Depuis 2009, le nombre de nuitées passées dans des établissements d'hébergement touristique dans l'UE est en hausse constante; cette évolution est notamment imputable à l'augmentation des nuitées de non-résidents du pays visité. En 2017, l'Espagne (471 millions de nuitées, soit +3,6% par rapport à 2016) est restée en tête, devant la France (431 millions, +6,6%), l'Italie (425 millions, +5,4%) et l'Allemagne (400 millions, +2,7%). Un communiqué de presse Eurostat est à votre disposition [en ligne](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: +32 229 56184)

## **Eurostat: Third quarter of 2017 – Seasonally adjusted government deficit down to 0.3% of GDP in the euro area – Down to 0.6% of GDP in the EU28**

In the third quarter of 2017, the seasonally adjusted general government deficit to GDP ratio stood at 0.3% in the euro area (EA19), a strong decrease compared with 1.0% in the second quarter of 2017. In the EU28, the deficit to GDP ratio stood at 0.6%, a decrease compared with 1.2% in the previous quarter. A press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Juliana Dahl – Tel.: +32 229 59914)

## **Third quarter of 2017 compared with second quarter of 2017 – Government debt fell to 88.1% of GDP in euro area – Down to 82.5% of GDP in EU28**

At the end of the third quarter of 2017, the government debt to GDP ratio in the euro area (EA19) stood at 88.1%, compared with 89.0% at the end of the second quarter of 2017. In the EU28, the ratio also decreased from 83.3% to 82.5%. Compared with the third quarter of 2016, the government debt to GDP ratio fell in both the euro area (from 89.7% to 88.1%) and the EU28 (from 82.9% to 82.5%). A press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Juliana Dahl – Tel.: +32 229 59914)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **La Commission s'apprête à accueillir le tout premier sommet sur l'éducation pour jeter les bases de l'espace européen de l'éducation**

Le tout premier [sommet européen sur l'éducation](#) aura lieu demain à Bruxelles, organisé par le commissaire à l'éducation, la culture, la jeunesse et au sport, Tibor **Navracsics**. Ce sommet fait suite au [sommet de Göteborg](#) (Suède) de novembre 2017 où la Commission a présenté ses projets en vue de créer un espace européen de l'éducation d'ici à 2025 et au [Conseil européen de décembre](#) où les États membres ont exprimé leur volonté d'accentuer leurs

efforts dans le domaine de l'éducation. A la veille de l'événement, Tibor **Navracsics** a déclaré: « *L'éducation doit doter nos citoyens, jeunes et moins jeunes, des compétences qui leur permettent de mener des vies épanouissantes et de bâtir des communautés. Bien que l'éducation relève de la responsabilité des États membres, nous devons intensifier notre coopération à l'échelon de l'Union. Nous devons utiliser pleinement le potentiel de l'éducation pour construire des sociétés résilientes, créer un sentiment d'appartenance et permettre aux citoyens de faire l'expérience de l'identité européenne dans toute sa diversité. A cette fin, nous souhaitons stimuler l'apprentissage des langues et faire en sorte que votre diplôme soit reconnu où que vous soyez dans l'Union, que les universités européennes puissent maximiser leur coopération et qu'étudier dans un autre Etat membre devienne plus facile que jamais. Voilà ce que représente un véritable espace européen de l'éducation, et le sommet de demain constitue une mesure concrète en vue de sa réalisation* ». Ce sommet est une occasion importante pour 18 ministres de l'éducation de l'UE, plus de 450 professionnels de l'éducation et représentants de toute l'Europe de se réunir pour [débatte de l'avenir de l'éducation en Europe](#). Ce sommet européen de l'éducation sera diffusé [en ligne](#) et constitue le point de départ d'une série, puisqu'un deuxième suivra à l'automne 2019. Un communiqué de presse complet est disponible [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tél .: +32 229 67083, Joseph Waldstein – Tél .: +32 229 56184)

### **Informal Justice and Home Affairs Council in Sofia: Commissioners Avramopoulos, Jourová and King to discuss migration, border management and judicial cooperation**

