

European Border and Coast Guard: Agreement reached on operational cooperation with Serbia

The Agency will be able to assist Serbia in border management and carry out joint operations with Serbia, in particular in the event of a sudden change in migratory flows.

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship **Dimitris Avramopoulos** said: *“Today is another milestone in our cooperation with Serbia on migration, border management and security. I want to thank the Serbian authorities for their efforts, willingness and commitment to reach this agreement. Step by step, we are better protecting the EU’s external borders, and we are doing so also by cooperating more closely with partner countries in our direct neighbourhood and beyond. I look forward to finalising the agreement soon and hope to also swiftly conclude the ongoing negotiations with other Western Balkan partners.”*

Supporting and cooperating with non-EU countries is essential for the protection of the EU’s external borders. In 2016, the Commission strengthened the European Border and Coast Guard’s mandate to allow for deployments in the EU’s immediate neighbourhood. Last week, following President **Juncker’s [State of the Union Address 2018](#)**, the Commission proposed to [further reinforce the European Border and Coast Guard](#), giving it the right level of ambition and allowing the joint operations and deployments to take place in countries beyond the EU’s immediate neighbourhood.

Today’s status agreement with Serbia is the third agreement initialled with partner countries from the Western Balkan region, following [Albania](#) in February and [the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia](#) in July. Negotiations with Montenegro and with Bosnia and Herzegovina are ongoing.

Next Steps

The draft status agreement initialled today with Serbia will be formally signed at a later date, after both sides complete the necessary legal procedures. The European Parliament’s consent is also required.

Once the agreement enters into force, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency will be able to carry out operational activities and deploy teams in the regions of Serbia that border the EU, in agreement with both the Serbian authorities and the authorities of the bordering EU Member States.

Background

The European Border and Coast Guard Agency can already carry out deployments and joint operations on the territory of neighbouring non-EU countries, subject to the prior conclusion of a status agreement between the European

Union and the country concerned. Under the [new proposal](#) to further reinforce the European Border and Coast Guard, such agreements could also be concluded with countries beyond the EU's immediate neighbourhood.

For More Information

[Press Release](#): European Border and Coast Guard: agreement on operational cooperation reached with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

[Press Release](#): Border management: European Border and Coast Guard Agency strengthens operational cooperation with Albania

[Website](#): The European Border and Coast Guard Agency

[Website](#): Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs

[One year on: EU-Canada trade agreement delivers positive results](#)

Early signs show that the agreement is already starting to deliver for EU exporters. Commissioner Malmström will visit Canada on 26 and 27 September to take stock of progress.

Whilst in Montreal, the Commissioner will meet with Minister of International Trade Diversification, James Gordon Carr. She will attend the first EU-Canada Joint Committee on 26 September, which is the highest body for the two partners to discuss issues of interest related to the agreement. She will also visit several European and Canadian companies, discuss with company representatives who are already making use of the agreement, and speak at the Université de Montréal on 27 September.

Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** said: *"The EU-Canada trade agreement has now been in action for a year and I'm pleased with the progress made so far. The preliminary data shows there is plenty to celebrate, even at this stage. Exports are up overall and many sectors have seen impressive increases. This is great news for European businesses, big and small. As ever with these agreements, there are certain areas where we have to make sure that we thoroughly implement what has been agreed, making sure that citizens and companies can fully benefit from the new opportunities. This is something I intend to discuss with my Canadian counterparts at the Joint Committee next week. I'm happy to say that our partnership with Canada is stronger than ever – strategically as well as economically. Together, we are standing up for an open and rules-based international trading order. CETA is a clear demonstration of that."*

Early days but positive trends

In addition to removing virtually all customs duties, CETA has given a boost to the business climate between the EU and Canada, offering valuable legal certainty for EU companies looking to export. Although it is too early to draw any firm conclusions, the initial trade results are pointing in the right direction. Across the EU, the latest statistics available, covering the October 2017 to June 2018 period, suggest that exports are up by over 7% year on year.

