



Friday, 28 October, 2016

### **Human and Animal Health: Commission continues fight against Antimicrobial Resistance with announcement of second Action Plan**

The EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis **Andriukaitis** confirmed the renewed commitment in tackling antimicrobial resistance (AMR) that is one of the biggest health threats facing humanity today. *"The EU has always been at the forefront in the fight against Antimicrobial resistance and this will remain an important priority for the Commission beyond 2016. We intend to publish in 2017 the next Action Plan that will continue to establish the EU as the leader in the fight against antimicrobial resistance"*, Commissioner **Andriukaitis** said. The new Action Plan will take the form of a Commission communication to the European Parliament and the Council and builds on the previous plan that is coming to an end in 2016. The plan will also bring together EU funds and instruments in order to promote innovation and research against AMR. Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Carlos **Moedas**, said: *"Since 1999, the EU has invested over €1 billion in research projects to tackle the public threat of antimicrobial resistance. Soon, we will announce the winner of the €1 million Horizon prize that addresses the issue of unnecessary use of antibiotics."* Antimicrobial Resistance is the ability of microorganisms to resist antimicrobial treatments, especially antibiotics. AMR not only has a direct impact on human and animal health - due to the failure in the treatment of infectious diseases - but also carries a heavy economic cost. AMR is responsible for more than 25 000 deaths per year in Europe alone. For more information see the full [press release](#).

### **European Commission supports Ukraine on its reform path [updated on 28/10/2016 at 12:20, adding quote by Commissioner Hahn]**

The European Commission strongly supports the comprehensive reform agenda of the Ukrainian government. The level and depth of assistance, unprecedented in the European Union's relations with a third country, is outlined in a report on the impact of the Support Group for Ukraine ([SGUA](#)) in the first 18 months of its activities, published today. Johannes **Hahn**, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations said: *"This report on the first 18 months of the Support Group for Ukraine's work reflects the very important progress Ukraine has made on reforms spanning anti-corruption and rule of law, management of the economy, and the energy sector, and decentralisation. Many of the key steps and notable new laws have been undertaken with the assistance of the Support Group which is proving to be an excellent tool to foster reform and co-ordinate EU efforts. This support is just a start: and the Support Group for Ukraine will continue to contribute to reform success in Ukraine in the years to come"*. The full [press release](#) is available online. The [report](#) of the 18 months of SGUA and the

factsheet "[Ukraine's reform achievements and EU's support](#)" are available online. The factsheet "[EU-Ukraine relations](#)" is also available.

## **Commission welcomes first major Marine Protected Area in the Ross Sea as a landmark decision for the Antarctic**

Today, after 5 years of negotiations, the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) agreed to establish a marine protected area (MPA) in the Ross Sea Region – the first major MPA in the history of the Antarctic. Commissioner Karmenu **Vella**, European Commissioner for Environment, Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, expressed his deep satisfaction with the result: *"The establishment of the first major Marine Protected Area in Antarctic waters is not just an important step for CCAMLR, but also a significant milestone in the European Union's push for comprehensive and more effective international ocean governance. I hope today's decision prepares the ground for the other protected areas which have been proposed by the EU, such as the Weddell Sea and East Antarctica."* The CCAMLR annual meeting in Hobart, Australia, took several other important decisions, many of them on the basis of EU proposals. In particular, members agreed to launch a second performance review. This will allow for the strengthening of the organisation in line with the objectives of the EU Common Fisheries Policy, notably the sustainable management of living marine resources. Significant progress was also achieved in the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Members strengthened the obligations related to vessel authorisation and tightened the rules of the IUU listing procedures. Members also agreed to facilitate scientific research and exploration of marine areas that have become exposed following the retreat or collapse of ice shelves around the Antarctic Peninsula. The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) was established by an international convention in 1982 with the objective of conserving Antarctic marine life. The establishment of CCAMLR was a response to the increasing commercial interest in Antarctic krill resources (a keystone component of the Antarctic ecosystem) and to the history of over-exploitation of several other marine resources in the Southern Ocean. The EU is a member of CCAMLR, together with Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA, and Uruguay.

