

Daily News 28 / 03 / 2019

Report on EU trade defence: effective protection against unfair trade

The EU shields 320,000 direct jobs across Europe from unfair foreign competition through its trade defence measures, according to a [report](#) out today. The main highlights of the report include a major overhaul of EU trade defence legislation, continued high EU trade defence activity, resolute action to safeguard EU steel producers and strong and continuous defence of EU exporters targeted in foreign investigations. Since November 2014, the Juncker Commission put in place 95 trade defence measures. Two-thirds of all the 135 measures in place concern imports from China. Commenting on the report, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude **Juncker** said: *"We are open traders, but we cannot afford to be naïve. Not all of our trade partners want to play by the same rules that we do – we must not be taken advantage of and must protect the EU, its companies and its workers against unfair trading practices. Our intense work in this field in the past few years bears fruit: we have now in place tools that are better-suited for today's global economy and we will continue working to ensure our companies and workers are shielded from any unfair practices."* Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** said: *"Open economies need effective tools to enforce fair competition, especially at a time where some countries don't want to play by the rules. This report shows that our trade defence team is working harder than ever to safeguard jobs and protect the EU from unfair trade practices around the world. Thanks to our recent reforms, we are able to act quicker and our tools are more suited to the current global economic challenges."* EU trade defence measures provide welcome relief to European companies. In some cases, the duties resulted in a decrease of unfairly priced imports of up to 99%. At the same time, the duties are set at a level that is sufficient to restore competitive conditions on the EU market, without overburdening EU consumer and industries that rely on imports. For more information see the full [press release](#) and a detailed [supplement to the report](#). (For more information: Daniel Rosario – Tel.: +32 229 56185; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)

Circular Economy: Commission welcomes European Parliament adoption of new rules on single-use plastics to reduce marine litter

The European Commission welcomes the adoption by the European Parliament yesterday afternoon of the ambitious measures it had earlier proposed to tackle marine litter coming from the 10 single-use plastic products most often found on European beaches, as well as abandoned fishing gear and oxo-degradable plastics. The rules on [Single-Use Plastics](#) items and fishing gear, addressing the ten most found items on EU beaches place the EU at the forefront of the global fight against marine litter. They are part of the [EU Plastics Strategy](#) – the most comprehensive strategy in the world adopting a material-specific lifecycle approach with the vision and objectives to have all plastic packaging placed on the EU market as reusable or recyclable by 2030. The Single-Use Plastics Directive adopted by the European Parliament is

an essential element of the Commission's [Circular Economy Action Plan](#) as it stimulates the production and use of sustainable alternatives that avoid marine litter. Following the vote, first Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: "Today we have taken an important step to reduce littering and plastic pollution in our oceans and seas. We got this, we can do this. Europe is setting new and ambitious standards, paving the way for the rest of the world." Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen** added: "Once implemented, the new rules will not only prevent plastic pollution, but also make the European Union the world leader in a more sustainable plastic policy." Commissioner Karmenu **Vella** concluded: "After the favourable vote by the Parliament today, our main task will be to ensure that these ambitious measures are quickly implemented in practice, which will be common work for public authorities, producers and consumers alike." More information is available in the statement [online](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Daniela Stoycheva – Tel.: +32 229 53664)

The European Commission and the European Investment Bank join forces to support investments for road safety and clean transport

Violeta **Bulc**, Commissioner for Transport and the European Investment Bank (EIB) Vice-President Vazil Hudák are joining forces to support investment for road safety and sustainable transport. At the occasion of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Conference in Bucharest, they launched simultaneously a '[Safer Transport Platform](#)' and a new '[CEF Transport Blending Facility](#)' (CEF BF). The Platform aims at promoting safety as a key element for transport investment and to provide easy access to technical and financial advice, in particular for road safety. The Blending Facility is an innovative financial instrument to support projects contributing to the environmental sustainability and efficiency of the transport sector in Europe. With an initial budget of EUR 200 million, the Facility will simplify access to EU grants or financial instruments and attract market-based financing, focusing on the deployment of the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) to improve rail safety and capacity and Alternative Fuels. Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** said: "I am very pleased that our good cooperation with the EIB shows concrete results to the benefit of European citizens. On the one hand, by focusing on clean mobility including the deployment of alternative fuel and the use of ERTMS, the CEF Transport Blending Facility will encourage and facilitate investments in two of our key policy objectives: the decarbonisation and digitalisation of EU transport. On the other hand, we are joining forces to further support road safety. To save lives on European roads, we need targeted investment in the right measures. The 'Safer Transport Platform' will help making sure that projects receive the necessary technical and financial advice, and eventually contribute to the reduction of road fatalities on our roads." (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Stephan Meder – Tel.: +32 229 13917)

