



Friday, 01 July, 2016

### **Statement by Commissioner Vella on first reading agreement on the National Emissions Ceiling Directive to reduce air pollution**

On 30 June 2016 the Council and the European Parliament reached a first reading agreement on a directive to reduce emissions of air pollutants. The new [National Emissions Ceiling Directive](#) sets stricter national limits from 2020 to 2029 and from 2030 onwards. EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Karmenu **Vella** welcomed the agreement: *"Air pollution is the number-one environmental cause of death in the EU, leading to over 400,000 premature deaths each year. The agreement reached will cut those impacts by half over the coming years. It will also deliver direct savings to the economy from fewer lost working days and lower health-care costs and stimulate investments in new technologies and green growth. The negotiations were difficult and complex, but the institutions came together in a spirit of compromise. With this agreement, the EU has acted decisively on an issue of crucial importance to our citizens."* Full statement available [here](#).

### **College meets with Slovak government to launch Presidency of the Council of the EU**

Today, Friday 1 July, European Commission President, Jean-Claude **Juncker**, offered the Slovak Government the full support of his Commission as the country launches its first-ever Presidency of the Council of the European Union. In his remarks following the meeting in Bratislava between the College of Commissioners and the Slovak Government, President **Juncker** said the programme of the Slovak Presidency was *"in perfect harmony with the European Commission's programme"*. The President underlined that the Commission would forge ahead with its political priorities in all areas. He highlighted that one of the most important challenges facing the European economy was the *"lack of investment"*, which is why the EU needed to *"prolong the Investment Plan for Europe which is turning into a real success story with €107 billion of new investment already."* The Slovak Presidency website is now online: <http://www.eu2016.sk/en>. President **Juncker's** remarks will be available [here](#).

### **Full entry into force of the Association Agreements between the EU and Georgia and the EU and the Republic of Moldova**

Today, Friday 1 July, the Association Agreement between the European Union and Georgia (full press release [here](#)), and the Association Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova (full press release [here](#)) enter fully into force. Both Association Agreements create Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas, thus deepening political and economic relations between the European Union and the

respective [Eastern Partnership](#) countries. Substantial parts of both Agreements have been provisionally applied since 1 September 2014, bringing concrete positive results for Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and the European Union. Factsheets are available on the [Association Agreement with Georgia](#), the [Association Agreement with the Republic of Moldova](#), [EU-Georgia](#) and [EU-Republic of Moldova](#) relations.

## **New EU rules to fight insider dealing and market manipulation in Europe's financial markets take effect**

A revamped EU legal framework, applicable as of 3 July, will ensure even more efficient, transparent and trustworthy European financial markets. This new rulebook will increase investor protection and confidence by allowing deeper and more integrated financial markets, and contribute to the creation of the Capital Markets Union. These rules will strengthen the fight against market abuse across commodity and related derivative markets, explicitly ban the manipulation of benchmarks, such as EURIBOR, and reinforce the investigative and sanctioning powers of regulators. They will also create common EU definitions for market abuse offences, covering insider dealing, unlawful disclosure of information and market manipulation. Serious cases of market abuse will be criminalised across the EU under a common set of criminal sanctions. For more information, see our press release [here](#).

## **Better regulation: Commission offers new opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the law-making process**

The Commission has opened up another part of the EU decision-making process for stakeholder input. In line with its commitments under the Better Regulation Agenda and the broad effort to increase transparency in the EU Institutions, as of 30 June, draft delegated and implementing acts will now be put online and open for public feedback for a period of four weeks. This new online feedback tool is part of the Commission's new, user-centred web presence. First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** said: *"Transparency and consultation are at the heart of our efforts to produce better regulation for better results. Since taking office 18 months ago we have thrown open our decision-making process and consult at all stages with those who have to deal with EU rules. Stakeholders will now be able to give their views for the first time on delegated and implementing acts, before they are adopted by the Commission."* More information is available in [this press release](#).

