

EU supports recovery and resilience in Nigeria with additional €50 million

In the margins of the [7th Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development](#) (TICAD) today, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** signed a new €50 million package to enhance efforts in North East Nigeria.

On the occasion, Commissioner **Mimica** said: *“The agreement signed today increases our bilateral cooperation with Nigeria by €50 million, bringing the total EU support to the country to €562 million for 2014-2020. This additional support will be focused on the North East of the country. It will help strengthen early recovery and build conflict resilience in affected and vulnerable communities in the States of Yobe and Borno, as well as improve human development, social cohesion and resilience for over 26,000 vulnerable households and communities in Yobe state.”*

The projects financed by this additional support will expand the already extensive EU humanitarian and development assistance to the many victims of violence and displacement in Nigeria’s North East, while addressing some of the underlying drivers of violent extremism in the country. An integral component of these activities will be peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution activities at community level, to facilitate reconciliation and reintegration.

In addition, the projects will engage communities and local leadership to support and revitalize markets and livelihoods, enhance conflict mitigation systems with the aim to strengthen resilience capacities in communities on the long-term.

Background

The EU support to Nigeria from the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) amounts to €562 million for 2014-2020, including the €50 million top-up to the country’s National Indicative Programme, resulting from the Mid-Term Review of the 11th European Development Fund.

Nigeria’s National Indicative Programme focuses on three focal sectors:

- 1) Health, nutrition and resilience sector (€280 million) aims to contribute to poverty reduction through better policy and institutional governance to enhance health services, social cohesion, increasing maternal and child survival rates and the resilience of the most vulnerable households especially in Northern Nigeria,
- 2) Sustainable energy and access to electricity sectors of Nigeria,
- 3) Rule of law, governance and democracy sector (€100 million) aims to contribute to government and civil society measures to improve economic

governance, consolidate the rule of law, enhance peace and security, reinforce democratic processes and continue support to manage migration and mobility.

For More Information

[EU development cooperation with Nigeria](#)

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Sécheresse en Europe : Les États membres donnent leur feu vert aux mesures de soutien proposées par la Commission

Les États membres ont approuvé aujourd’hui une série de [mesures de soutien proposées](#) par la Commission pour atténuer les difficultés financières auxquelles sont confrontés les agriculteurs en raison de la sécheresse. Ces mesures ont également pour objectif d’accroître la disponibilité du fourrage pour animaux. Phil **Hogan**, Commissaire à l’agriculture, a déclaré : *“Depuis le début des événements climatiques extrêmes, nous suivons la situation de près et sommes prêts à soutenir nos agriculteurs. La Commission a été en contact étroit avec tous les États membres tout au long du processus et nous avons réagi rapidement lorsque cela était nécessaire. Ces mesures devraient soulager financièrement les agriculteurs européens et les protéger contre une pénurie de fourrage pour leur bétail.”* Les actions sur lesquelles les États membres ont voté aujourd’hui incluent la possibilité d’augmenter les avances sur les paiements de la [Politique Agricole Commune](#) (paiements direct et développement rural), ainsi que plusieurs dérogations exceptionnelles aux règles du verdissement pour que les agriculteurs puissent trouver des aliments pour leurs animaux de manière plus flexible. La Commission reste par ailleurs en contact avec tous les pays afin d’avoir des informations à jour sur l’impact de la sécheresse en Europe. Plus d’informations sont disponibles [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d’informations: Enrico Brivio – Tel. +32 229 56172; Clémence Robin – Tel.: +32 229 52509)

Four MEDIA-supported films will compete for the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival

The 76th Venice Film Festival starts today featuring 12 films supported by the [MEDIA programme](#) – the EU’s programme for supporting the European film and audiovisual industries. Four of the MEDIA-supported films have additionally been shortlisted to compete for the [Golden Lion](#): ‘The Truth’ by Hirokazu Kore-eda (France, Japan), ‘About Endlessness’ by Roy Andersson (Sweden, Germany, Norway), ‘Martin Eden’ by Pietro Marcello (Italy, France) and ‘The Painted Bird’ by Václav Marhoul (Czech Republic, Ukraine, Slovakia). The [Orizzonti competition](#) that is dedicated to latest aesthetic and expressive trends in

international cinema will feature MEDIA-supported 'Blanco en blanco' by Theo Court (Spain, Chile, France, Germany) and 'Madre' by Rodrigo Sorogoyen (Spain, France). The film 'Effetti Domino' by Alessandro Rosseto (Italy) will be screened in the [Sconfini section](#) that is dedicated to art-house and genre movies, experimental and artists' films. Five more films supported by MEDIA will participate in the independent sections [Giornate degli Autori](#) as well as in the [Venice International Film Critics Week](#) held in parallel to the festival. At the sidelines of the festival, the European Commission will also organise on Saturday the [European Film Forum](#). Further details on the MEDIA-supported films at the Venice Film Festival are available [here](#), the MEDIA programme [here](#) and on the European Film Forum [here](#). More information on the Commission's support for the audiovisual and creative sectors in 2020 is available [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel. +32 229 67 083; Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

