

Remarks by Vice-President Dombrovskis at the ECOFIN press conference

Thank you, Toomas.

First, let me reiterate the European Commission's strong commitment to the fight against tax evasion and aggressive tax planning.

During this mandate, we have tabled many proposals. Together, they can change the current state of affairs. Several of those proposals have already been agreed.

But some are still outstanding, pending agreement from Member States. We hope that the Paradise leaks will help to create a new political momentum to reach the unanimity required for an agreement.

For example, we call on Member States to take forward our June proposal for transparency measures for so-called tax 'intermediaries'. Recent revelations confirm the powerful role that tax planners and tax advisers – or intermediaries – play in tax avoidance and aggressive tax planning strategies worldwide.

Recent reports show how EU legislation can be circumvented by clever schemes and structures put in place by advisers to avoid paying for example VAT.

This is why we insist that national authorities need to receive information on potentially aggressive tax planning schemes before they have been implemented.

Our view is that an agreement on our proposal for public country by country reporting should significantly increase tax transparency and shine a spotlight on big corporations that embrace aggressive tax planning.

We regret that Ministers could not reach a political agreement on the VAT e-commerce package today. But good progress was made and hopefully the deal can be sealed at the December ECOFIN.

Today we also discussed the EU blacklist for non-cooperative tax jurisdictions. The work on the list is on-going as planned. We call for an agreement on the list at the 5 December ECOFIN, but we also call for an agreement on countermeasures against those jurisdictions that will end up on the list. Only then this exercise will be credible and meaningful.

Today we also discussed the on-going legislative business as regards financial services. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Estonian Presidency for their stewardship in reaching successful political agreements on the Bank Creditor Hierarchy, IFRS 9 and large exposures. Now it is important to maintain this positive spirit and work towards a general

approach on the rest of the Banking package, ideally by the end of the year.

Speaking of tackling remaining weaknesses in our banking systems, Commissioner Jourova and I explained how our Restructuring Directive, which aims at giving second change for viable enterprises, could also help to tackle high levels of non-performing loans. It can also help the on-going benchmarking exercise of national loan enforcement and insolvency regimes.

Issues related to insolvency and loan enforcement regimes are fundamental for our overall Action Plan for tackling non-performing loans. Finance ministers were broadly supportive of this initiative and we hope for swift adoption of this directive by the Justice and Home Affairs Council.

Today we presented to Ministers our proposals to review the European Supervisory Authorities and the European Systemic Risk Board. To reach our goal of a truly integrated European financial market, we need EU supervision that can support such a market. We need to ensure supervisory convergence. We also need a supervisory architecture that can weather new challenges such as Brexit, or seize opportunities such as the fast development of Fintech.

Today's discussion showed a broad support for Capital Markets Union and the need of supervisory convergence. But the devil is always in the detail.

A number of points were raised by Finance Ministers. So the next step is for technical teams to screen the Commission proposals in the coming months.

Finally, we welcome the Council conclusions on EU statistics. We will now consider the recommendations in detail and, where necessary, will improve our action further.

We share the same objective – to ensure regular, high quality and official statistics at Member States and EU level. They are indispensable for good decision-making in the European Union.

Reliable statistics are essential for European economic governance as they help create trust among Member States. This is why ensuring the independence of statistical offices in each and every EU country matters so much.

Thank you.

[Daily News 07 /11/ 2017](#)

Future of Europe: Commission brings together religious leaders to discuss a values-based and effective Union

Commission First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** today hosted the 13th annual high-level meeting with religious leaders from across Europe, alongside European Parliament First Vice-President Mairead McGuinness. The annual high-level meeting is part of the regular dialogue with churches, religious communities, philosophical and non-confessional organisations foreseen by Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty, and entrusted to First Vice-President **Timmermans** by President **Juncker**. This year's meeting took place against the background of the ongoing debate on the Future of Europe, launched by the Commission's White Paper on 1 March 2017. First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: *"The future of Europe is in the hands of its citizens. Shaping that future is our collective responsibility, our shared values our compass. The regular dialogue with confessional organisations, like the one with non-confessional organisations, allows us to address the issue of our common future from different perspectives. It is through inclusive dialogue that we can chart the best course for our common future."* The participants discussed the human dimension of Europe, in particular its social and environmental dimensions and the principles of solidarity, social justice and sustainability. The leaders present were invited to work with the Commission throughout the reflection process on the future of Europe and to bring their respective communities into the debate. The press conference can be watched on [EbS](#) and the press release is available [online](#). (For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265; Tim McPhie – Tel.: +32 229 58602; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444)