Commission welcomes European Parliament's vote on new rules facilitating access to online TV and radio content across borders

Following the European Parliament's approval of [modernised copyright rules](#) earlier this week, today the Parliament endorsed another crucial piece of legislation to make the copyright rules fit for the digital age. The Commission welcomes the positive vote for the Directive that will simplify cross-border distribution and retransmission of television and radio programmes. Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus **Ansip** and Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** said in a joint statement: *"We welcome the approval of the Directive on television and radio programmes by the European Parliament. With today's vote, we are completing the modernisation of the EU copyright rules launched in 2015 and we are getting another step closer to a fully functioning Digital Single Market. Radio and TV programmes are an essential source of information, culture and entertainment for European citizens. The new rules will offer better access to such programmes across the Union, for the benefit of cultural diversity. They will make it easier for European broadcasters to make large parts of their TV and radio programmes available online in all EU countries, while ensuring that creators, authors and rights holders are adequately paid for the use of their content. The new rules will be particularly relevant for the 41% of Europeans who watch TV online but also for the linguistic minorities as well as the 20 million EU citizens who are living abroad in another EU country."* The full statement is available [here](#). Further details are outlined in the [Q&A](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

Clean mobility: Commission welcomes European Parliament adoption of new CO2 emission standards for cars and vans to reduce pollution and improve air quality

The European Parliament yesterday agreed on CO2 emission standards for new cars and vans in the EU for the period after 2020 – a significant step towards decarbonising and modernising the European mobility sector and put the EU on track to become climate neutral. Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel Arias **Cañete** said: *"This vote sends a very clear message: mobility and the transport sector has a crucial role to play in Europe's transition towards a climate-neutral economy. The new targets and incentives will help EU industry embrace innovation towards zero-emission mobility and further strengthen its global leadership in clean vehicles. At the same time, the gradual transition will allow sufficient time for reskilling and upskilling of workers, so that no-one is left behind in this transition. Consumers will save money at the pump, and cleaner cars also mean less pollution and cleaner air for all Europeans."*As a result of the new rules, in 2030, emissions from new cars will have to be 37.5% lower and emissions from new vans 31% lower, compared to 2021. The new CO2 standards are part of the clean mobility package and a stepping stone towards a modernised, and more competitive European transport sector, and the road towards a climate-neutral economy in line with the EU's commitments under the Paris Agreement. The new rules contribute to implementing the Juncker Commission priority of a resilient Energy Union and a forward-looking climate change policy. A press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel.:

+32 229 56186; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel.: +32 229 74959)

Commission welcomes Parliament's votes on the future Cohesion Policy 2021-2027

The Commission welcomes yesterday's votes in the European Parliament, establishing its first reading positions on the [Commission's proposal](#) for Cohesion Policy in the next long-term EU budget. This is a major step toward the adoption of the new framework, for a modernised Cohesion Policy with simpler rules and a focus on innovation, support to small and medium businesses, climate-related actions, employment and social inclusion. *"I want to thank the Parliament for its work on this file and I welcome its positions, which endorse the architecture and key elements of our proposal,"* said Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu** after the vote. *"We will resume the trilogue discussions with the Parliament and the Council in the autumn, but in the meantime, we are making good progress in our discussions with the Member States on the future Cohesion Policy programmes and their priorities. This is of paramount importance so that investments can start on the ground as early as possible and in an efficient, targeted way."* On 27 February, as part of the European Semester process of economic policy coordination, the Commission launched a discussion on investment needs and challenges in the Member States and set out first ideas as to how EU funds, in particular Cohesion Policy funds, can help to achieve investment priorities in the EU budget period 2021-2027 (see press release [here](#)). The Commission is now in contact with all Member States to discuss and define the future programming of the funds at national and regional levels. *(For more information: Christian Spahr – Tél.: +32 2 295 00 55; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tél.: +32 229 56169)*

