



Friday, 08 July, 2016

Agriculture: Commission publishes Short-Term Outlook report

The Commission today published the Short-Term Outlook for EU arable crops, dairy and meat markets in 2016 and 2017. Thanks to the boost in exports to China, EU pigmeat exports are expected to reach a record level in 2016 at 2.4 million tonnes (+18% on annual basis). Current negotiations for access to other markets could even further improve the export situation. EU beef gross production is expected to further increase by 2.4% due to a higher number of slaughterings and very dynamic live exports. As for dairy, EU prices have since the first week of May started increasing for butter, whole milk powder and whey powder and to a lesser extent for skimmed milk powder, cheddar and gouda. As was the case in 2009, these developments are not reflected in milk prices paid to farmers as the EU dairy market remains oversupplied. Despite the maintenance of the Russian ban, EU dairy exports are overall expected to increase by 5% in 2016, which means 900,000 tonnes of milk more than last year. The EU cereal production for the marketing year 2015/2016 is expected to be high, only 5.4% below the record 2014/2015 harvest, at 310 million tonnes of usable production. *Read full report below*

- [Short-term outlook for EU arable crops, dairy and meat markets in 2016 and 2017](#)
- [EU balance sheets and production details by Member State](#)

RegioStars Awards 2016: jury selects 23 finalists as Europe's most notable regional projects

Today the Commission announced the finalists for the 2016 RegioStars Awards, which honour Europe's most notable and innovative projects supported by Cohesion Policy Funds. An independent jury led by MEP Lambert Van Nistelrooij selected [23 finalists](#) from regions and cities in 14 Member States: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom, on the basis of four criteria: innovation, impact, sustainability and partnership. The jury will later select one winning project in each of the following five categories: 1) "Smart Growth", for innovative projects creating new opportunities in the global economy, 2) "Sustainable Growth" for exemplary projects in the field of Circular Economy, 3) "Inclusive Growth", for projects promoting social inclusion, 4) "CityStars", rewarding solutions for sustainable urban development, and for the first time, in this 9th edition of the RegioStars Awards, 5) "Effective Management", for outstanding innovation in the fields of simplification and efficient management of the funds. The winners will be announced during the 2016 RegioStars Award ceremony, which will take place on 11 October, during the [2016 European Week of Regions and Cities](#).

EUROSTAT First population estimates - EU population up to slightly over 510 million at 1 January 2016... .. despite a first ever negative natural change

On 1 January 2016, the population of the **European Union** (EU) was estimated at 510.1 million, compared with 508.3 million on 1 January 2015. During the year 2015, almost 5.1 million babies were born in the **EU**, while more than 5.2 million persons died, meaning that the EU recorded for the first time ever a negative natural change of its population. The remainder of the change (positive) is driven mainly by net migration. [Full text available on EUROSTAT website](#)

Press conference by President Juncker, President Tusk and President of the United States, Barack Obama

Following the EU-US leaders' meeting which took place this morning in Warsaw ahead of the NATO Summit, President **Juncker** underlined the centrality of the US, NATO and the EU to the global order. "*We complement each other and together we provide security to Europe, our neighbourhood and beyond*" President **Juncker** said, adding that we can still work more closely together – "*that's why we're here today*", he added. On the morning's meetings, which included discussions on the consequences entailed by British vote to leave the European Union, President **Juncker** repeated that there is no negotiation until the British authorities have notified under Article 50 (TEU) their intention to leave the European Union, but added "*I do think that even after the referendum the European Union and the United Kingdom share a community of interest, not only in the defence and the military sector, but in all the relevant sectors of the international life mainly as far as trade is concerned*", reiterating the commitment to keep Britain as a strong ally in NATO and as a strong partner. Finally, President **Juncker** confirmed that TTIP had been discussed, and added that "*we want to conclude these negotiations before the end of this year*" for which the European Commission has received a mandate from EU Heads of State or Government. President **Juncker's** remarks are available [online](#).

President Juncker to interview candidate for Commissioner from the United Kingdom

Following the nomination by British Prime Minister David Cameron of Sir Julian King as the candidate to replace outgoing Commissioner Lord **Hill**, President Jean-Claude **Juncker** will receive him on Monday, 11 July at 11:00 (CET) for an interview. The purpose of the interview will be to determine the candidate's ability to serve as a European Commissioner, particularly in light of Article 17(3) of the [Treaty on European Union](#) (TEU), which states that: "*The members of the Commission shall be chosen on the ground of their general competence and European commitment from persons whose independence is beyond doubt.*" Procedurally, the appointment of a new Commissioner of UK nationality requires common accord between the President of the Commission and the Council after the consultation of the European Parliament (Article 246, subparagraph 2 of the [Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#)). In addition, the Interinstitutional [Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the European Commission](#) requires the President of the Commission to "seriously consider" the results of the consultation of the European Parliament – which will audition the candidate – before giving his accord to the decision of the Council to appoint the new Commissioner (para 6 of the Framework Agreement). Following the [decision of Commissioner Lord Hill to resign](#) from the European Commission and on the transfer of the Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union portfolio to Vice-President Valdis **Dombrovskis**, which will take effect on 16 July, Prime Minister Cameron informed President Juncker on 7 July of his wish to nominate Sir Julian King as the member of the European Commission of UK nationality.