Copyright: Commission launches dialogue between platforms and rights holders

The European Commission opened today a [call for expression of interest](#) to participate in the stakeholder dialogue on the application of Article 17 of the [Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market](#) on the use of protected content by online content-sharing service providers. The stakeholders will discuss best practices on how content-sharing platforms and service providers should cooperate with rights holders. This dialogue is requested under the new directive and will feed into the preparation of guidance on the application of Article 17. The Commission will hold the first stakeholder meeting on 15 October in Brussels. The objective of the meeting is to gather and map existing practices for the use of copyright-protected content by online content-sharing service providers in cooperation with rights holders, as well as to gather user experiences. The deadline for applying is 18 September. More information and the call for expression of interest are available [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel. +32 229 67 083; Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50 698)

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of sole control over Sotheby's by Next Alt

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control over Sotheby's of the US by Next Alt SARL of Luxembourg. Sotheby's is a broker of fine and decorative art, jewellery and collectibles active worldwide. Next Alt is the personal holding of Mr Drahi, which controls the Altice group. The Altice group is active in the provision of a range of telecoms, content, media, entertainment and advertising services worldwide. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because the companies' activities do not overlap. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9457](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of the Galloper offshore windfarm by DTC and IRCP

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Diamond Transmission Partners Galloper (Holding) Limited by Diamond Transmission Corporation Limited (“DTC”) and InfraRed Capital Partners Limited (“IRCP”), all of the UK. Diamond Transmission Partners Galloper is the holding company of the Offshore Transmission Owner for the Galloper offshore windfarm, active in the transmission of electricity from this windfarm to the UK’s onshore National Electricity Transmission System. Diamond Transmission Partners Galloper is currently solely controlled by DTC. DTC is a holding company with activities in the electricity transmission sector. IRCP is an infrastructure investment management company active in financial advice and managing investments on behalf of investment funds. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because the companies’ activities do not overlap. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission’s [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9472](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of GES by Würth Group

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Grupo Electro Stocks, S.L.U. (“GES”) of Spain by FEGA & Schmitt Elektrogroßhandel GmbH, belonging to the group Adolf Würth GmbH & Co. KG (“Würth Group”) of Germany. GES distributes electrical and fluid materials in Spain mainly to other professionals in the construction sector. Würth Group is active in the wholesale distribution of products and systems manufactured by third parties mainly to professional end users in trade and industry. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the companies’ moderate combined market position, the limited presence of Würth Group in the relevant markets in Spain and the presence of several other players in these markets. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission’s [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9437](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

Concentrations : La Commission autorise l’acquisition de Domidep par I Squared Capital Advisors

La Commission Européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l’acquisition de Domidep SAS société basée en France, par I Squared Capital Advisors (US) LLC («ISQ»), basée aux Etats-Unis. Domidep exploite des maisons de retraite en France et en Belgique où elle propose aux personnes âgées dépendantes des services d’hébergement tout compris et un accompagnement personnalisé. ISQ est un gestionnaire international indépendant d’investissements en infrastructures spécialisé dans les secteurs de l’énergie, des services publics, des télécommunications et des services transports. La Commission a conclu que l’acquisition envisagée ne soulèverait

pas de problème de concurrence dans la mesure où les sociétés ne sont pas actives sur le même marché ou sur des marchés liés ou complémentaires. La transaction a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée de contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.9469](#). *(Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Forgital by Carlyle

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Forgital Italy S.p.A. of Italy by The Carlyle Group of the US. Forgital is active in the forging, laminating and machining of rolled rings in the aerospace sector and the supply of components in oil and gas, transmission, power generation and general mechanics. Carlyle is a global investment firm that manages funds present in different business segments, including the manufacture of machined parts for aircraft engines. The Commission concluded that the transaction would raise no competition concerns because the overlaps between the activities of the companies are very limited. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9427](#). *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

ANNOUNCEMENT

Commissioner Mimica in Japan for the TOKYO International Conference on African Development

Today, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** is in Yokohama, Japan, for the [7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development](#) (TICAD) under the theme 'Africa and Yokohama, Sharing Passion for the Future'. Commissioner **Mimica** will speak at the plenary sessions, and address several side events on a range of topics, such as peace and stability in the Horn of Africa, youth employment and agribusiness in Africa, and cooperation in the Western Indian Ocean. Commissioner **Mimica** will also hold meetings with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe and Foreign Minister Tarō Kōno, and with the President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency Shinichi Kitaoka. In addition, the Commissioner is scheduled to meet the President of Nigeria Muhammadu Buhari. The meeting will be followed by a signing ceremony for additional EU support for the North East of the country. A press release on this will follow. *(For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Christina Wunder – Tel.: +32 229 92256)*

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

[Drought in Europe: Member States agree on support measures proposed by the Commission](#)

Member States today agreed to a series of [support measures proposed by the Commission](#) to ease the financial difficulties faced by farmers due to adverse weather conditions, and increase the availability of feed for animals.