Research: Commission invests €540 million to advance work of top scientists

Today, the Commission is announcing 222 new funding grants worth on average €2.5 million each, to help scientists advance their most daring research ideas. The grants, which are awarded by the European Research Council, will allow these top-class scientists to further their research into issues like improving the generation and storage of renewable energy, helping our biological clocks cope with our 24/7 modern lives and exploring the role of women in the fight for social and gender justice in Eastern Europe. Carlos **Moedas**, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: *"The ERC Advanced Grants back outstanding researchers throughout Europe. Their pioneering work has the potential to make a difference in people's everyday life and deliver solutions to some of our most urgent challenges. The ERC gives these bright minds the possibility to follow their most creative ideas and to play a decisive role in the advancement of all domains of knowledge."* Advanced grants support well-established and independent top researchers. The full press release and list of successful researchers is available [here](#). *(For more information: Lucia Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Mirna Talko – Tel.: +32 229 87278)*

A Europe that protects: framework contracts for pandemic influenza vaccines signed today

15 Member States and the European Commission today sign framework contracts with the pharmaceutical company Seqirus for the production and supply of pandemic influenza vaccines under the "[EU Joint Procurement Agreement to procure medical countermeasures](#)". Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, said: "Today's signature signals a new era in the access of EU citizens to pandemic influenza vaccines. Member States signing the contracts can rest assured that their citizens will have access to vaccines in case of an influenza pandemic at the best price available. This is one additional example where acting together we get stronger and achieve more." In the event of an influenza pandemic, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain representing around half of the EU population, and the European Commission will receive influenza vaccines thanks to the contracts concluded today under the Joint Procurement Agreement. This mechanism aims at improving Member States' preparedness to mitigate serious cross-border threats to health, ensuring equitable access to all participating Member States and guaranteeing more balanced prices for the Member States in their joint negotiations with pharmaceutical companies on specific medical countermeasures. Negotiations with another pharmaceutical company are ongoing in view of signing a second round of contracts, which will maximize the vaccine coverage according to the specific needs of the participating Member States and will further improve their preparedness for the next pandemic. For more details please see [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

Concentrations: La Commission autorise l'acquisition de Parex par Sika

La Commission européenne a autorisé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition du contrôle exclusif de la Financière Dry Mix Solutions SAS (« Parex »), basée en France, par Sika AG, basée en Suisse. Parex est principalement active dans la production et la commercialisation de mortiers utilisés dans l'industrie de la construction. Sika est un développeur et producteur de produits utilisés dans le secteur du bâtiment et des industries manufacturières. Les activités des entreprises se chevauchent dans plusieurs domaines, notamment en ce qui concerne le mortier pré-mélangé, les produits chimiques pour la construction, les produits chimiques et les mastics en France, ainsi qu'en Espagne en ce qui concerne les systèmes composites d'isolation thermique extérieure. La Commission a conclu que l'acquisition envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, principalement parce que les parts de marché cumulées des entreprises sont modérées et qu'un grand nombre de concurrents resteront actifs sur tous les marchés concernés par l'opération, après la concentration. La transaction a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure normale du contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le site internet [concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public des affaires](#) de concurrence de l'affaire [M.9276](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tél.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tél.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

La commissaire Crețu en Allemagne pour discuter de la future politique de Cohésion