EU reduced CO2 emissions by 23% – while economy grew by 53%

Greenhouse gas emissions in the European Union were reduced by 23% between 1990 and 2016, while the economy grew by 53% over the same period, the latest Commission's report reveals as this year's UN Climate Conference [COP23](#) kick-start in Bonn. The [report](#) "Two years after Paris – Progress towards meeting the EU's climate commitments" shows that while economic growth has recently picked up, the EU remains firmly on track to meet its 2020 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target. Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel **Arias Cañete** said: *"Two years after the adoption of the Paris Agreement, the EU remains fully committed to reducing its domestic emissions by at least 40% between 1990 and 2030. We are on track to meet our 2020 target and close to finalising our climate legislation for the next decade. Our emissions decline while the economy grows, largely thanks to innovative technologies, showing that growth and climate action can go hand in hand. However, there are still challenges ahead, as transport emissions in the EU continue to grow. This is why the Commission will present tomorrow measures to slash emissions from cars and vans in the decade starting 2021"*. Under the [Paris agreement](#), the EU has committed to cut CO2 emissions by at least 40% by 2030 while modernising the EU's economy and delivering on jobs and growth for all European citizens. In 2016, EU emissions decreased by 0.7% while GDP grew by 1.9%. The EU is one of the major economies with the lowest per capita emissions, and the emissions per unit of GDP continue to fall. The progress report also looks at the EU's contribution to international climate action. In 2016, the EU and its Member States continued to be a major provider of [climate finance](#) to

developing countries, increasing their overall contribution to last year reach EUR 20.2 billion. More information on the Commission's website [here](#). (For more information: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel.: +32 229 56186; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)

Investment Plan provides financial boost for medium-sized companies in Finland

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has signed an agreement with OP Bank worth €150 million under the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the core of the Investment Plan for Europe. This guarantee agreement under the EFSI allows OP to lend up to €300 million to companies with a minimum turnover of €30 million. Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, said: *"The Investment Plan for Europe has proven incredibly successful when it comes to providing financing to small and medium-sized companies in Europe. In relative terms, Finnish SMEs have benefitted less from EFSI financing than SMEs in many other Member States. Therefore, I'm very happy that thanks to this new €150 million agreement with OP Bank, medium-sized Finnish businesses will benefit from the Investment Plan, and as a result, be able to expand their operations and create new jobs across the country."* (For full press releases on all EFSI projects see the [Investment Plan website](#) and for more information contact Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

Commission proposes fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and North Sea for 2018

Today the Commission presents its proposal for fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and the North Sea for 2018. The Commission proposes quotas for 78 stocks: for 53 stocks the fishing quota is either increased or remains the same and for 25 stocks is reduced. The fishing opportunities, or Total Allowable Catches (TACs), are quotas set for most commercial fish stocks that keep the stocks healthy, while allowing the fishing industry to profit from fishing the highest amount of fish. As the size of some key fish stocks is increasing – notably for sole in the North Sea, northern hake and southern horse mackerel – so is the profitability of the fishing sector, with an estimated EUR 1.5 billion profit for 2017. Karmenu **Vella**, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said: *"Our fleet is becoming more profitable and that is because some of the EU's key fish stocks are healthier and more abundant. The perseverance of the fishermen and the responsible fisheries management decisions stand to prove that sustainability and profitability can go hand in hand. That being said now is not the time for complacency. We must continue our joint efforts to manage our seas and oceans in a way that works for the environment, for the economy and for future generations."* Today's proposal will be submitted for discussion and decision by the Member States at the December Fisheries Council (11-12 December in Brussels), to be applied as from 1 January 2018. [Press release](#) and [MEMO](#) available online. (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Iris Petsa – Tel.: +32 229 93321)

Commission awards Paris as most innovative European city in 2017

Today, the European Commission awarded the 2017 European Capital of Innovation ([iCapital](#)) prize of €1,000,000 to Paris. The award, granted under the EU's research and innovation programme Horizon 2020, recognises Paris for its inclusive innovation strategy. Tel Aviv and Tallinn were selected as runners-up, and were both awarded €100,000. Innovation Commissioner Carlos **Moedas** announced the results at the [Web Summit](#) in Lisbon. He said: "Cities are not defined by their size and population, but by the breadth of their vision and the power bestowed upon their citizens. Some cities are not afraid to experiment. They are not afraid to involve their citizens in developing and testing out new ideas. These are the cities that empower their citizens. Today we are here to acknowledge these cities." Over the last decade, Paris has built more than 100, 000 square meters of incubators, and hosts now the world's largest start-up campus. Tallinn has been awarded for its initiative to act as a testing ground for potential breakthrough technologies such as self-driving cars or parcel delivery robots. Tel Aviv has set up a Smart City Urban Lab that links up innovative start-ups with leading technology companies. During their participation at the Web Summit, Commissioner **Moedas** and Commissioner for Competition Margrethe **Vestager** took the opportunity to promote another Commission award in a [Facebook Live chat](#): the EU Prize for Women Innovators 2018. It supports gender equality in innovation and emphasizes the importance of creating positive role models for women innovators and entrepreneurs. [Applications](#) are still open until 15 November. A press release on the [iCapital Award winners](#) and information on the [EU Prize for Women Innovators 2018](#) are available online. (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040; Maud Noyon – Tel. +32 229-80379)