Of these, certain sectors are doing especially well. Machinery and mechanical appliances, which make up one fifth of EU exports to Canada, are up by over 8%. Pharmaceuticals, which account for 10% of the EU exports to Canada and are up by 10%. Other important EU exports are also on the rise: furniture by 10%, perfumes/cosmetics by 11%, footwear by 8% and clothing by 11%.

In terms of agricultural products, there are also some encouraging figures: exports of fruit and nuts increased by 29%, chocolate by 34%, sparkling wine by 11% and whisky by 5%.

Companies that are already benefitting from CETA in different ways include, for example:

- The consortium of Italian San Daniele ham producers increased its sales to Canada by 35%. Exports of Italian agricultural products to Canada are up by 7.4% overall.
- Belgian chocolate company *Smet Chocolaterie* that has just opened their first shop in Ontario, Canada, to cope with extra demand for their products; thanks to scrapping of 15% import duties their sales increased by a fifth compared to year ago. European exports of chocolate to Canada are up 34% overall.
- Spanish company *Hiperbaric* making innovative machines for preserving food using high pressure. Thanks to CETA, it is easier for their workers to enter Canada temporarily to install and maintain their equipment.

Company examples from **Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden** are available [here](#).

Background

CETA offers new opportunities for EU businesses of all sizes to export to Canada. The agreement eliminated tariffs on 98% of products that the EU trades with Canada. This amounts to approximately €590 million in saved duties per year once all the tariff reductions kick in. It also gives EU companies the best access ever offered to companies from outside Canada to bid on the country's public procurement contracts – not just at the federal level but at provincial and municipal levels, too.

CETA creates new opportunities for European farmers and food producers, while fully protecting the EU's sensitive sectors. The agreement now means that 143 EU high quality food and drink products (the "geographical indications") can now be sold under their own name in Canada and are protected from imitation.

The agreement also offers better conditions for services' suppliers, greater

mobility for company employees, and a framework to enable the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, from architects to crane operators.

CETA has been provisionally in force since 21 September 2017 following its approval by EU Member States, expressed in the Council, and by the European Parliament. It will only enter into force fully and definitively, however, when all EU Member States have ratified the agreement.

The EU has 39 trade agreements with 69 countries in place. The latest agreement concluded by the EU is with Japan. The EU's trade agreements have been proven to spur European growth and jobs. One example is the EU-South Korea trade deal. Since it entered into force in 2011, EU exports to South Korea have increased by more than 55%, exports of certain agricultural products have risen by 70%, EU car sales in South Korea have tripled and the trade deficit turned into a surplus. 31 million jobs in Europe depend on exports. On average, each additional €1 billion of exports supports 14 000 jobs in the EU.

For more information

[EU exporter stories](#)

[Factsheets](#)

[Town and cities exporting to Canada](#)

[Text of CETA](#)

[More resources on CETA](#)

U.S. is now the EU's main supplier of soya beans with a share of 52%

Presidents **Juncker** and Trump issued a [EU-U.S. Joint Statement](#) following a meeting in Washington on 25 July, in which the two sides agreed to [increase trade in several areas and products, notably soya beans](#).

To monitor the evolution of trade in soya beans, [President Juncker put in place a reporting mechanism](#) according to which imports from the United States increased by 133% compared to the same period in the previous year (July-mid-September 2017).

Commissioner for Agriculture, Phil **Hogan**, said: *"I welcome the latest trade figures which show that we are delivering on the commitment made by Presidents Juncker and Trump to increase trade, particularly in relation to soya beans. This reflects both our longstanding trade relationship and the*

potential to achieve so much more by working together to build on that relationship.”

The current figures show that imports of U.S. soya beans to the EU have been continuously increasing over the past weeks:

- Compared to the first 12 weeks of the 2017 marketing year (July to mid-September), EU imports of **soya beans** from the United States are **up by 133% at 1,473,749 tonnes**. At the time of the [first reporting issued on 1 August 2018](#), and covering the first five weeks of the current marketing year, imports amounted to 360,000 tonnes, corresponding to a 280% year-on-year increase;
- In terms of the EU’s total imports of soya beans the **U.S. share is now at 52%**, compared to 25% in in the same period last year. This puts the U.S. ahead of Brazil (40%), the EU’s second main supplier, followed by Canada (2.3%), Paraguay (2.3%) and Uruguay (1.7%).