La commissaire chargée de la politique régionale, Corina **Crețu**, se trouve aujourd'hui et demain à Berlin et à Potsdam, en Allemagne. Elle rencontrera cet après-midi Peter Altmaier, ministre fédéral des Affaires économiques, pour discuter de la politique de Cohésion et de ses priorités en matière d'investissement dans le prochain budget à long terme de l'UE pour 2021-2027. À Berlin, la commissaire **Crețu** a participé ce matin à un événement organisé par la présidence roumaine du Conseil de l'UE, au cours duquel elle a présenté l'architecture de la politique de Cohésion post-2020 aux ambassadeurs des États membres de l'UE et des pays voisins. Vendredi, elle rencontrera Dietmar Woidke, ministre-président du Brandebourg, à Potsdam. Ils discuteront des opportunités de la future politique de Cohésion pour le Brandebourg. La commissaire **Crețu** et le ministre-président Woidke visiteront ensuite le parc scientifique de Potsdam-Golm, un site cofinancé par l'UE où la recherche internationale allant de la biotechnologie à la physique gravitationnelle est combinée à la formation de jeunes chercheurs. *(Pour plus d'informations: Christian Spahr – Tél.: +32 2 295 00 55; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tél.: +32 229 56169)*

Commissioner Jourová on official visit to Czechia

Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Věra **Jourová** will be visiting Czechia until Monday. Her visit includes a meeting at the Canadian embassy with ambassadors from Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the United States, amongst others, to exchange views on the upcoming European Parliament elections, the rule of law, Brexit and the role of the EU in the international context. Commissioner **Jourová** will then meet M. Snasel, the rector of the Ostrava University, with whom she will discuss Horizon 2020 amongst other topics. She will deliver a speech on Friday at the event, where the Data Protection Association awards the best Data Protection Officer of 2018. On Monday, she will participate to the 15th edition of the [ISSS](#) annual conference on the Internet in State Administration and Self-government, where she will deliver a speech on digitalisation. *(For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)*

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

Report on EU trade defence – effective protection against unfair trade

The Juncker Commission has strengthened Europe's trade defence toolbox through two major reforms. Since 2014, it has also applied 95 measures to ensure that European companies and workers can compete on fair terms. Two-thirds of all the 135 measures in place concern imports from China.

In 2018 the EU completed the biggest overhaul of its anti-dumping and anti-subsidy legislation since 1994. The reform strengthened the EU's defences against dumped and subsidised imports. Against this background, the EU continued its intense activity and finalised a high number of investigations resulting in new protection measures, in particular in the steel sector. The year 2018 was also notable in that the EU imposed three safeguard measures, the first since 2002.

President of the European Commission Jean-Claude **Juncker** said: *"We are open traders, but we cannot afford to be naïve. Not all of our trade partners want to play by the same rules that we do – we must not be taken advantage of and must protect the EU, its companies and its workers against unfair trading practices. Our intense work in this field in the past few years bears fruit: we have now in place tools that are better-suited for today's global economy and we will continue working to ensure our companies and workers are shielded from any unfair practices."*

Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** said: *"Open economies need effective tools to enforce fair competition, especially at a time where some countries don't want to play by the rules. This report shows that our trade defence team is working harder than ever to safeguard jobs and protect the EU from unfair trade practices around the world. Thanks to our recent reforms, we are able to act quicker and our tools are more suited to the current global economic challenges."*

According to today's report, since the beginning of the mandate of the Juncker Commission in November 2014 until December 2018, the Commission has imposed 95 trade defence measures. At the end of 2018, the EU had 93 definitive anti-dumping measures and 12 anti-subsidy measures in place. Almost 44% of them were measures applying to imported steel products. Of all the measures in force, over two-thirds (68%) concern products imported from China.

EU trade defence measures provide welcome relief to European companies. In some cases, the duties resulted in a decrease of unfairly priced imports of up to 99%. At the same time, the duties are set at a level that is sufficient to restore competitive conditions on the EU market, without overburdening EU consumer and industries that rely on imports.