Statement by Vice-President Ansip and Commissioner Jourová on the occasion of the adoption by Member States of the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield

"Today Member States have given their strong support to the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield, the renewed safe framework for transatlantic data flows. This paves the way for the formal adoption of the legal texts and for getting the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield up and running. The EU-U.S. Privacy Shield will ensure a high level of protection for individuals and legal certainty for business. It is fundamentally different from the old 'Safe Harbour'. It imposes clear and strong obligations on companies handling the data and makes sure that these rules are followed and enforced in practice. For the first time, the U.S. has given the EU written assurance that the access of public authorities for law enforcement and national security will be subject to clear limitations, safeguards and oversight mechanisms and has ruled out indiscriminate mass surveillance of European citizens' data. And last but not least the Privacy Shield protects Europeans' rights and provides for several accessible and affordable redress mechanisms. During the formal adoption process, the Commission has consulted as broadly as possible taking on board the input of key stakeholders, notably the independent data protection authorities and the European Parliament. Both consumers and companies can now have full confidence in the new arrangement, which reflects the requirements of the European Court of Justice. Today's vote by the Member States is a strong sign of confidence." The statement is available [online](#) and more information on the Privacy Shield is available [here](#) .

Commission gets go-ahead for €6.7 billion investment in transport projects

The EU Member States today formally approved [the list of 195 transport projects](#) that will receive **€6.7 billion of EU funding** under the 2015 calls for proposals of the [Connecting Europe Facility](#) (CEF). This list had been put forward by the Commission on 17 June (see [Press release](#), [MEMO](#) and [press conference](#)). Along with the Commission's [Investment Plan](#), the CEF is instrumental in bridging the investment gap in Europe and stimulating the EU economy. The investment confirmed today by the Member States will unlock additional public and private co-financing for a combined amount of €9.6 billion, and is expected to create up to 100,000 jobs by 2030. Commissioner for Transport Violeta **Bulc** said: *"I am glad we have the support of the Member States for our multi-billion investment in 195 priority transport projects. The bulk of this funding has been allocated to central and eastern Europe, which will help bridge the deployment gap between EU regions. In doing so, the Connecting Europe Facility contributes to better, greener and safer transport all across Europe."* Individual project grant agreements will now be prepared by the [Innovation and Networks Executive Agency](#) (INEA) and signed with the project beneficiaries by the end of the year.

Climate Action: EU launches €3.5 million emissions trading cooperation project with Korea

Today, the EU launched a cooperation project with the Republic of Korea to support the implementation of East Asia's first national emissions trading system. The project, which is valued at €3.5 million and expected to run for three years, marks a new chapter in climate change cooperation, which plays an important part in the [Strategic Partnership between the EU and Korea](#). The Korean Emissions Trading System (KETS) established in 2015, is the main policy measure for achieving Korea's greenhouse gas reduction targets under the Paris Agreement – the new global climate change agreement agreed by world leaders last December. With more than a decade of experience with the EU emissions trading system (EU ETS), the EU is providing technical assistance during the early years of operation of the KETS. Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel **Arias Cañete** said: *"We are living up to the promises made in Paris. With our cooperation project with China and now Korea, we are sharing more than a decade of pioneering EU experience in emissions trading and demonstrating our support for domestic carbon market initiatives. I hope that China's and now Korea's experience can be a trigger to expand emissions trading systems across the region. We need resolute action by all countries to keep climate change in check as we agreed in Paris."* Recently, the Commission also announced it was stepping up its collaboration with China on emissions trading, with a new € 10 million (more than 70 million yuan) project, also funded under the [EU's Foreign Partnership Instrument](#). Emissions trading is playing an increasingly important role in China, where a nationwide carbon market will be launched in 2017.

Commission launches new anti-dumping investigations on hot-rolled steel products

The European Commission [has launched an investigation](#) to determine whether imports of hot-rolled steel products originating in Brazil, Iran, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine have been dumped on the EU market. These products are used as an input into other steel products as well as directly in a variety of industrial applications, including for construction, shipbuilding, gas containers, pressure vessels and energy pipelines. This investigation follows the [ongoing anti-dumping](#) and [anti-subsidy investigations](#) into similar products from China, launched in February and May respectively. In total, the EU has 37 anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures already in place. The Commission now has up to nine months to establish whether conditions to impose provisional countervailing duties are met, and a further six months to decide whether to impose definitive measures. Anti-dumping investigations follow a strict procedure in line with EU and WTO rules, during which all interested parties can make comments and attend hearings.