La Commission approuve une nouvelle indication géographique protégée de Croatie

La Commission européenne a approuvé la demande d'inscription du «[Slavonski kulen](#)»/«[Slavonski kulin](#)» dans le registre des indications géographiques protégées (IGP). Le Slavonski kulen, aussi appelé Slavonski kulin, est un saucisson sec fabriqué chaque année du 1^{er} novembre au 31 mars dans la région croate de Slavonie dans le nord-est du pays. La production de ce saucisson dans la région s'appuie sur une tradition de plus de 200 ans. Ce produit constitue une importante source de revenus pour certaines exploitations agricoles de la région. Le «[Slavonski kulen](#)»/«[Slavonski kulin](#)» est traditionnellement dégusté lors de fêtes religieuses, de jours fériés ou de fêtes familiales. Cette nouvelle appellation va rejoindre plus de 1410 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)

La politique de cohésion de l'UE protège l'environnement et la santé des

Lettons

Près de 25 millions d'euros du [Fonds européen de développement régional](#) vont contribuer à l'assainissement d'étangs contenant du goudron acide à Inčukalns, à 35 km au Nord de Riga, en Lettonie. Le projet vise à empêcher les infiltrations acides dans les nappes phréatiques et à réhabiliter le site pour protéger la santé des habitants ainsi que l'environnement. Un système de surveillance de la qualité de l'eau des nappes phréatiques et de l'environnement sera mis en place, pour permettre la ré-exploitation du site. La commissaire à la politique régionale Corina **Crețu** a déclaré: *“Voici un nouvel exemple de la valeur ajoutée de l'Europe; je me réjouis de savoir que les habitants d'Inčukalns vivront dans un environnement plus sain grâce à nos investissements.”* Plus d'informations sur la politique de Cohésion en Lettonie sont disponibles sur la [Plateforme Open Data](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

L'UE investit pour un meilleur accès à l'eau potable en Roumanie

Plus de 17 millions d'euros du [Fonds de Cohésion](#) sont investis dans quatre projets d'infrastructures de gestion et distribution de l'eau en Roumanie. La Commissaire à la politique régionale Corina **Crețu** a déclaré: *“Un meilleur accès à l'eau potable, c'est un quotidien transformé pour des milliers d'habitants. Je suis fière que la politique de Cohésion investisse pour une qualité de vie meilleure, partout en Europe.”* 7 millions d'euros financeront l'achèvement des travaux sur les réseaux de distribution et de collecte de l'eau dans des agglomérations urbaines du comté de Gorj, au Sud-Ouest du pays, notamment dans le chef-lieu, Târgu Jiu. Dans le comté de Suceava, au Nord de la Roumanie, 5 millions d'euros sont investis dans l'extension du système de gestion et traitement de l'eau. 7766 habitants de plus bénéficieront ainsi d'un accès à une eau plus saine à la fin des travaux. 2,8 millions d'euros serviront à achever la rénovation et extension du réseau de distribution d'eau et d'égouts dans huit zones urbaines du comté d'Ilfov, qui entoure Bucarest. Enfin, dans la région de Constanța-Ialomița, 2,5 millions d'euros contribueront à achever la réhabilitation et l'extension des infrastructures de gestion et distribution de l'eau dans 19 communes, dont vont bénéficier 24 000 habitants de plus. (Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

Education: new report documents the broad scope of citizenship education across European countries

A [report](#) published by the European Commission's [Eurydice Network](#) today provides a comprehensive picture of citizenship education in schools across Europe. Covering 42 education systems including those of the 28 EU Member States, it confirms that citizenship education is part of the national curricula for general education in all countries and that it is about far

more than simply teaching students about a country's constitutional structure. Tibor **Navracsics**, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *"This report provides important new evidence on how schools build up shared values in our societies by teaching pupils and students the necessary skills for acting responsibly. Its publication is timely as we prepare to present shortly a draft Council Recommendation on promoting social inclusion and common EU values through education and non-formal learning."* Many countries have revised curricula on citizenship education whilst a few have increased the number of teaching hours; some have upgraded teacher training and improved guidance and support material. However, gaps are also identified, for example the lack of centralised regulations or recommendations with regard to citizenship education for prospective teachers in a large number of education systems. The report also contains four case studies on recent policy initiatives in the area of citizenship education in Belgium (Flemish Community), Estonia, France and Austria. For more information, see this [factsheet](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: +32 229 56184)

State aid: Commission approves prolongation of Portuguese guarantee scheme

The European Commission has authorised, under EU State aid rules, the prolongation of a guarantee scheme for credit institutions in Portugal until 7 May 2018. The Commission found the extension of the measures to be in line with its [2013 Banking Communication](#), according to which the Commission can authorise schemes providing for liquidity measures for banks, which do not have a capital shortfall. The scheme [was initially approved in October 2008](#) and prolonged several times, the [last time in February 2017](#). The Commission approved the prolongation of the scheme because the measure is well targeted, proportionate and limited in time and scope. In line with the 2013 Banking Communication, the Commission is authorising guarantee schemes on banks' liabilities for periods of six months. Each prolongation is based on a review of the developments in financial markets and the scheme's effectiveness. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the reference SA.48550. (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