## **EU and China step up climate and clean energy cooperation**

In the margins of the [G20 energy ministerial meeting in Beijing](#), where ministers adopted a communiqué recognising the key role of clean energy and energy efficiency in achieving the goals set at the Paris climate conference, Climate Action and Energy Commissioner Miguel **Arias Cañete** announced a new emissions trading cooperation project and the agreement of a new EU-China Energy Roadmap. Commissioner **Arias Cañete** said: *"As two of the world's major economies, largest net energy importers, and biggest energy consumers, both China and the EU share many challenges and an increased responsibility to meet our common climate goals set in Paris. With emissions trading, clean energy and technology innovation at the heart of our new EU-China energy and climate partnership, both economies get ready to make the energy systems fit for purpose and reap all the benefits of the ongoing global clean energy revolution."* The new €10 million emissions trading cooperation project will build on the existing cooperation project which started in 2014 and supported the roll-out of seven pilot schemes across the country. The three-year project will start in 2017, coinciding with the launch of the nationwide carbon market in China. As well as addressing challenges related to the setting up of a national emissions trading system, the new cooperation project will also establish a regular dialogue to discuss developments on emissions trading in China and the EU. The project is a concrete action following the [EU-China Joint Declaration on Climate Change](#) in which

the two sides agreed to enhance existing bilateral cooperation on carbon markets. The landmark [EU-China Energy Roadmap](#) constitutes a keystone in the overall strategic partnership between the EU and China as both transition to a low-carbon economy. The agreement lays the foundations for sharing best practices on energy regulation, demand and supply analysis, energy crisis, and nuclear safety, as well as grid design and the integration of renewable energy into the electricity grid. Moreover, the roadmap looks to foster trade and investment in energy efficiency and renewables with the knock-on effects of boosting competition and lowering costs. It also aims to work together on promoting combined heat and power systems, expand the bio-gas sector and promote [smart grids](#).

### **Trade boosted by five years of EU-Korea Free Trade Agreement**

EU exports to South Korea have increased by 55% since the free trade agreement (FTA) between South-Korea and the EU entered into force five years ago, according to a detailed [European Commission report](#) released today to mark the agreement's anniversary. Bilateral trade in goods between the two trading partners has been growing constantly since 2011, and reached a record level of over 90 billion euros in 2015. The EU-Korea trade deal has helped turn the EU's trade deficit with South Korea into a trade surplus, and has turned Korea into one of the EU's top ten export markets. EU Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** commented: *“The numbers speak for themselves. The evidence of our agreement with Korea should help convince the unconvinced that Europe benefits greatly from more free trade. When our companies can export more easily, or when money saved from scrapped customs duties can be reinvested in company development, it spurs European growth. It safeguards and creates jobs. This anniversary gives us many reasons to roll up our sleeves and conclude all other pending EU trade deals that are on the table.”* The agreement has opened new opportunities for many small European businesses in such diverse sectors as food and drink, pottery, packaging, sports equipment and book binding technology. In total, European companies have saved €2.8 billion in scrapped or discounted customs duties over the past five years. More information can be found in today's [press release](#).

### **State aid: Commission approves prolongation of Polish bank guarantee scheme**

The European Commission has authorised under EU state aid rules the fourteenth prolongation of the Polish bank guarantee scheme until 31 December 2016. The scheme provides for guarantees in favour of different types of solvent credit institutions in Poland. It was initially [approved in September 2009](#) and prolonged several times, last time in [February 2016](#). In [February 2012](#), the pricing conditions of the scheme were brought in line with the requirements of the [Commission's 2011 Communication on state aid to banks during the crisis](#). Other conditions of the original scheme remain unchanged. The Commission found the prolongation of the scheme to be in line with its [guidelines on state aid to banks during the crisis](#) because it is well targeted, proportionate and limited in time and scope. Under the rules, the Commission is authorising guarantee schemes on banks' liabilities for periods of six months in order to be able to monitor developments and adjust conditions accordingly. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#), under the case number SA.45575.

### **Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of Cegid by Silver Lake**

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of Cegid Group of France by Silver Lake Group of the United States. Cegid is a provider of finance, tax and human resource software for small and medium-sized enterprises. Silver Lake is an investment group focused on private investments in large scale companies in technology markets. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because there are only minimal overlaps between the activities of Cegid Group and the activities of Silver Lake's portfolio companies. 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.8040](#).