Agriculture and rural development Commissioner Phil **Hogan** said: *“Since the beginning of the extreme climatic events, we have been closely following the situation and are ready to support our farmers. The Commission has been in close contact with all Member States throughout, and we have reacted swiftly when necessary. These measures should relieve European farmers financially and protect them against a shortage of fodder for their livestock.”*

The actions Member States agreed on today in a committee meeting include the possibility for higher advance payments and several exceptional derogations on greening rules to help farmers provide sufficient feed for their animals. Affected farmers will be able to receive a higher percentage of their Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) payments to improve their cash flow. This includes:

- Receiving up to 70% of their direct payments as of mid-October;
- And receiving 85% of their rural development payments as soon as the package of measures is formally adopted at the beginning of September.

Derogations to certain [greening rules](#) will also be allowed to increase the availability of feed. This includes the possibility to:

- Consider land lying fallow as a distinct crop or as an ecological focus area even though it has been grazed or harvested;
- Sow ‘catch crops’ as ‘pure crops’ (and not a mixture of crops as currently prescribed) if intended for grazing or fodder production;
- Shorten the 8-week minimum period for ‘catch crops’ to allow arable farmers to sow their winter crops in a timely manner after their ‘catch crops’.

Next steps

Following today’s decision, this package of measures should be formally adopted at the beginning of September.

The Commission will continue to be in contact with all Member States regarding the impact of droughts.

For more information

[ESMA issues opinions on product intervention measures by Slovenia](#)

The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) has today issued two positive opinions on product intervention measures taken by the National Competent Authority (NCA) of Slovenia. ESMA's opinion finds that the proposed measures are justified and proportionate and that it is necessary for NCAs of other Member States to take product intervention measures that are at least as stringent as ESMA's measures.

ESMA has issued two opinions on national product intervention measures from:

- The Agencija za trg vrednostnih papirjev of Slovenia (ATVP) – [Opinion on the proposed product intervention measures relating to contracts for differences](#)
- The Agencija za trg vrednostnih papirjev of Slovenia (ATVP) – [Opinion on the proposed product intervention measure relating to binary options](#)

Background

NCAs may take product intervention measures in accordance with Article 42 of Regulation (EU) No 600/2014. At least one month before a measure is intended to take effect, an NCA must notify all other NCAs and ESMA of the details of its proposed measure and the related evidence, unless there is an exceptional case where it is necessary to take urgent action.

In accordance with Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 600/2014, ESMA performs a facilitation and coordination role in relation to such product intervention measures taken by NCAs. After receiving notification from an NCA of its proposed measure, ESMA must adopt an opinion on whether the proposed measure is justified and proportionate. If ESMA considers that the taking of a measure by other NCAs is necessary, it must state this in its opinion.

The opinions that ESMA previously issued on proposed national product intervention measures are published on its [website](#).

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Juncker Plan in Lithuania: Vilnius Factoring Company to issue €10 million in new microloans with EIF support

Vilnius Factoring Company, a private lending company in Lithuania, has signed an agreement with the European Investment Fund (EIF) to issue microloans of up to €25,000. Micro-enterprises and farmers in Lithuania can now benefit from non-banking funding opportunities under the [EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation](#) (EaSI). The company is issuing microloans up to a total of €10 million with a guarantee from the EIF. The agreement is backed by the Juncker Plan's European Fund for Strategic Investments, which allows the European Investment Bank Group to invest in more projects that often come with greater risks. Marianne **Thyssen**, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, said: *"Thanks to this financial support from the EU, more micro-entrepreneurs in Lithuania will gain access to finance. This will allow them to start up or develop their business, creating more jobs and opportunities at grassroots level. I warmly welcome this agreement which, once again, shows that, through our programme for employment and social innovation, the EU can take concrete action to tackle financial and social exclusion. This agreement brings us one step closer to building a fairer and more social Europe."* The funds can be invested in either the company's working capital or its business development. More information can be found in this [press release](#). As of July 2019, the Juncker Plan has mobilised €424 billion of additional investment, including €1.6 billion in Lithuania. The Plan is currently supporting 967,000 small and medium businesses across Europe. (For more information: Christian Wigand – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Siobhan Millbright – Tel.: +32 229 57361)

European Investment Bank signs €25 million financing deal with podcast company Acast under the Juncker Plan