State aid: Commission approves prolongation of Portuguese Guarantee Scheme on EIB lending

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, a prolongation of a Portuguese guarantee scheme on European Investment Bank (EIB) lending until 7 May 2018. The scheme covers State guarantees to banks that guarantee EIB loans granted to companies in Portugal. The Commission found the prolongation of the scheme to be in line with its [2013 Banking Communication](#) because it is well targeted, proportionate and limited in time and scope. It was [initially approved on 27 June 2013](#) and prolonged several times, the last time [in February 2017](#). The prolonged scheme will allow the continuation of funding provided by the EIB to the real economy and prevent the disruption of the credit granted by the EIB through the banks participating in the scheme. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the reference SA.48549. (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229

80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

Eurostat: September 2017 compared with August 2017 – Volume of retail trade up by 0.7% in euro area, up by 0.3% in EU28

In September 2017 compared with August 2017, the seasonally adjusted volume of retail trade rose by 0.7% in the euro area (EA19) and by 0.3% in the EU28, according to estimates from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. In August, the retail trade volume decreased by 0.1% in the euro area, while it rose by 0.5% in the EU28. In September 2017 compared with September 2016, the calendar adjusted retail sales index increased by 3.7% in the euro area and by 3.5% in the EU28. A Eurostat press release is [available online](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040; Maud Noyon – Tel. +32 229-80379)

STATEMENTS

Statement by Commissioner Navracsics on the 150th Anniversary of the Birth of Marie Skłodowska-Curie

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Marie Skłodowska-Curie, Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *“On 7 November 2017, we celebrate the 150th anniversary of Marie Skłodowska-Curie’s birth. She was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and the only female scientist who was awarded the Prize twice, in both physics and chemistry. She discovered two new elements, polonium and radium, which led to the founding of the discipline of atomic physics. Marie Skłodowska-Curie succeeded in studying abroad when almost all universities were closed to women. She excelled in her scientific studies and research in male-dominated fields and travelled the world to acquire more knowledge. Long before the concept of a work-life balance existed in our minds, Marie Skłodowska-Curie managed to combine ground-breaking scientific achievements with raising a family.”* The full statement is available [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: +32 229 56184)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Arias Cañete meets Governor of California Jerry Brown

Building on concrete efforts by both California and the EU to implement carbon markets and zero-carbon transportation policies, and in light of the global momentum generated by the Paris Agreement, Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel **Arias Cañete** and Governor of California Jerry Brown met today in Brussels and agreed to step up cooperation on emissions trading and zero-carbon transportation. On carbon markets, the EU

and California will hold regular political and technical dialogues on the design and implementation of their carbon markets, including cooperation with other carbon markets such as China. Hosted by China's Special Representative on Climate Change Affairs, Commissioner **Arias Cañete** and Governor Brown will open a high-level event on carbon markets and the role of carbon pricing in China on 14 November at COP 23 in Bonn. The EU and California will also work together to scale zero-carbon transportation solutions globally, including by bringing new commitments and new partners to the Global Climate Action Summit which California will host 12-14 September 2018. The Summit will emphasize how subnational actors have already contributed to emissions reductions, spur bold new commitments, and galvanize a global movement for everyone to do more. Following today's meeting, Climate Action and Energy Commissioner Miguel **Arias Cañete** said: *"The EU and California are natural partners in the fight against climate change and have been pioneers in the early years of carbon markets and clean mobility. Today Governor Brown and I agreed to strengthen our cooperation so that we remain leaders in these areas – both of which will be key for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement."* The European Union is the largest carbon market in the world, with its emissions trading system a key part of the EU's policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while California also has a well-established carbon market, that is linked with markets in Quebec and Ontario. The EU's low-emission mobility strategy for the transport sector is also a key element of the bloc's climate policy, with a major new proposal on CO₂ emission standards for cars and vans to be considered by the Commission tomorrow. California introduced its first regulation to accelerate the uptake of zero-emissions vehicles in 1990 and its current standards have been adopted by nine other US States. The state also has a goal to put more than 1.5 million zero-emission vehicles on its roads by 2025. More information on the [Commission's website](#). (For more information: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel.: +32 229 56186; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)

Commissioner Moscovici in Berlin, Germany

Pierre **Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, will be in Berlin tomorrow, 8 November to attend the [French-German Business Forum 2017](#). He will also hold a number of meetings, including with Wolfgang Schäuble, President of the Bundestag; Peter Altmaier, Federal Minister of Finance; Christian Lindner, Chair of the Free Democratic Party; and Cem Özdemir, Co-Chair of the Alliance 90/The Greens party. (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976; Patrick McCullough – Tel.: +32 229 87183)

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

Commission proposes fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and North Sea for 2018

Today the Commission presents its proposal for fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and the North Sea for 2018. The Commission proposes quotas for 78 stocks: for 53 stocks the fishing quota is either increased or remains the same and for 25 stocks is reduced. The fishing opportunities, or Total Allowable Catches (TACs), are quotas set for most commercial fish stocks that keep the stocks healthy, while allowing the fishing industry to profit from fishing the highest amount of fish. As the size of some key fish stocks is increasing – notably for sole in the North Sea, northern hake and southern horse mackerel – so is the profitability of the fishing sector, with an estimated EUR 1.5 billion profit for 2017.