Background

The EU currently imports about 14 million tonnes of soya beans per year as a source of protein to feed our animals, including chicken, pigs and cattle, as well as for milk production. Soya beans from the US happen to be a very attractive feed option for European importers and users thanks to their competitive prices.

The data included in the report published today on soya beans, comes from the [Crops Market Observatory](#) which the European Commission launched in July 2017 to share market data and short-term analysis to ensure more transparency.

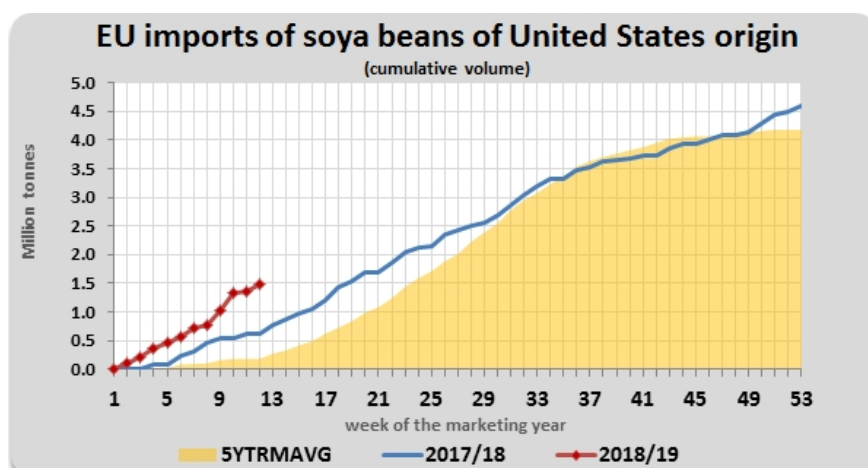
For more information

[EU-US Joint Statement](#)

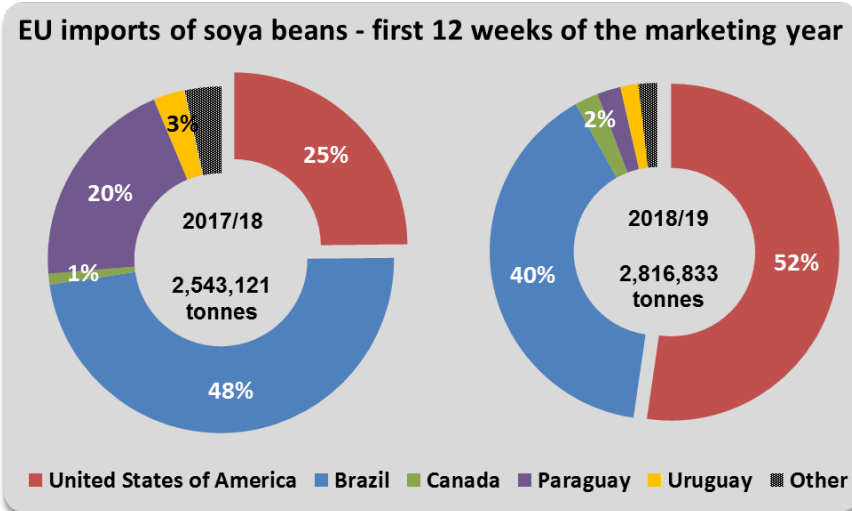
[EU-US soya bean trade](#) report

[The Crops Market Observatory](#)

Annex



EU imports of soya beans - first 12 weeks of the marketing year



EU soya beans imports

Origin	MY 2018/19		MY / MY	MY 2017/18	
	tonnes	share		tonnes	share
United States of America	1 473 749	52.3%	↑ +133.3%	631 762	24.8%
Brazil	1 114 325	39.6%	↓ -8.4%	1 217 000	47.9%
Canada	64 230	2.3%	↑ +150.2%	25 668	1.0%
Paraguay	63 755	2.3%	↓ -87.5%	508 165	20.0%
Uruguay	49 129	1.7%	↓ -33.4%	73 733	2.9%
Other	51 645	1.8%	↓ -40.5%	86 793	3.4%
Total	2 816 833		↑ +10.8%	2 543 121	

[EU steps up its strategy for connecting Europe and Asia](#)

The Joint Communication builds on the European Union's own experience of enhancing connections between its Member States, with and in other regions. With sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based connectivity at its core, the Communication will help to guide the EU's external action in this field and is a part of the implementation of its [Global Strategy](#).