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has signed a €25 million 'quasi-equity' financing agreement with podcast company Acast to expand its research and development activities and to further develop its audio content distribution platform. As well as independent podcasts, Acast also looks after the audio content of larger publishers, such as the Financial Times, the Guardian, Vogue, Aftonbladet and Billboard. The EIB financing is supported by the Juncker Plan's European Fund for Strategic Investments. The EIB's 'quasi-equity' financing has the characteristics of an equity stake in the company, yet does not translate into the EIB owning shares in Acast. European Commission Vice-President Valdis **Dombrovskis**, responsible for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, said: *"The main motivation for creating the Juncker Plan was to provide alternative sources of financing to innovative companies in need of financial support that struggled to obtain a traditional bank loan, and as a result to boost jobs, growth and investment in the EU. Today's agreement between the EIB and Acast does exactly that, and it does so using a novel form of financing. I wish the company every success with its expansion plans."* More information can be found in this [press release](#). As of

July 2019, the Juncker Plan has mobilised €424 billion of additional investment, including €12.9 billion in Sweden. The Plan is currently supporting 967,000 small and medium businesses across Europe. (For more information: Vanessa Mock – Tel.: +32 229 56194; Siobhan Millbright – Tel.: +32 229 57361)

Concentrations : La Commission autorise l'acquisition du groupe OCEA par ICG et Predica

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition du groupe OCEA, basé en France, par Intermediate Capital Group plc («ICG»), basé au Royaume Uni, et Prévoyance Dialogue du Crédit Agricole S.A. («Predica»), basée en France. OCEA est principalement présent dans le secteur de la gestion de la performance énergétique des logements sociaux et copropriétés. Predica est une compagnie française d'assurance-vie et d'assurance-santé appartenant au groupe Crédit Agricole qui offre une vaste gamme de services dans le domaine bancaire. ICG fournit des services de gestion d'actifs en Europe, Asie Pacifique et aux États-Unis. La Commission a conclu que l'opération envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, compte tenu de son impact très limité sur la structure du marché. L'opération a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée du contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.9436](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

Concentrations: la Commission européenne autorise l'acquisition d'Indigo par Mirova et Predica

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition d'Infra Foch Topco SAS, société holding du groupe Indigo (« Indigo »), par Mirova S.A. et Prévoyance Dialogue du Crédit Agricole S.A. (« Predica »), toutes trois basées en France. Indigo propose des services de stationnement de véhicules dans plusieurs états membres de l'Union européenne. Mirova est une société de gestion contrôlée par la Banque Populaire et Caisse d'Épargne. Predica est une compagnie française d'assurance-vie et d'assurance-santé appartenant au groupe Crédit Agricole qui offre une vaste gamme de services dans le domaine bancaire. L'opération donne lieu à des chevauchements horizontaux limités entre Mirova et Indigo sur les services de stationnement de véhicules dans quelques villes de France. La Commission a toutefois conclu que l'opération envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problèmes de concurrence en raison du nombre de parkings concurrents présents sur les marchés et du pouvoir de marché limité des entreprises concernées, en particulier de Mirova, dans le secteur. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet](#) concurrence de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.9367](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Oettinger travels to the Netherlands to discuss EU's next long-term budget

European Commissioner in charge of Budget and Human Resources, Günther H. **Oettinger**, will travel to the Netherlands later today to talk about the EU budget for 2021-2027. In The Hague, the Commissioner will meet with the Dutch Minister of Finance Mr Wopke Hoekstra and with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Stef *Blok*. The meetings with senior government representatives from the Netherlands are part of the ongoing efforts of the Commission to support the negotiations on the EU's next long-term budget towards an agreement in the autumn of this year. Ahead of his visit, Commissioner **Oettinger** said: *"The EU needs an agreement on EU's next long-term budget as early as possible for the benefit of our entrepreneurs, farmers, researchers and students. The Commission is doing its best to make an autumn agreement a reality and we count on seeing all Member States – including the Netherlands – working towards the same objective. EU citizens expect results from us and we should be able to deliver."* On 2 May 2018, the Commission put forward a proposal for a modern, balanced and fair long-term budget to deliver on Europe's priorities as set out by Leaders in Bratislava in 2016 and in Rome in 2017. Since then, the Commission has worked hand in hand with the rotating Presidencies of the Council, and in close collaboration with the European Parliament, to take the negotiations forward. In line with the [conclusions](#) from the European Council meeting of 20 and 21 June 2019, an agreement is due before the end of the year. The Commission shares the firm belief that sticking to this timeline is essential, for the hundreds of thousands of students, farmers and researchers across Europe, as well as everybody else who benefits from the EU budget. To facilitate this objective, Commissioner **Oettinger** travelled earlier this summer to Finland, which currently holds the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU. More information about why a timely agreement is of key importance is available [here](#) and [here](#). (For more information: Mina Andreeva – Tel.: +32 229 91382; Andreana Stankova – Tel.: +32 2 29 57857)

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