Karmenu **Vella**, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said: *“Our fleet is becoming more profitable and that is because some of the EU’s key fish stocks are healthier and more abundant. The perseverance of the fishermen and the responsible fisheries management decisions stand to prove that sustainability and profitability can go hand in hand. That being said now is not the time for complacency. We must continue our joint efforts to manage our seas and oceans in a way that works for the environment, for the economy and for future generations.”*

The EU has made important progress over recent years, with 44 stocks now fished at Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) levels, up from only 5 in 2009. The objective under the [Common Fisheries Policy](#) is to have all stocks fished at sustainable levels by 2020. The process towards this goal takes into account socioeconomic and environmental factors. As the legally binding deadline for the 2020 target draws closer, the margin for setting quotas that are not sustainable is narrowing. The Commission is working with Member States to support the fishermen in this transition.

Today’s proposal will be submitted for discussion and decision by the Member States at the December Fisheries Council (11-12 December in Brussels), to be applied as from 1 January 2018.

Details of the proposal

The Commission proposes fishing quotas on the basis of independent scientific advice received from the [International Council for the Exploration of the Sea](#) (ICES).

The proposal covers stocks managed by the EU alone and stocks managed in cooperation with third countries, such as Norway, or through [Regional Fisheries Management Organisations](#) (RFMOs). International negotiations for many of the stocks concerned are still ongoing and some further stocks are awaiting scientific advice. For these, the figures will be included at a

later stage.

Later this autumn, the Commission will propose additional quotas, the so-called 'quota top-ups', for fisheries that in 2018 fall under the [landing obligation](#), which requires that all catches of regulated commercial species on-board are landed and counted against quota. The allowed quota is thereby increased to facilitate the transition to the new system of 'no discards'. The exact top-ups per fishery will be determined on the basis of scientific advice. The proposal does not take into account the forthcoming TAC top-ups.

- **Proposed increases:** For 19 stocks, such as **Norway lobster** in the North Sea, 4 **sole** stocks and 3 **plaice** stocks in North Western waters, and **megrims** in South Western waters, the Commission proposes to increase the Total Allowable Catch. The increases also include the socioeconomically important **sole** stock in the Bay of Biscay that has followed a management plan led by the industry, and can now be increased. The same applies to **sole** in the Eastern Channel and the Western Atlantic stock of horse mackerel which can also be increased.
- **Stocks that can be fished as before:** 14 stocks are kept at the same level as last year.
- **Proposed decreases:** Decreases are proposed for 25 stocks. For 15 of these, the decrease proposed is less than 20%. For **plaice** in the Celtic sea and **whiting** in West of Scotland and in the Irish Sea a zero TAC is proposed.
- A proposal to prohibit fishing of **eels** is introduced for all Union waters, following scientific advice emphasising the importance of ceasing all fisheries that target spawners, until there is clear evidence of improvement of the state of the stock.
- **Stocks for which scientific data are lacking:** For cases where data are not sufficient to properly estimate the stock's size, the Commission proposal follows scientific advice from ICES, i.e. cuts or increases of a maximum of 20%.

For more information

See **tables below** for details on today's proposals for the Atlantic and the North Sea

[TACs and quotas](#)

[Questions and Answers](#) on Commission's proposal on fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and North Sea for 2018

Scientific advice: the proposed TACs take due account of the [scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea \(ICES\) and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries \(STECF\)](#).

Stakeholders were also consulted, based on the [Commission's Consultation document](#)

[Multiannual management plans](#)

[Map of fishing areas](#)

Note: The tables below only list EU stocks not shared with third countries

Table 1: Stocks with proposals for increased TAC

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	final TAC in 2017, incl top-up	TAC 2018 (Proposal, excl top-up)	TAC change: 2017 – 2018 (Proposal)
Cod	Gadus morhua	7a	146	292	100%
Common sole	Solea solea	7d	2724	2933	8%
Common sole	Solea solea	8ab	3420	3621	6%
Common sole	Solea solea	7e	1178	1202	2%
Common sole	Solea solea	7fg	845	901	7%
Greater silver smelt	Argentina silus	Union waters of 3 and 4	1028	1234	20%
Greater silver smelt	Argentina silus	Union and international waters of 5, 6 and 7	3884	4661	20%
Haddock	Melanogrammus	7a	2615	2796	7%
Herring	Clupea	7a	4127	7016	70%
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	Union waters of 2a, 4a; 6, 7a-c, 7e-k, 8abde; Union and international waters of 5b; international waters of 12 and 14	83829	101070	21%
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	8c	13271	16000	21%
Megrims	Lepidorhombus	8c, 9 and 10; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	1159	1387	20%
Norway lobster	Nephrops	Union waters of 2a and 4	20034	20851	4%
Plaice	Pleuronectes	7a	1098	1793	63%
Plaice	Pleuronectes	7de	10022	10360	3%
Plaice	Pleuronectes	7fg	405	511	26%
Tusk	Brosme brosme	3a, subdivision 22-32	29	31	7%