State aid: Commission opens in-depth investigations into tax exemptions for Belgian and French ports

The European Commission has opened two in-depth probes to check if corporate tax exemptions granted under Belgian and French law to ports' economic activities are in line with EU state aid rules and whether they give companies in a certain sector an advantage over competitors in other Member States.

Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, in charge of competition policy, said: "*Ports play a key role in the EU's economy. Our competition rules reflect that and allow Member States to support the construction or upgrade of port infrastructure through investment aid. However, tax exemptions shouldn't distort competition by giving an unfair advantage to some ports over others in Europe.*"

Cross-border competition plays an important role in the ports sector and the Commission is committed to ensuring a level playing field in this important economic sector.

Mergers: Commission approves joint venture between Singapore Airlines and Airbus for the supply of maintenance, repair and overhaul services

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the creation of a joint venture by the Singapore Airlines group and the Airbus group. Singapore Airlines is active worldwide in the provision of air passenger and cargo transportation services as well as engineering services such as airframe maintenance and overhaul services. Airbus is active in aeronautics, space and defence-related services. The joint venture would provide maintenance, repair and overhaul services to commercial airlines that have their principal place of business in the Asia-Pacific region and are operating Airbus A350 XWB, A380 or A330 aircraft. The joint venture's activity would focus on heavy and line maintenance and would be based in Singapore. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns because the companies' combined market shares are low and several alternative suppliers would remain active after the merger in the markets for heavy and line maintenance. 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.8011](#).

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of BANIF by Banco Santander Totta

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the takeover of certain assets and liabilities of BANIF by Banco Santander Totta (BST), part of the Santander Group of Spain. Both BANIF

and BST are active in retail banking, corporate banking and card payment services in Portugal. BANIF has a strong presence in Madeira and the Azores. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns given that the overlaps between BANIF and BST's activities are limited at national level. For Madeira and the Azores, no concerns arise either, given that BANIF and BST are not close competitors and that most Portuguese banks are also present in Madeira and the Azores and have a uniform pricing policy for entire Portugal. The proposed transaction was examined under the normal merger review procedure. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#) under the case number [M.7947](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Komel – Tel.: +32 229 61175)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Seventh Eastern Partnership Informal Partnership Dialogue takes place in Kyiv

On Monday 11 and Tuesday 12 July, the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes **Hahn**, the Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, and the Deputy Secretary General of the European External Action Service, Helga Schmid, on behalf of High Representative/Vice-President, Federica **Mogherini**, will travel to Kyiv to participate in the seventh Eastern Partnership (EaP) Informal Partnership Dialogue. The meeting is hosted by Ukraine and brings together EU representatives as well as the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy of the six EaP partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine) for informal, high-level discussions on the further development of the Eastern Partnership and on international issues. The meeting will be an opportunity for the participants to reflect on the implementation of the renewed European Neighbourhood Policy and to discuss ways of enhancing the effectiveness of the EaP in preparation for the next EaP summit, foreseen for 2017. Ministers of Economy will engage in a discussion on economic reforms to unleash the potential of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The Informal Partnership Dialogues are held twice a year and hosted in turn by the EaP partner countries.

Commissioner Thyssen meets national parliaments on the yellow card procedure for posted workers

On Monday 11 July, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**, will travel to Bratislava to meet representatives of the national parliaments of the Member States. The Commissioner will speak at the meeting of National Parliament Committees dealing with EU affairs (COSAC), chaired by the [Slovak Presidency of the Council](#) of the European Union, on the social dimension of the EU. In this context the Commissioner will underline the priority President Juncker has given to the social agenda for Europe, the proposal for a [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) and address the yellow card procedure triggered by national parliaments in 11 Member States on the Commission's [proposal to revise the 1996 Posted Workers Directive](#). Ahead of the meeting Commissioner Thyssen said: "*The core objective of our European social market economy model is to ensure that competitiveness, growth and social progress go hand in hand. The Internal Market is our single biggest achievement of that model but it is not, and has never been, a market without rules. How to ensure free movement whilst combining it with a fair level playing field and adequate social protection merits a thorough democratic debate in which national parliaments have their role, alongside the EU institutions.*" Commissioner **Thyssen**'s speech will be made available [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Monday 11 - Friday 15 July: 14th round of negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership The 14th round of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations between the EU and the US will take place from 11 to 15 July in Brussels. This third round in six months continues the very intensive period of talks which started.

Tuesday 12 - Wednesday 13 July: EU-China Summit in Beijing On Tuesday 12 and Wednesday 13 July, European Commission President Juncker and European Council President Tusk will represent the EU at the 18th bilateral Summit between the European Union and China, in Beijing.

Friday 15 - Saturday 16 July: 11th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Under the theme "20 Years of ASEM: Partnership for the Future through Connectivity", the 11th Asia-Europe Meeting – the ASEM summit – will take place on Friday 15 and Saturday 16 July 2016 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

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.