The Joint Communication on elements for an EU strategy on connecting Europe and Asia is available [online](#).

"Connectivity is the way to the future. The more connected we are, the more opportunities we have – to find common political solutions and to bring economic prosperity to citizens", said High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini**. *"Our approach is the European Union's way: to establish stronger networks and strengthen partnerships for sustainable connectivity, across all sectors and based on a respect for common rules. This is the European way to tackle challenges and take opportunities, to the benefit of people in Europe and in Asia as well."*

Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, Jyrki **Katainen** said: *“We want to work with our Asian partners to improve connections between Europe and Asia, while bringing our values and approach in doing so. Infrastructure networks that will be built should be coherent, interoperable, as well as financially and environmentally sustainable. Calls for tender should be open and transparent to promote good governance and a level playing field. It is an approach that works, and one that we see a demand for among Asian countries, in our Eastern neighbourhood, the Western Balkans and beyond.”*

The Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica** added: *“The EU and Asia are important partners on sustainable development and delivering the UN 2030 Agenda. Our development cooperation is an essential element of our broader engagement and partnership with Asia, not least in promoting sustainable connectivity. We want to further strengthen our partnership and focus even more on providing technical assistance, improving regulatory environments and creating incentives to drive forward and scale-up much needed investments.”*

Commissioner for Transport, Violeta **Bulc**, said: *“Transport infrastructure is the lifeblood of EU-Asia connections, carrying both people and goods between the continents, on the wings of digitalisation and decarbonisation. Europe is sharing and engaging through one of the most developed transport networks and infrastructure financing programmes in the world: the trans-European transport network. Connectivity matters!”*

Sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based: connectivity the EU’s way

The EU will combine a principled approach to connectivity and recognition that Asia encompasses different regions, which are home to very diverse countries in terms of economic models and level of development, with concrete action based on three strands:

1. Creating **transport** links, **energy** and **digital** networks and **human** connections;
2. Offering **connectivity partnerships** to countries in Asia and organisations;
3. Promoting sustainable finance through utilising diverse **financial tools**.

Creating cross-border networks

Efficient infrastructure and connections create growth and jobs and enables people and goods to move. From transport links to energy networks, people-to-people contacts to digital webs, the EU will extend its own networks and to contribute to new ones beyond its borders.

The EU’s [Trans-European Transport Networks](#) (TEN-T) are being extended to countries bordering Asia. The EU should now connect the TEN-T with networks in Asia. The EU’s digital single market provides a blueprint for enhancing trade in digital services, while its [Digital4Development strategy](#) fosters

socio-economic development. We will share our experience of creating regional, liberalised energy markets with a focus on market-driven transformation towards clean energy. We will continue to promote human exchanges and mobility, for example in education, research, innovation, culture and tourism.

Developing strong bilateral and global connectivity partnerships

Our world depends on smooth and secure flows of goods, services and people. With a track record of a rules-based, fair and transparent internal market, the European Union is engaging with partners beyond its borders in order to promote similar approaches to sustainable connectivity.

The EU will pursue bilateral connectivity partnerships. The EU-China Connectivity Platform, for example, will help both parties to create synergies and address differing points of view. At a regional level, the EU is able to draw on its experience of contributing to the enhanced connectivity and integration of various regional cooperation structures, for example in the Baltic and Black Seas, as well as with ASEAN and as part of the ASEM process. Fostering increased region-to-region cooperation in connectivity would enable the European Union to extend its sustainable and rules-based connectivity model. Finally, the EU will engage with international organisations in determining the legal frameworks and concrete forms of connectivity, for example to set international standards. The World Trade Organisation, the International Energy Agency, the International Maritime Organisation and United Nations bodies are just a few examples where the European Union is working and will continue to work for sustainable and fair global practices.