Tusk	Brosme brosme	4	235	251	7%
Tusk	Brosme brosme	Union and international waters of 5, 6 and 7	3860	4130	7%

Table 2: Stocks with no changes in TAC⁽¹⁾

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	final TAC in 2017, incl top-up	TAC 2018 (Proposal, excl top-up)	TAC change: 2017 – 2018 (Proposal)
Cod	Gadus morhua	Kattegat	525	525	0%
Cod	Gadus morhua	6a; Union and international waters of 5b east of 12° 00' W	0	0	0%
Common sole	Solea solea	7a	40	40	0%
Greenland halibut	Reinhardtius hippoglossoides	Union waters of 2a and 4, international waters of 5b and 6	2500	2500	0%
Herring	Clupea harengus	Union and international waters of 5b, 6b and 6aN	4170	4170	0%
Herring	Clupea	6a (S), 7b, 7c	1630	1630	0%
Lemon sole and witch	Microstomus kitt and Glyptocephalus cynoglossus	Union waters of 2a and 4	6391	6391	0%
Ling	Molva molva	4 (EU)	3494	3494	0%
Ling	Molva molva	Union and int. waters of 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14	20396	20396	0%
Norway lobster	Nephrops	8c	0	0	0%
Picked dogfish	Squalus	Union and international waters of 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 14	270	270	0%
Pollack	Pollachius pollachius	7	12146	12141	0%
Pollack	Pollachius pollachius	8abde	1482	1482	0%

Whiting	Merlangius	8	2540	2540	0%
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Table 3: Stocks with proposals for decreased TAC

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	Final TAC in 2017, incl top-up	TAC 2018 (Proposal, excl top-up)	TAC change: 2017 – 2018 (Proposal)
Anchovy	Engraulis	9 and 10; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	12500	7115	-43%
Anglerfish	Lophius	7	33516	29534	-12%
Anglerfish	Lophius	8abde	8980	7914	-12%
Anglerfish	Lophius	8c, 9, 10, CECAF 34.1.1	3955	3879	-2%
Blue ling	Molva dypterygia	Union and int. waters of 5b, 6, 7	11314	10763	-5%
Blue ling	Molva dypterygia	Int. waters of 12	357	286	-20%
Boarfish	Caproidae	Union and international waters of 6, 7 and 8	27288	20380	-25%
Common sole	Solea solea	Union waters of 2a and 4	16123	14027	-13%
Common sole	Solea solea	3a; Union waters of Subdivisions 22-32	551	336	-39%
Haddock	Melanogrammus aeglefinus	Union and international waters of 6b, 12 and 14	4690	4202	-10%
Hake (overall N. TAC)	Merluccius	Overall northern TACs (3a / 2a and 4 / 5b, 6, 7, 12 and 14 / 8abde)	119765	97581	-19%
Hake	Merluccius	8c, 9 and 10; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	10520	7366	-30%
Herring	Clupea	7ghjk	14467	5445	-62%
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	Union waters of 4b, 4c and 7d	18247	15179	-17%
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	9	73349	55555	-24%
Megrims	Lepidorhombus	Union waters of 2a and 4	2639	2526	-4%
Megrims	Lepidorhombus	8abde	1352	1218	-10%
Megrims	Lepidorhombus	Union and international waters of 5b; 6;	5682	4691	-17%

Megrims	Lepidorhombus	7	13691	12310	-10%
Norway lobster	Nephrops	3a; Union waters of Subdivisions 22-32	12715	11738	-8%
Plaice	Pleuronectes	7hjk	128	0	-100%
Plaice	Pleuronectes platessa	Kattegat	2343	1467	-37%
Sprat	Sprattus	7de	4120	3296	-20%
Whiting	Merlangius	6; Union and international waters of 5b; international waters of 12 and 14	213	0	-100%
Whiting	Merlangius	7a	80	0	-100%

Table 4: Stocks subject to late advice or ongoing negotiations [\[2\]](#)

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	final TAC in 2017
Anchovy	Engraulis	8	33000
Anglerfish	Lophiidae	Union waters of 2a and 4	13521
Anglerfish	Lophius	6; Union and international waters of 5b; international waters of 12 and 14	7650
Blue ling	Molva dypterygia	Union and int. waters of 5b, 6, 7	11314
Cod	Gadus morhua	7b, 7c, 7e-k, 8, 9 and 10; Union waters of CECAF	2830
Haddock	Melanogrammus	5b,6a	3697
Haddock	Melanogrammus	7b-k, 8, 9 and 10; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	7751
Norway lobster	Nephrops	6; Union and international waters of 5b	16407
Norway lobster	Nephrops	7	25356
Norway lobster	Nephrops	7 – Porcupine Bank special condition	3100
Norway lobster	Nephrops	8abde	4160
Norway lobster	Nephrops	9 and 10; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	336