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control of Bögel by Wilmar and AGRAVIS**

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control of H. Bögel GmbH & Co. KG and H. Bögel Beteiligungsgesellschaft mbH (together "Bögel") both of Germany by the Wilmar group of Singapore and AGRAVIS group of Germany. Bögel is active in the international wholesale of animal feed ingredients including palm kernel expeller which is a by-product of palm oil extraction. Wilmar is active along the oil production value chain. AGRAVIS is active in the cooperatively organised agricultural trade and the production and sale of compound animal feed, mainly in Germany. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because of the limited overlaps between the companies' activities. Moreover, a number of strong wholesale traders will continue supplying palm kernel expeller but also other non-grain feedstuff ingredients in competition with Bögel in the European Economic Area (EEA). 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.7854](#).

### **EUROSTAT: May 2016-Euro area unemployment at 10.1%-EU28 at 8.6%**

The **euro area** (EA19) seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 10.1% in May 2016, down from 10.2% in April 2016 and from 11.0% in May 2015. This is the lowest rate recorded in the **euro area** since July 2011. The **EU28** unemployment rate was 8.6% in May 2016, down from 8.7% in April 2016 and from 9.6% in May 2015. This is the lowest rate recorded in the **EU28** since March 2009. These figures are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. Full text available on EUROSTAT [here](#)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **High-level EU participation at the Western Balkans Summit in Paris, focusing on connectivity and youth**

On Monday, 4 July, four Members of the College will participate in the Western Balkans Summit and a number of side events. The High Representative/Vice-President, Federica **Mogherini**, will attend the Summit event hosted by French President François Hollande, addressing the Heads of State and Government on behalf of the President of the Commission, Jean-Claude **Juncker**. The Summit will provide an opportunity for participants to discuss developments that have a regional importance such as migration, security issues including the fight against extremism, jobs and economic growth. Youth and connectivity are two other key focus areas of the Summit and associated side events, with leaders expected to sign an Agreement on the establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office of the Western Balkans as well as confirming a new set of reforms, including the establishment of a regional market for electricity, and endorsing a new package of investment projects covering railway infrastructure, renewables and energy efficiency. The European Union has pledged up to €1 billion in co-financing of investment projects until 2020, and has so far delivered one-third of this. In parallel to the Summit, the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes **Hahn**, will join Foreign Ministers to take stock of the Enlargement process and to discuss the connectivity and youth agenda, economic development and common challenges such as radicalisation, the fight against terrorism, and migration. Commissioner Hahn will also participate at the Business Forum, which takes place in the morning. Commissioner for

Transport Violeta **Bulc** will address Economy Ministers to highlight some of the priority actions and reforms to be undertaken in the transport sector in order to better connect the region to the EU. Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics** will also participate in a side event in Paris, in the Western Balkan Youth Conference, where he will give a keynote speech focussing on the role of education, formal and non-formal, in enabling young people to find jobs and their place in society - through skills development, Erasmus+ and [further steps](#) to support Member States in tackling violent radicalisation leading to terrorism, which were recently presented by the European Commission. Coverage of the event will be available on [EbS](#).

**MEX/16/2379**

## Upcoming Events.

**30 June-Friday 1 July:** [College travels to Bratislava to meet with the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU](#) On 30 June and 1 July, the College of Commissioners is travelling to Bratislava for its traditional visit to the incoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union, which in the second semester of 2016 will be held by the Slovak Republic. President Juncker and the Commission Members will discuss the priorities of the Slovak Presidency during a plenary session with the Slovak government. Before participating in a plenary meeting of the National Council – the Slovak Parliament – the College will engage in four cluster meetings with members of the Slovak government, grouped around the themes: external relations, security, migration and justice; energy and climate policy, transport and natural resources; growth, competitiveness and internal market; and the EU Budget, Economic and Monetary Union, and the social agenda

**Friday 22 July: The Commission adopts its monthly infringements package** Adoption of monthly infringements package. These decisions seek to enforce EU law across Europe so that citizens and businesses can benefit fully from the internal market.



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