Promoting sustainable financing of investment

With Asia requiring an estimated €1.3 trillion per year for infrastructure investment, there are significant opportunities for EU companies, provided that robust legal frameworks are in place. The EU will look to combine financial sources from international financial institutions, multilateral development banks and the private sector to ensure sustainable domestic and international finance for connectivity, while ensuring transparency and a level playing field for businesses. A comprehensive approach to investment financing, pioneered in Europe by the European Fund for Strategic Investments, as well as outside the EU through specific geographical investment facilities, has successfully leveraged investments for infrastructure and connectivity. Combined with the [European Commission's proposals](#) for reinforced external action under the next EU Multi-annual Financial Framework (2021-2027), the potential for additional intelligent, innovative and multi-dimensional investment financing in and towards Asia is significant.

A better connected Europe and Asia through transport links, energy, human and digital networks will strengthen the resilience of societies and regions, facilitate trade, promote the rules-based international order, and create avenues for a more sustainable, low-carbon future. This Joint Communication will inform the EU's engagement with its partners from the neighbourhood to

the Pacific, bringing benefits for the people of Europe and those countries who see the value of our approach to connectivity.

Background information

The Joint Communication adopted today by the European Commission and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy provides the elements for an EU strategy on connecting Europe and Asia.

The proposals made in the Joint Communication will now be discussed in the European Parliament and the Council, and will contribute to discussions on connectivity at the upcoming [Asia-Europe Meeting \(ASEM\) Summit](#), to be held in Brussels on 18-19 October.

Further Information

[Joint Communication: Connecting Europe and Asia – building blocks for an EU Strategy](#)

[Memo: Explaining the European Union's approach to connecting Europe and Asia](#)

[Factsheet: Connecting Europe and Asia – The EU Strategy](#)

[Explaining the European Union's approach to connecting Europe and Asia](#)

What is 'connectivity' for the European Union?

Connectivity is essentially about networks. These can be in the form of transport links: by air, land or sea. Connectivity can be digital networks: mobile or fixed, from cables to satellites, from the internet backbone to the last mile. Connectivity also includes energy networks and flows: from gas, including liquefied natural gas (LNG) to electricity grids, from renewables to energy efficiency. Finally, connectivity has a very obvious human dimension: from cooperation in education, research and innovation to travel and tourism. Connectivity serves and facilitates human interaction.

Connectivity brings people, places and opportunities closer, which is why it has to be approached and managed well. To work efficiently, connectivity requires internationally agreed practices, rules, conventions and technical standards, supported by international organisations and institutions that enable interoperability of networks and trade across borders. The potential impact of infrastructure and investments also requires the necessary steps to be taken to ensure that connectivity is sustainable. This refers to fiscal, environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Why is this Joint Communication coming now and what does it plan to achieve?

Already in 2016, the [EU's Global Strategy](#) recognised that connectivity requires that the EU steps up its engagement, noting the link between the EU's security and prosperity and the increasing importance of a 'connected Asia'. Since then, the economic, political, and security related implications of connectivity have become greater than ever before.

With opportunities for investment and better connectivity also comes responsibility. The impact of climate change and the need to speed up a global transition to low-carbon economies, the pitfalls of unsustainable borrowing and the dangers of unfair trade and investment practices make a sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based approach to connectivity not only desirable but necessary. Others are also setting out their own strategies at this time.

These factors have made it increasingly urgent for the EU to formulate its policy on Euro-Asian connectivity. It allows the EU to strengthen its engagement with its partners, clearly laying out its expectations and the conditions of its cooperation, following a unified, cross-sectoral, and integrated approach. The EU can build on its experience of regulating connectivity and creating cross-border transport, energy, human and digital links. It can draw on its many partnerships with third countries as well as regional and international organisations. It has its own means of helping to mobilise investment, which the [Commission has proposed to strengthen](#) for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2021-2027), combining other public and private sources of capital. In doing so, it seeks to create an enabling environment for investment, create opportunities for businesses – based on a level playing field – and citizens, who will benefit from the growth this generates, as well as the results of increased connectivity in the fields of education, research, innovation, culture and tourism.