The main highlights of 2018:

- **Major overhaul of TDI legislation:** The EU reformed its anti-dumping and anti-subsidy legislation in 2018 to react more effectively to unfair trade practices that harm EU producers. The changes have made investigations faster and more transparent, with an additional focus on helping smaller companies. These new rules, which started applying for new investigations in 2018, include the possibility to impose higher duty levels in cases where there are more serious market distortions.
- **Continued high EU trade defence activity:** In 2018, the EU initiated 10 new investigations, of which four concerned imported steel products. There were 14 decisions taken regarding new measures. The EU also initiated 17 investigations to review existing measures, with seven decisions taken to keep measures in place. Furthermore, the Commission initiated three safeguard investigations, one in the steel sector and two bilateral ones on rice with Cambodia and Myanmar.
- **Resolute action to safeguard EU steel producers:** Following the imposition of measures by the US on steel and aluminium, the EU took action to address the disruptive effects of the measures on the EU steel sector. This was necessary to avoid global trade diversion towards the EU that threatened to damage EU steel producers.
- **Strong and continuous defence of EU exporters targeted in foreign investigations:** the Commission intervened in around 70 foreign trade defence investigations targeting EU exporters in cases of unwarranted or abusive use of trade defence instruments. This led to the successful removal or non-imposition of duties in many cases. The number of trade defence measures targeting EU exporters now stands at 174, as compared to 162 in 2017. This upward trend is expected to continue over the next years.

For more information

[2018 EU trade defence report](#)

[Supplement to the report](#) (Commission Staff Working Document)

[EU trade defence – factsheet](#)

[More information about EU trade defence procedures and existing cases](#)

[Questions and answers: Directive on television and radio programmes](#)

What is the current situation for online transmission and retransmission of television and radio programmes?

Broadcasters are increasingly offering their broadcasts online (for instance through their simulcasting or catch-up services). However, such online

programming often remains unavailable in other Member States, even if there is interest abroad to access it. The clearance of rights for such uses can be particularly burdensome: a broadcaster needs to obtain authorisations from various rightholders, for different categories of works and other protected content, and separately for every Member State, where the programme will be available online.

Retransmission services aggregate TV and radio channels into packages. They are increasingly provided using technologies other than cable (for example IPTV), but the current rules facilitating rights' clearance for operators of those services are limited to retransmissions by cable. The operators of retransmission services using other technologies (for example, satellite, IPTV, digital terrestrial, mobile network, internet) cannot benefit from these rules facilitating rights' clearance. Currently, the complexity in clearing the rights makes it difficult for these services to offer programmes coming from other Member States.

How will the new Directive contribute to developing cross-border access to TV and radio programmes?

The new Directive addresses the difficulties related to the clearance of copyright in two ways:

- By establishing the **principle of the "country of origin"**: the rights required to make certain programmes available on the broadcasters' online services (for instance their simulcasting or catch-up services) are to be cleared only for the broadcaster's country of principal establishment (instead of all Member States in which the broadcaster wishes to make its programmes available). The licence fee paid by the broadcasters to right holders will have to reflect the audience of the programmes. The country of origin principle will help broadcasters to make certain programmes (all radio programmes, and, for TV, news and current affairs programmes, as well as fully financed own productions of broadcasters) available online also in other Member States. As a result, consumers will have more choice to watch and listen to online programmes transmitted by broadcasters established elsewhere in the EU. Citizens of linguistic minorities or Europeans living in another Member State will have better possibilities to follow programmes in their mother tongue.
- By extending **the system of mandatory collective management**, which is currently applicable to cable retransmissions only, to retransmission services provided through other means (such as Internet Protocol television (IPTV), satellite, digital terrestrial or online technologies). This system allows retransmission operators to clear the necessary rights in a simpler manner – they need to clear the relevant rights with broadcasters whose channels they retransmit and with collective management organisations, i.e. organisations that represent a multitude of right holders and not with several individual right holders on a one-to-one basis (e.g. a music composer or an audiovisual performer). At the same time this system ensures that the rights of all concerned rightholders are covered. The new rules will allow the retransmission operators to offer to their users more channels from across the European Union. For example, Belgian operators offering TV

packages to Belgian customers using IPTV technology will be able to clear rights more easily for channels from other Member States and include them in their packages.

Which services are covered by the country of origin principle?

