



TODAYS
News

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€54 million for cross border cooperation between Greece and Cyprus

On behalf of Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu**, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Elżbieta **Bieńkowska** adopted the 2014-2020 cross border cooperation programme between Greece and Cyprus, worth €54 million, with nearly €46 million coming from the [European Regional Development Fund](#). The programme will help Greece and Cyprus further develop their local economies with the objectives of creating jobs, improving infrastructures and protecting the environment, by promoting active cooperation in these areas. This programme is part of the [Interreg programme](#) framework which has a budget of €10.1 billion for the period 2014-2020, invested in over 100 cooperation programmes between regions. Interreg programmes aim to tackle common challenges identified in the border regions and to exploit their growth potential. More information on the cross border cooperation programme between Greece and Cyprus is available [online](#). The descriptions of the 2014-2020 Interreg programmes are available [Commissioner Crețu's webpage](#) and on the [Inforegio website](#).

Record public response to consultation on Birds & Habitats Directives reaffirms support for EU role in protecting nature

More than half a million European citizens have contributed to a public consultation on the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives, a record number of submissions for a Commission consultation. A total of 552,471 citizens and organisations responded to the Commission [questionnaire](#). The input received is a mixture of detailed responses from stakeholders and statements submitted by citizens through web-based campaigns such as the Nature Alert NGO campaign, which accounted for over 520,000 responses and generated over 50,000 tweets. This mass participation helps to provide the Commission with an idea of the public interest in the issue, in complement to the detailed input provided by other stakeholders. Commission First-Vice President Frans **Timmermans** and Commissioner for the Environment Karmenu **Vella** welcomed the response: "*We're very grateful for the active participation and degree of engagement with our consultation. We'll bear all the input received in mind as the Fitness Check continues. As we have said many times before, this exercise is about making sure that legislation that was introduced a generation ago remains fit for purpose for the next generation. This includes looking at issues of implementation and enforcement. This is about finding the best way to keep our standards to protect birds and other wildlife high, and making sure they are effectively applied, not about weakening them.*" In the Autumn the Commission will organise a High-Level Conference to review the first results of the Fitness Check evaluation. Fitness Checks are one of the tools under the Commission's REFIT programme which aim to assess the performance of the existing EU legal framework with respect to its policy objectives. Under the

Commission's [Better Regulation](#) strategy, EU policies should be reviewed regularly to make sure that they are still fit for purpose, without lowering the EU's high standards of environmental, social and consumer protection.

UK's Traditional Bramley Apple Pie Filling status to be protected

Today the Commission has approved the addition of 'Traditional Bramley Apple Pie Filling' to the register of Traditional Specialties Guaranteed (TSGs). Traditional Bramley Apple Pie Filling is a homogeneous blend of fresh Bramley apple pieces, sugar and water, with the option of Bramley apple purée, corn flour and lemon juice. The fruits of the grafted Bramley apple were first exhibited before the Royal Horticultural Society's Fruit Committee on 6 December 1876. During the Victorian Age, there was a quest to develop single purpose culinary apple varieties for the ultimate apple pie recipe. At the 1883 National Apple Congress the Bramley was acclaimed as the best suited variety for apple pies. Since then, the recipe for Traditional Bramley Apple Pie Filling has remained unchanged and is still commercially used today. This denomination will be added to the list of over 1,200 products already protected. More information: webpages on [quality products](#) and [DOOR database](#) of protected products.

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Perrigo by Mylan

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of Perrigo of Ireland, by Mylan of the Netherlands. Mylan is one of the main European producers of prescribed generic pharmaceuticals. Perrigo is specialised in selling over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, available without prescription in pharmacies. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns, because the parties' activities are largely complementary. In the limited instances where both Mylan and Perrigo sell pharmaceutical products in the same therapeutic area or based on the same molecule in some Member States of the European Economic Area, they are not close competitors and they will continue to face competition of strong players. The transaction was examined under the normal merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.7645](#).

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of VSE by RWE

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of VSE of Slovakia, by RWE, of Germany. RWE is active throughout the energy value chain. VSE is active in the retail supply and distribution of electricity in Slovakia. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns because of the limited overlaps and the presence of other strong players on all 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.7589](#).

EUROSTAT: Household real income per capita up in both euro area and EU28

In the **euro area**, in real terms, household income per capita increased by 0.9% in the first quarter of 2015, after an increase of 0.1% in the previous quarter. Household real consumption per capita increased by 0.8% in the first quarter of 2015, after an increase of 0.2% in the previous quarter. A EUROSTAT press release can be found [here](#).

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Find out [here](#) what will be discussed next week in the European Commission, European Council and the European Parliament.