Does the Joint Communication prioritise regions, sectors or projects?

The Joint Communication looks at how to connect Europe and Asia as a whole. It draws upon the European Union's existing efforts to enhance connectivity, from bilateral dialogues to regional-to-region action plans, to engagement with and in international organisations. All regions and all sectors are important in their own ways. The world is increasingly interlinked, and the Joint Communication seeks to help create conditions where connectivity is increasingly sustainable. The EU's interests in connectivity are best served when countries adopt good regulatory frameworks, create better business conditions, follow sensible economic policies, and tend towards open markets.

How has the EU been working on connectivity already?

The EU has been successfully connecting its Member States ever since its inception. A common transport policy was elemental in creating of the common market for goods and services and the free movement of people. The Trans-European Networks (TEN) were created in 1991, to enhance transport

connections between the Member States and are now being extended to many countries outside the EU as well. The European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) seeks to mobilise €500 billion in investment by 2020, [having met its target](#) of €315 billion in July 2018. Until now, 21% of this investment has gone to energy, 11% to digital, and 8% to transport, all aspects of connectivity.

The EU is managing more than €8 billion of funding in Asia between 2014-2020, of which significant resources support bilateral and regional initiatives in the context of connectivity, for example ASEAN's Master Plan on Connectivity and the educational exchange programme ERASMUS+, to name a few. Under our Asia Investment and Central Asia Investment facilities, EU funding of €300 million for the period 2010 to 2016 has leveraged around €2.5 billion of investments through blending of grants and loans.

How much money will the European Union invest in enhancing connectivity between Europe and Asia?

For the next budget of the European Union, the [European Commission has proposed to increase the European Union's external action budget to €123 billion](#) for the period 2021-2027. This represents an increase of 30% compared to the previous period. Included in this proposal is an investment framework for external action, with an increased fire-power of up to €60 billion. Building on the successful experience of the EU's External Investment Plan, it will help to raise and leverage additional financial resources for sustainable development from the private sector. If agreed by the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, this increased funding would make a significant contribution to the European Union's commitment to enhancing connectivity between Europe and Asia.

Is this strategy directly in competition with China's Belt and Road Initiative?

The European Union's approach to Euro-Asian connectivity is that it must be sustainable, comprehensive and rules-based. This approach brings direct benefits to people, both in the 'end point' countries and countries of transit, brings decarbonisation, digitalisation, fair competition, investment and innovation.

The European Union and China share an interest in making sure that our respective initiatives work well together, despite the differences in approach and implementation. Connectivity is not possible if systems and networks are not interoperable. As we have already been doing, the European Union will continue to engage with China – in our bilateral Connectivity Platform, in the wider bilateral relationship, and in multilateral fora – to create synergies and to find commonalities. As the Joint Communication highlights, the EU will further step up its work within international organisations to set and enforce global rules and standards, which will create a level playing field and equal opportunities for all.

How does this Joint Communication relate to the connectivity policies or initiatives of other countries?

The European Union will always look to engage with partners – in Europe’s neighbourhood, in Asia and beyond – on enhancing connectivity and finding complementary and common solutions. Our approach to connectivity, highlighting long-standing policies and future strategic direction, is clearly set out in the Joint Communication: connectivity must be fiscally, environmentally, socially and economically sustainable; comprehensive across sectors and financial frameworks; and rules-based. These are the principles for our engagement with other countries and organisations.

The message from the Joint Communication is that the European Union wants to engage more and wants to improve connectivity between Europe and Asia on these mutually-beneficial terms. We will proactively seek to identify synergies between our and our partners’ connectivity strategies, such as China’s Belt and Road Initiative, Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategies of Japan and the United States, as well as Connectivity 2025 of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), among others, in order to jointly foster sustainable connectivity across Europe and Asia.

Further Information

[Joint Communication: Connecting Europe and Asia – building blocks for an EU Strategy](#)

[Press release: EU steps up its strategy for connecting Europe and Asia](#)

[Factsheet: Connecting Europe and Asia – The EU Strategy](#)