



TODAYS
News

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EU Trust Fund kicks off its actions to address needs of Syrian refugees in Turkey

As announced by President **Juncker** in the [State of the Union speech](#), the recently established [EU Regional Trust Fund](#) in response to the Syrian crisis launched its first actions in support of Syrian refugees. With €17.5 million, 240 000 Syrian refugees in Turkey, most of them children, will receive schooling opportunities and food security through monthly vouchers. For these actions in Turkey, the EU Trust Fund is using contributions from the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). Federica **Mogherini**, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission said: *"Syria is losing a whole generation to war and exile. A pen and a book can give hope to Syrian children. They are the best weapon against hatred and radicalisation. They can give a future to a whole country."* Commissioner **Hahn** stated: *"I am glad that, with the start of implementation of two contracts in Turkey, the EU Trust Fund will be able to bring support to those who most need it in very concrete forms be it food, be it education services"*. The press release is available [here](#). In addition, there is a [memo](#) on funding of migration-related activities in the Southern Neighbourhood region and a [press release](#) on boosting socio-economic development and supporting better living conditions in the Southern Mediterranean region.)

European Commission supports better access to medicines in poorest countries

The Commission today agreed to support the least developed countries' (LDCs) call for easier access to cheaper medicines by means of an indefinite exemption from World Trade Organization (WTO) intellectual property rules for pharmaceuticals. This exemption allows generic medicines to be imported, and produced locally, regardless of patents, for example when licenses are not available. It means producers of generics and international programmes can supply drugs like HIV treatment in affected countries without fear of patent infringement suits. EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia **Malmström** said: *"The poorest countries of the world need effective access to medicines. Although patents stimulate innovation in developed and emerging economies, intellectual property rules should be a non-issue when the world's poorest are in need of treatment. This exemption will give the least developed countries the necessary legal certainty to procure or to produce generic medicines. I am confident that the Council will support this approach, and that the EU will take the lead in the WTO in this field."* A press release is available [here](#).

The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement gets the EU Parliament's green light

The EU is closer to the ratification of the Trade Facilitation Agreement at the World Trade Organization (WTO) following a positive plenary vote by the European Parliament. This deal involving all members of the WTO is expected to simplify and modernise customs procedures around the world, help small businesses

access new export opportunities and play a significant role in increasing developing countries' involvement in global value chains. For the benefits to materialise, the agreement needs first to be ratified and implemented. Only sixteen WTO members have completed the ratification, since the end of negotiations in December 2013. Following yesterday's decision by the Parliament, the EU would show its leadership in the process by completing the ratification procedure with a Council's vote by the beginning of October, becoming the agreement's 17th Party. The EU had set a target of up to €400 million over five years to assist developing countries in bringing the agreement into effect. The EU will help finance reforms and projects improving the customs systems of developing and least developed countries, as part of its "Aid for Trade" engagement. More information on the Trade Facilitation Agreement is available [here](#) or on the [WTO homepage](#).

Connecting Greece and Bulgaria's border regions: adoption of a new Interreg programme worth €129 million

The European Commission adopted yesterday the 2014-2020 cross border cooperation ('[Interreg](#)') programme for Greece and Bulgaria. It is worth €129 million, with more than €110 million coming from the [European Regional Development Fund](#). The programme's first priority is to boost the competitiveness of SMEs and help them expand beyond local markets. Corina **Crețu**, Commissioner for Regional Policy, said: *"This programme will help the border regions of Bulgaria and Greece to work together and address common challenges. The new programme is clearly result-oriented and will make a real difference on the ground, from improved transport infrastructure to opportunities for new jobs."* The fifth programming period of Interreg for 2014-2020 has a budget of €10.1 billion, invested in over 100 cooperation programmes. The descriptions of the 2014-2020 programmes are available on [Commissioner Crețu's webpage](#) and on the [InfoREGIO website](#).

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Synlab by Cinven

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of Synlab Holding GmbH of Germany, by Cinven Capital Management of Guernsey (United Kingdom). Synlab offers laboratory diagnostics for human and veterinary medicine and environmental analysis services. Cinven is a private equity business active in the European buy-out market, controlling companies in various industry sectors through its investment funds. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because of the companies' limited combined market position. 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.7707](#).

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of HCC Insurance by Tokio Marine

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of HCC Insurance Holdings, Inc. of the US by Tokio Marine Holdings, Inc. of Japan. Both companies provide non-life insurance, reinsurance and ancillary services for individual consumers, large corporates and other insurance groups, worldwide. HCC is mainly active in the USA whereas Tokio Marine mainly in Japan; both have a European presence. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because of the companies' limited activities and moderate combined market shares in Europe. The transaction was assessed under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the Commission's public [case register](#) under the case number [M.7733](#).

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of PKP Energetyka by CVC.