The country of origin principle will apply to online services of broadcasters that give access to programmes, which are transmitted through traditional broadcasts.

The services covered include simultaneous online transmission of broadcasts (simulcasting), offering the possibility to watch and/or listen to the broadcast programmes for a defined period of time after their initial broadcast (catch-up), and transmitting content that enriches, extends or complements the broadcast (including for example previews, complements such as "the making of").

The country of origin does not apply to video-on-demand (VOD) services.

Which types of programmes are covered by the country of origin principle?

The country of origin principle will apply to all radio programmes, and to certain TV programmes – to news and current affairs programmes and programmes that are fully-financed own productions of the broadcasting organisations.

The country of origin principle will therefore not apply to TV productions acquired from third parties or commissioned by the broadcasting organisations from independent producers. Television broadcasts of sport events are also excluded.

Will broadcasters be obliged to make such programmes available online across borders?

No. The country of origin principle is an enabling mechanism for broadcasters, who wish to offer programmes on their online services across borders, but it will not oblige them to do so.

Which retransmission services will benefit from the system of mandatory collective management?

Cable operators already benefit from mandatory collective management under the existing Satellite and Cable Directive (Directive 93/83/EEC). Thanks to the new Directive, operators of retransmission services provided by other technologies (satellite, IPTV, digital terrestrial, mobile network, internet) will benefit from the same regime to clear the rights that are needed in order to retransmit radio and TV programmes from other Member States. Retransmission services over the internet are covered by the new rules to the extent their services are provided in a managed environment (i.e. an environment in which authorised users can access secure retransmissions).

The rules on mandatory collective management do not apply to rights in retransmissions that are held by broadcasters. In such cases broadcasters

licence the rights to operators of retransmission services directly, as is already the case for cable retransmissions under the Satellite and Cable Directive.

What is direct injection? What are the new rules introduced by the Directive?

Direct injection is a process increasingly used by broadcasters to transmit their programmes to the public. Instead of transmitting their programmes directly to the public over the air or by wire, broadcasters send their programmes to distributors, which transmit them to the public.

The Directive clarifies that when broadcasters transmit their programme-carrying signals by direct injection exclusively to distributors, and the latter transmit these to the public, there is an act of communication to the public, in which both the broadcaster and the distributors participate, and for which they need to obtain authorisation from rightholders. This new provision will help to ensure that rightholders are adequately remunerated when their works are used in programmes transmitted through direct injection.

For Further Information

[Commission welcomes European Parliament's vote on new rules facilitating access to online TV and radio content across borders](#)

Following the European Parliament's approval of modernised copyright rules earlier this week, today the Parliament endorsed another crucial piece of legislation to make the copyright rules fit for the digital age. The Commission welcomes the positive vote for the Directive that will simplify cross-border distribution and retransmission of television and radio programmes.

Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus **Ansip** and Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** said in a joint statement:

"We welcome the approval of the Directive on television and radio programmes by the European Parliament. With today's vote, we are completing the [modernisation of the EU copyright rules](#) launched in 2015 and we are getting another step closer to a fully functioning Digital Single Market.

Radio and TV programmes are an essential source of information, culture and entertainment for European citizens. The new rules will offer better access to such programmes across the Union, for the benefit of cultural diversity.

They will make it easier for European broadcasters to make large parts of their TV and radio programmes available online in all EU countries, while ensuring that creators, authors and rights holders are adequately paid for the use of their content.

The new rules will be particularly relevant for the 41% of Europeans who watch TV online but also for the linguistic minorities, as well as the 20 million EU citizens who are living abroad in another EU country.

Together with the portability rules allowing Europeans to travel with their online subscriptions, with the implementation of the Marrakesh Treaty providing better access to books to blind and visually impaired people, as well as the new Copyright Directive designed to bring tangible benefits to citizens, creative sectors, and the press, we are completing our broader initiative to bring EU copyright rules up to date for the digital age."

Next Steps

The text adopted today by the European Parliament will have to be formally endorsed by the Council of the European Union. Once published in the Official Journal of the EU, Member States will have 24 months to transpose the new rules into their national legislation.

