



Thursday, 08 September, 2016

### **Preparation of the Eurogroup and informal ECOFIN Council meetings, Bratislava 9-10 September**

Vice-President **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President **Katainen** and Commissioner **Moscovici** will represent the Commission at the Eurogroup and informal ECOFIN Council meetings in Bratislava. Vice-President **Dombrovskis** and Commissioner **Moscovici** will participate in the [Eurogroup meeting](#), where the agenda includes discussions on progress in Greece's stability support programme, the quality of public finances, the procedural preparations for the assessment of [Draft Budgetary Plans](#), the fiscal situation of Spain and Portugal and exchange rate developments. Commissioner **Moscovici** will represent the Commission in the [press conference](#) concluding the meeting. The informal ECOFIN Council's [agenda](#) focusses on the future of EU economic policies, the deepening of the economic and monetary union, taxation issues and the [Investment Plan for Europe](#). Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will participate in the [press conference](#) closing the sessions taking place on 9 September, while Vice-President **Katainen** will take part in the [press conference](#) concluding the sessions taking place on 10 September

### **EU announces more projects under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey: €348 million in humanitarian aid to refugees in Turkey**

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** announced today the largest ever EU humanitarian aid programme – the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN). It will be rolled out by the World Food programme (WFP) in partnership with the Turkish Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), the Turkish Red Crescent and the Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policy (MoFSP) to address the everyday needs of refugees in Turkey. This is largest ever humanitarian programme using direct cash-transfers to cover the everyday needs of the most vulnerable refugee families in Turkey. The Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN), financed with €348 million by the EU and its Member States under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey, is the first social assistance scheme of its kind, marrying international humanitarian know-how and government services to reach out to one million refugees across Turkey. Through it, the European Commission continues to respect its commitments under the EU-Turkey Statement. *"In line with the EU and its Members States' strong commitment to support vulnerable refugees in Turkey, the unprecedented scale of the ESSN will make a significant difference in the lives of men, women and children who have had to flee conflict and violence. Together with the World Food Programme and our Turkish partners we have developed an innovative system that can deliver what people need, where it is needed most, and in the most effective way possible. Through the ESSN, our contribution will be more effectively directed to vulnerable refugees. This is a game changer in the delivery of international humanitarian aid. I would like to take this opportunity to commend Turkey on its unparalleled generosity in supporting refugees in the country"* said

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides**. A [press release](#) and an updated [factsheet](#) are online.

### **Federica Mogherini and Johannes Hahn in Ankara for the High Level Political Dialogue**

Tomorrow, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission Federica **Mogherini** and Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes **Hahn** will pay an official visit to [Turkey](#). They will chair the EU Turkey High Level Political Dialogue where they will discuss all issues of common interest and concern with Foreign Affairs Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and EU Minister Ömer Çelik. A press conference will follow the meeting which will be retransmitted live on [EbS](#). Federica **Mogherini** and Johannes **Hahn** will also attend a ceremony for the victims of the attempted coup. They will reiterate the position of the European Union which unequivocally and immediately condemned the attempted coup against the legitimate and democratically elected institutions. The HRVP and the Commissioner will take this opportunity to stress, once again, once again and as confirmed at the informal meeting of the EU foreign ministers in Bratislava, the full solidarity to the people and institutions of Turkey and the importance of the rule of law. They will also meet with political authorities and representatives of the main political parties. Videos and photos of the visit will be available on [EbS](#).

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Lampiris by Total**

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of Lampiris S.A. of Belgium by Total S.A. through its subsidiary Elf Aquitaine S.A.S., both of France. Lampiris is active in the supply of natural gas and green electricity to retail and industrial customers in France and Belgium, as well as in the production of renewable energy in Belgium. Total, together with its subsidiaries, is an international energy producer and provider mainly active in the oil and gas sector. The companies' activities overlap on a number of markets. However, the Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the companies' limited individual and combined positions on the markets concerned. 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.8123](#).