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of PKP Energetyka S.A. of Poland by CVC Capital Partners SICAV-FIS S.A of Luxembourg ("CVC Capital Partners") through certain CVC Funds. PKP is a Polish energy company. CVC Capital Partners through CVC Funds holds stakes in a number of companies in various industries including chemicals, utilities,

manufacturing, retailing and distribution, primarily in Europe, the US and the Asia-Pacific region. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because the companies are not active in the same markets. In fact, none of the companies held by CVC are competing with PKP nor are active on related 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.7751](#).

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of GSK's meningococcal ACWY vaccines business by Pfizer

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of the *Nimenrix* and *Mencevax* vaccines businesses belonging to GSK of the UK by an Irish subsidiary of Pfizer of the US. Both vaccines protect against meningitis A, C, W and Y. GSK, a global pharmaceutical, consumer health and vaccines company, committed to divest the vaccines to gain the Commission's clearance of its transaction with Novartis [in January 2015](#). Pfizer is a global pharmaceutical company which manufactures and sells a wide range of pharmaceuticals, including vaccines. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because of the absence of overlap between the parties. The present 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.7716](#).

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over DEFTA Group by Naxicap and Fonds Avenir Automobile

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control over DEFTA Group ("DEFTA") by Naxicap and Fonds Avenir Automobile, all of France. DEFTA supplies components and systems for the automotive industry. Naxicap offers asset management services. Fonds Avenir Automobile is a capital development fund dedicated to the automotive industry. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because there are very limited overlaps between the companies' activities in the concerned market. 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.7738](#).

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Delion France by Bpifrance and Springwater Capital

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control over Delion France by Banque publique d'investissement (Bpifrance), both of France, and Springwater Capital of Switzerland. In 2014, Delion France was created by Springwater Capital to take over some assets from a paper company in liquidation for the purpose of producing high-quality paper pulp. Delion France is currently solely owned by Springwater Capital. Springwater Capital is active in the reorganisation, restructuring and acquisition of companies and carries out special opportunity transactions like turnaround and distressed investments. Bpifrance is a subsidiary of BPI Group, which is ultimately owned by Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations of France and the French state. BPI Group is an investment fund. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because the companies involved are not active in the same 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.7731](#).

EUROSTAT: More than 670 000 persons died in the EU from respiratory diseases

In the European Union in 2012, diseases of the respiratory system, including lung cancer, were the cause of death for 671 900 persons, 13% of all deaths. Men (398 400 deaths due to respiratory diseases) were more affected than women (273 600). Among the various diseases of the respiratory system, lung cancer (leading to the deaths of 268 600 persons, or 40% of all deaths due to respiratory diseases), bronchitis and other chronic lower respiratory diseases (161 500 deaths, or 24%) and pneumonia (127 400 deaths, or 19%) were

particularly prominent in the EU as causes of deaths. This information on causes of death in the EU comes from a [report](#) published by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. A Eurostat press release can be found [here](#).

STATEMENTS

Commissioner Thyssen speech at World Pension Summit in the Hague

Commissioner **Thyssen** is today speaking at the [World Pension Summit](#). She outlined the Commission's comprehensive approach to address pension developments in the European Union in the context of the demographic challenge that Europe currently faces. Pension systems have to remain both adequate and financially sustainable in the face of an ageing society. Setting out how the Commission monitors the evolution of pensions systems in the 28 Member States and how the European Semester can provide guidance on modernising social protection systems, Commissioner **Thyssen** said: *"This Commission intends to continue its efforts to support Member States in making their pension systems fit for the future. Lots of progress has been made already, but there is no room for complacency or resting on our laurels. To preserve and improve the adequacy and the sustainability of our pensions and those of our children, more people will need to work more and longer. The Commission will look at creating a deeper capital markets union. We will continue in the Semester with recommending reforms to Member States, focusing on improving adequacy and developing complementary pensions."* See full speech [here](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Hahn visits Ukraine

Johannes **Hahn**, Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations will visit Ukraine on 10-12 September. The main aim of the visit is to provide impetus for the ongoing reform process and demonstrate the EU's steadfast support for Ukraine's efforts in challenging circumstances in support of its independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty. During his visit Commissioner **Hahn** will meet political leaders, including President Poroshenko, Prime Minister Yatsenyuk and Minister of Foreign Affairs Klimkin. The Commissioner will also participate in the [12th Yalta European Strategy Conference](#). Ahead of his visit, Commissioner **Hahn** stated: *"I welcome the serious steps taken by the government in building democratic institutions, strengthening the rule of law and invigorating the country's economy. Further efforts are needed, above all on the prevention and fight against corruption to achieve a sustainable reform success"*. The Commissioner also commended the government's recent efforts in fulfilling its obligations under the Minsk agreements and underlined the importance for all sides to fully implement the agreements by the end of the year.

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