Commissioners Dimitris **Avramopoulos**, **Věra Jourová** and Julian **King** will attend an informal meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council in Sofia, Bulgaria on 25 and 26 January. On Thursday, Commissioners **Avramopoulos** will join Home Affairs Ministers to exchange views on the reform of the Common European Asylum System and, together with Commissioner **King**, on next steps to strengthen the EU's external borders. Over lunch, participants will discuss global efforts to manage migration under the future Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. A press conference is scheduled to take place after the meeting at around 16:00 CET and will be broadcast on [EbS](#). On Friday, Commissioner **Jourová** will update Justice Ministers on the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office ([EPP](#)) and discuss the Brussels IIa [Regulation](#) on cross-border matrimonial matters and parental responsibilities. She will present to ministers the results of the 3<sup>rd</sup> monitoring of the [Code of Conduct](#) countering illegal online hate speech and the Commission guidance on the General Data Protection Regulation. Finally, they will discuss justice aspects of Artificial Intelligence. A press conference will take place around 13:00 CET and will be [web streamed](#). (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 2 298 67 64; Christian Wigand Tel.: +32 2 29 62253)

### **Commissioner Neven Mimica in Rome to discuss the future of Italian development and cooperation policy**

Today, the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica**, will be in Rome for the [first National Conference on Development and](#)

[Cooperation](#). Closer cooperation and joint-up action between the EU and its Member States is one of the cornerstones of the new [European Consensus on Development](#). Ahead of the visit, Commissioner **Mimica** commented: “A regular dialogue between the European Union and our Member States on development and international cooperation is indispensable to tackle major global challenges. Poverty, gender inequality, migration and mobility, and the protection of human rights are just a few examples where more joint-up action is needed to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. Today we are already working with Italy in 35 developing countries, covering all continents. I want to see us step up this common effort further, to increase our collective impact and to support effectively our partners’ sustainable development strategies.” The two-day event, hosted by the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, will see a number of high level attendants, including the President of the Central African Republic, Mr Faustin-Archange Touadera. (for more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)

## **25 years of the Single Market: Commissioner Bieńkowska participates in a Citizens’ Dialogue in Maastricht**

Tomorrow, Commissioner for the Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** will engage with some 200 students in Maastricht (The Netherlands) to discuss: *What benefits does the Single Market bring to you? What future do Europe’s citizens want for the Single Market? Is the Single Market fit for the digital age and is it sustainable?* The debate takes place against the backdrop of the [debate on the Future of Europe initiated by President Juncker](#) and coincides with the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Single Market, one of Europe’s greatest achievements. The Commission has been delivering on the [Single Market Strategy](#) – a roadmap to unlock the full potential of the Single Market and make it the launch pad for European companies to thrive in the global economy (see [press release](#) on the most recent initiative). More broadly, the Commission is acting to further develop the Single Market with a focus on energy markets, the digital single market, fair labour markets, less fragmentation in financial markets, and fighting tax avoidance. The [Citizens’ Dialogue](#) takes place in Maastricht from 11:00 to 12:30 CET and can be watched live [here](#). Join #EUdialogues (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040; Maud Noyon – Tel. +32 229-80379)

## **Commissioner Gabriel in Budapest for Regional Digital Summit and Citizens’ Dialogue**

Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** will be in Budapest, Hungary tomorrow to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> [Regional Digital Summit](#) as well as in a [Citizens’ Dialogue on fake news and digital Europe](#). The Citizens’ Dialogue will start at 15:40 CET in the House of the European Union in Budapest. The event will be livestreamed [here](#). The Commissioner will additionally meet Hungary’s Minister for National Economy Mihály Varga and



hold a discussion with Secretary of State for European Union Affairs Szabolcs Takács. The Commissioner will also meet Hungarian stakeholders to discuss illegal content online. At the Regional Digital Summit, Commissioner **Gabriel** will deliver a speech and participate in a ministerial panel discussion on digital economy. At noon, the high-level guests of the Summit will sign a Memorandum of Understanding on the development of regional urban mobility platform. *(For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)*

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