Norway pout	Trisopterus esmarki	3a, Union waters of 2a and 4	176250
Picked dogfish	Squalus	Union and international waters of 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 14	270
Sandeel	Ammodytes	Union waters of 2a, 3a and 4	486.115
Skates and rays	Rajidae	Union waters of 2a and 4	1378
Skates and rays	Rajidae	Union waters of 3a	47
Skates and rays	Rajidae	Union waters of 6ab, 7a-c and 7e-k	8434
Skates and rays	Rajidae	Union waters of 8 and 9	3762
Skates and rays	Rajidae	7d	1063
Sprat	Sprattus sprattus	Union waters of 2a and 4	176411
Turbot and Brill	Psetta maxima & Scopthalmus rhombus	Union waters of 2a and 4	4937
Whiting	Merlangius	7b-k	27500

Table 5: Stocks for which the TAC is delegated to an individual member state

Common name	Scientific name	TAC Unit	Delegated to
Herring	Clupea	VI Clyde(1)	United Kingdom
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	CECAF(Canaries)	Spain
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	CECAF(Madeira)	Portugal
Horse Mackerel	Trachurus	X,CECAF(Azores)	Portugal
Penaeus shrimps	Penaeus	French Guyana	France

[1] This table [Table 2] does not include the 20 stocks included in the Joint Statement by the Council and the Commission "Ad statement stable stocks" (see Council document PECHE 491, 15502/15 REV1).

[2] Final TAC figures for 2017 are including transfers, and reflect the total TAC set by the EU for a certain stock

Questions and Answers on the Commission's proposal for Atlantic and North Sea fish quotas (TACs) in 2018

How many fishing quotas (also referred to as Total Allowable Catches or TACs) are there in the Atlantic and North Sea?

Fishing opportunities for 78 TACs are being proposed today by the Commission for the Atlantic and North Sea:

- 36 TACs are based on Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) advice
- 42 TACs concern so-called data-limited stocks. This means that scientists cannot make a full assessment. Of these 42 TACs, the Commission is proposing to keep 28 at the same level of 2017 (20 are included in the agreement with the Council to keep them stable unless scientific advice shows that the stock is deteriorating. These stocks are by-catches in mixed fisheries and the TACs are rather small).

The remaining TACs are to be filled in at a later stage.

Why is it important that quotas are in line with Maximum Sustainable Yield levels?

Proposing fishing quotas or TACs at Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) levels means phasing out unsustainable fishing. Fishing at this level allows the fishing industry to take the highest possible amount of fish from the sea while keeping fish stocks healthy.

In December 2014 the EU set 36 TACs in line with MSY. In December 2016 this number was increased to 44 TACs. This is coming from a situation where 5 TACs were set in line with MSY in 2009. The Commission is again proposing to reach MSY exploitation rates by 2018 for all the stocks for which scientists have given advice. The number of Total Allowable Catches (TACs) in line with MSY will ultimately depend on the decision made by the Council in December.

What is the monetary value of the 2018 proposal compared to this year's quotas?

As several high value or high volume TACs (e.g. some nephrops and sole TACs) are still missing from the proposal, comparing the monetary value to last year's quotas is not possible. However, the overall value of 2017 TACs (for the Baltic, North Sea and Atlantic) was around EUR 5 billion, corresponding to EUR 1.5 billion in profits.

What's new in the fishing opportunities for 2018?

Since 2015, fish that in the past would have been discarded has to be landed. This transition is implemented gradually, starting with fishermen in the pelagic and industrial fisheries and in fisheries of the Baltic Sea who have been asked to land all catches as of 1 January 2015. Fishermen in the North Sea and the Atlantic have been asked to land all catches of certain demersal species, since 1 January 2016.

The demersal landing obligation will be extended further in 2018, as defined in the [‘discard plans’](#). This applies for example to additional fisheries for whiting and saithe in the North Sea, the fisheries for saithe, black scabbardfish and roundnose grenadier in the North-Western waters and additional fisheries for anglerfish, plus fisheries for black scabbardfish, red seabream and blue whiting in the South-Western waters. To compensate the industry for the extra effort in adapting to the landing obligation, the Commission proposes the so-called “TAC top-ups” for fish stocks that fall under the landing obligation. The “top-ups” reflect the level of catches formerly discarded. This approach stems from the Basic Regulation article 16, para 2. The demersal fisheries required to land all fish in 2018 were agreed by the three regional groups of North Western Atlantic, South Western Atlantic and North Sea. These provisions are incorporated into EU law through the delegated acts on ‘discard plans’.