Background

In [September 2016](#), the European Commission proposed a Regulation to facilitate the licensing of rights for certain online transmissions of broadcasters and retransmissions of television and radio programmes. As part of the political agreement reached on 13 December 2018, the EU co-legislators agreed to turn the proposed Regulation into a Directive.

This Directive complements the rules set out in the existing [Satellite and Cable Directive](#) (Directive 93/83/EEC), which already facilitates cross-border satellite broadcasting and retransmission by cable of TV and radio programmes from other Member States.

The rules on broadcasters' online transmissions will apply to all radio programmes, and to certain television programmes (news and current affairs programmes and fully financed own productions of broadcasters).

The new rules will provide:

- **New opportunities for broadcasters**, through the country of origin principle that will facilitate the licensing of rights, **to make certain programmes on their online services available across borders** (services covered are simulcasting, catch-up services and other services that complement the main broadcast, such as previews).
- **A wider choice of radio and TV programmes offered by retransmission services provided** through Internet Protocol television (IPTV), satellite, digital terrestrial, mobile networks or over the internet. The Directive applies a facilitated rights clearance mechanism – the system of compulsory collective management – to retransmission services provided through means other than cable (e.g. over internet), making it

easier to obtain authorisations required to retransmit radio and TV channels from other Member States.

- **Legal certainty for transmissions of radio and TV programmes through direct injection**, ensuring that rights holders are adequately remunerated when their works are used in programmes transmitted through direct injection.

For Further Information

[European Parliament confirms that the 2017 EU budget was well-managed](#)

The European Parliament today gave its final approval, known as ‘discharge’, to the way in which the European Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, managed and implemented the EU budget in 2017. The positive vote follows from the European Court of Auditors’ decision to give the EU annual accounts [a clean bill of health for the 11th year in a row](#), finding them true and fair.

Commissioner Günther H. **Oettinger**, in charge of budget and human resources said, *“The European Parliament has once again confirmed that the EU budget has been managed in line with the rules, generating great added value for our citizens. The EU’s achievements are numerous and the discharge exercise gives us yet another opportunity to look at them. Looking ahead, the next long-term EU budget for the 2021-2027 is the next big opportunity to show that we are learning from the past. In its proposal, the Commission has put forward ideas how to make sure the EU budget generates an even greater added value for the EU citizens, while being more flexible and simpler. We are now working hand in hand with the European Parliament and the Council towards timely adoption of the various proposals, including the 37 specific spending programmes, so that beneficiaries from across the Union will be able to benefit from EU funding as of January 2021.”*

For the first time ever, this year’s discharge report of the European Parliament highlights some of the EU budget’s key achievements. For example, the report underlines that by the end of 2017, the EU budget programme for small and medium sized companies supported over 275,000 businesses in 25 countries. By the end of 2016, the money under the Cohesion Fund (CF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) led to better healthcare services for 2.7 million people, improved water supply for 156,000 citizens and improved wastewater treatment for some 73,000 EU residents. In 2017 alone, the EU budget – through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) – supported the creation of over 7,000 additional places in reception centres, while the number of places adapted for unaccompanied minors increased from only 183 in 2014 to over 17,000 in 2017. These figures confirm once again

that the EU budget has delivered on the EU citizens' expectations. The report also outlines key recommendations for the future. In the coming months, the Commission will report to the European Parliament on the actions that it will take in response to the European Parliament's recommendations.

Background

The annual budget discharge is the European Parliament's final approval of how the European Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, has implemented the EU budget in a given year. The discharge vote is therefore the formal closure of the budget year in question. The European Parliament grants discharge on a recommendation from the Council. The procedure therefore allows the European Parliament and the Council to exercise democratic control over the way taxpayers' money is being spent. Before taking its decision, the Parliament examines the accounts, the balance sheet and the report on the management of the budget as prepared by the Commission as well as the European Court of Auditors' annual report and any relevant special reports. The European Commission also provides additional information to the Parliament through the ongoing exchanges in the context of the discharge procedure.