### **EUROSTAT: European Heritage Days - How satisfied are inhabitants of EU capital cities with cultural facilities? - Very or rather satisfied in all capitals but one**

“Generally speaking, please tell me if you are very satisfied, rather satisfied, rather unsatisfied or not at all satisfied with cultural facilities such as concert halls, theatres, museums and libraries in your city?” inhabitants of 83 European cities were asked in 2015. Results show significant disparities between capital cities in the **European Union** (EU), with levels of satisfaction ranging from 34% to 97%. [Full text available on EUROSTAT website](#)

### **STATEMENTS**

**Statement by Vice-President Ansip and Commissioner Oettinger on the end of roaming charges in the EU**

Following the [publication of draft measures](#) related to the end of roaming charges for European travellers as of 15 June 2017, Vice-President **Ansip**, in charge of the Digital Single Market, and Commissioner **Oettinger**, in charge of the Digital Economy and Society, said: *"Getting rid of roaming charges is one of the best achievements of the European Union in the last few years, and a cornerstone for building the Digital Single Market. For more than a decade, the Commission has been working to reduce the huge surcharges that telecoms operators imposed on their customers each time they crossed a border while using their mobile device on holiday, at the week-end or during business trips (...) We are now at the final hurdle: the complete abolition of roaming charges for European travellers in the EU. This will enter into effect as of 15 June 2017. Those of us who travel do so on average for 12 days per year. But the Commission goes much further by abolishing roaming charges for at least 90 days per year, much more than the average time that a European is roaming with their phone. So in practice these charges will disappear for the vast majority of us. 99% of European travellers are covered. In any event, 90 days is the strict minimum. Mobile phone companies can always offer more or even choose not to apply limits at all. Some have already done so, and we strongly encourage this (...) Without a few safeguards to avoid abuses - safeguards that the European Parliament and Council have asked the Commission to specify - network quality and investments in new capacity in some countries may suffer as people could opt for different territorial operators, and the domestic mobile prices might go up as operators would try to compensate losses. Those who travel to and from work, crossing borders every day, are not concerned by the minimum of 90 days (...) Finally, Europeans will be able to spend their holidays in peace, without the worry of big phone bills when they come home."* The full statement can be found [here](#).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **Energy: European Commission to build on the successful regional gas cooperation in Central and South Eastern Europe**

On 9 September, Commission Vice-President for Energy Union Maroš **Šefčovič** and Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy Miguel **Arias Cañete** will travel to Budapest to further build on the successful work of the Central Eastern and South-Eastern European Gas Connectivity (CESEC) High Level Group. Ministers of 15 European Member States and Energy Community countries as well as of contracting parties will discuss progress achieved on the implementation of cross-border gas links as well as on actions allowing for the creation of a liquid gas market in the region. In order for the countries to fully benefit from the potential of the region, the meeting will also see a discussion on the possibility to broaden the regional energy cooperation to other areas such as electricity, renewables and energy efficiency. Vice-President **Šefčovič** said: *"Our energy diplomacy is bearing fruit in allowing new sources of energy to arrive on Europe's shores from the Caspian Sea, East Mediterranean or the emerging global LNG market. But in order to harvest these fruits, we must prepare our internal market to distributing the new sources across borders. CESEC has proven instrumental in the process of integration the region's gas markets and has thus become a central channel for further integration across the energy sector."* Commissioner **Arias Cañete** said: *"The success of this Commission initiative shows that the regional approach works if underpinned by high level political commitment by Member States and a clear roadmap. While we celebrate the achievements in building the missing gas links between countries, we will also look for new horizons and take our cooperation to new areas such as integrating electricity markets and boosting efficiency and renewables in the CESEC region."* Since its launch by the Commission in 2015, the CESEC Initiative has already resulted in rapid development of the infrastructure in the region and implementation of EU market rules which help ensure fairer prices for consumers and efficient functioning of competitive energy markets. The Energy Union aims at guaranteeing that all countries in Central and South East Europe will have access to at least three different sources of energy in the future, and works intensively to make sure that all countries in the regions are well interconnected to the rest of Europe.

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## COMING UP

**Wednesday 14 September: President Juncker delivers his State of the Union address at the European Parliament** Jean-Claude Juncker, will deliver his State of the Union address at the European Parliament. The speech will be followed by a plenary debate.



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