How will the calculation of TAC top-ups be done?

The TAC top-ups will be determined on the basis of how much the fleets that come under the landing obligation from 2017 onwards contribute to total catches and discards. When calculating the TAC top-ups this will also take into account the ‘de minimis’ percentages of discards which will still be allowed. ‘De minimis’ can be applied where it is very difficult to increase selectivity or where the costs of handling unwanted catches would be disproportionate. The ‘de minimis’ exemption is deducted from the top-up in order not to increase overall fishing mortality.

The Commission has asked the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) to analyse all fleet segments on the basis of expected discards. Whenever discard data and information per fleet segment are incomplete, the Commission asks STECF to advise on the risks associated with using the discard average given by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) for the whole stock to calculate TAC top-ups. This risk analysis will guide the Commission’s proposals for TAC adjustments. If on the other hand information on catches and discards by fleet segment exists, TAC adjustments can be calculated without the risk of increasing fishing mortality.

Why are “TAC top-ups” not yet included in the Commission proposal?

The Commission has asked for advice on the appropriate level of top-ups to the advisory body STECF. The advice is expected at the beginning of November. Therefore for the stocks that will be under the landing obligation in 2018 only the basic fishing opportunities, stemming from the ICES advice, are included in the Commission proposal. The Commission will table a non-paper with all the TAC top-ups as soon as possible after receiving the advice from

STECF. This approach will allow discussions to start as soon as possible in preparation of the December Council.

How will the Commission avoid the ‘choking’ of certain fisheries under the landing obligation?

One of the main challenges arising from the landing obligation is the ‘choking’ phenomenon: sometimes fishing for a certain species does not make economic sense because the bycatch is high and the TAC for that bycatch is low – hence the ‘choking’ of the fishery. The Commission is consulting with stakeholders and looking for practical and sound solutions to this, solutions that must keep fishing both economically viable and sustainable. With this in mind, the TAC for **dab** and **flounder** in the North Sea was deleted this year, as it was shown to have no conservation effect. Furthermore, the tools for implementing the landing obligation should be fully explored by stakeholders, including adopting multiannual management plans to take into account the specificities of regional fisheries.

Why are there so many figures missing in the proposal?

The Commission negotiates on behalf of the EU a number of quotas for fish stocks shared with third countries (Norway, Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Russia). The same is the case for the stocks in international waters and for highly migratory species such as tuna, where the Commission negotiates fishing opportunities in regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs). The gaps will be filled as soon as these negotiations are concluded. In addition, for some stocks advice was received too late to include figures in the proposal.

For more information

[TACs and quotas](#)

[Press Release](#) on Commission’s proposal on fishing opportunities in the Atlantic and North Sea for 2018

More information on [Quota Top-ups](#)

Scientific advice: the proposed TACs take due account of the [scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea \(ICES\) and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries \(STECF\)](#).

Stakeholders were also consulted, based on the [Commission’s Consultation document](#)

[Multiannual management plans](#)

[Map of fishing areas](#)

Statement by Commissioner Tibor Navracsics: 150th Anniversary of the Birth of Marie Skłodowska-Curie – A timeless Source of Inspiration

On 7 November 2017, we celebrate the 150th anniversary of Marie Skłodowska-Curie's birth. She was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and the only female scientist who was awarded the Prize twice, in both physics and chemistry. She discovered two new elements, polonium and radium, which led to the founding of the discipline of atomic physics. Marie Skłodowska-Curie succeeded in studying abroad when almost all universities were closed to women. She excelled in her scientific studies and research in male-dominated fields and travelled the world to acquire more knowledge. Long before the concept of a work-life balance existed in our minds, Marie Skłodowska-Curie managed to combine ground-breaking scientific achievements with raising a family.

So I admire her not only for her scientific achievements but equally for her courage in breaking barriers and helping to redefine the role of women in science and society.

The successful EU programme for researchers named after Marie Skłodowska-Curie takes her example as inspiration, by supporting highly-skilled researchers, boosting their careers and helping to bring about major scientific discoveries. Over the past 20 years, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions have supported more than 100 000 researchers with EUR 11 billion, at all stages of their careers, irrespective of nationality. I am delighted that around 40% of them are women. I am proud that nine researchers involved in the programme have subsequently been awarded the Nobel Prize. Most recently, in October 2017, Richard Henderson, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions project coordinator, shared the award for Chemistry; and the EU funded project GraWIToN, which contributed to the prize for Physics with its findings*, involved 9 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions fellows.

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions are renowned for setting standards for quality training, attractive working conditions and open recruitment throughout the European Research Area. I am convinced that this programme will continue to deliver outstanding results for the benefit of society. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions play an eminent role in making Europe the leading hub for a new generation of global talent. Europe can surely count on its next generation of researchers to tackle societal challenges, following in the footsteps of Marie Skłodowska-Curie.

[MSCA Work Programme 2018-2020](#)

[Novelties in the MSCA Work Programme 2018-2020](#)

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