## **EFSI in Denmark: EIF and the Danish Growth Fund (Vækstfonden) sign an agreement to finance agricultural businesses**

The European Investment Fund (EIF) and The Danish Growth Fund (Vækstfonden) have signed a COSME agreement in Denmark, guaranteed by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the heart of the [Investment Plan for Europe](#). The COSME-EFSI guarantee agreement will allow Vækstfonden to support DKK 180,000,000 (ca. EUR 24.2m) of loans to agricultural Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Denmark over the next three years. The agreement will make it possible for Vækstfonden to support additional financing at favourable conditions to around 75 young farmers wishing to acquire a farm. European Commissioner for Agriculture, Phil **Hogan**, said: *"Agriculture is the heartbeat of rural areas. To ensure the continued viability of rural Europe, we need to invest in our farmers. Thanks to the Investment Plan for Europe, small agri businesses across Denmark will now be able to grow and expand. This is a concrete example of the EU delivering for citizens in rural areas and I hope to see more such EFSI agreements in the near future."* **For more information see [here](#).**

## **EUROSTAT: Household real income per capita up in both the euro area and the EU28 Real consumption per capita stable in the euro area and up in the EU28**

In the euro area, in real terms, household income per capita increased by 0.2% in the second quarter of 2016, after an increase of 1.0% in the previous quarter. Household real consumption per capita was stable in the second quarter of 2016, after an increase of 0.9% in the first quarter of 2016. More information [here](#)

## **European companies awarded for their green business solutions**

On 27 October, the winners of the European Business Awards for the Environment 2016-17 were announced. Businesses are quickly recognising that shifting to a circular economy makes sound economic sense. The Commission's 'European Business Awards for the Environment' rewards the best of these pioneers for their eco-innovative practices and products in the EU and candidate countries. They are an important part of the Commission's toolbox for the implementation of the [Circular Economy Action Plan](#) adopted in December 2015. From micro start-ups to global brands this year's winners are: HiPP-Werk Georg Hipp OHG baby-food manufacturer, Germany; Ladybird Farm leisure centre, Hungary; CMS Window Systems, United Kingdom; M2i Life Sciences for the protection of crops, France; Fairphone BV smartphones, Netherlands; and Hydromx International A.S., Turkey. Karmenu **Vella**, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries said: "*Companies competing for the Business awards for the Environment represent the true agents of change in Europe's transition towards a circular economy. They show that innovation, economic viability and environmental protection can go together. Green solutions can be incorporated in the business model of a company of any size, at any stage, in any sector or country.*" A [press release](#) is available online.

## **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Medical Depot Holdings by Clayton, Dubilier & Rice**

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the proposed acquisition of Medical Depot Holdings by Clayton, Dubilier & Rice (CD&R), both of the US. Medical Depot Holdings is active globally in the manufacturing and, through its subsidiaries, in the distribution of certain medical home care equipment. CD&R is a global equity investor, controlling a number of portfolio companies active in a variety of sectors. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because it creates no overlaps between the companies' activities. 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.[8219](#).

## **Commission recommends clearer tax rules to support small producers of alcoholic beverages and to fight the sale of dangerous counterfeit alcohol**

The Commission has today published a series of recommendations to improve the current EU framework for excise duty on alcoholic drinks. While the current rules work well, they are over 20 years old and in clear need of updating in the context of our fight against tax fraud. For example, more clarity and research is needed on the existing exemption for denatured alcohol which can be used to produce dangerous counterfeit alcoholic drinks. The Commission is also keen to reduce costs for smaller businesses. Reduced rates of excise duty could be made more consistent to benefit a wider range of small producers of beer, wine and other alcoholic beverages. It is now for EU Member States to take these recommendations

forward and decide if they want to make changes to existing rules. Today's report follows last year's public consultation on this issue. Excise duties are indirect taxes on the sale or use of specific products. They are usually applied as an amount per quantity of the product - e.g. per 1,000 litres in the case of alcohol. Revenues from excise duty go directly to the coffers of EU Member States. The full report is available [here](#).

## **EUROSTAT: Second generation immigrants in the EU generally well integrated into the labour market and have high educational attainment**

What is the educational and labour market performance of second generation immigrants in the European Union (EU)? How do the native-born descendants of immigrants perform in contrast to their counterparts with native-born parents? How do they develop compared with first generation immigrants? Does the origin of their foreign-born parents influence their performance? The answers to these questions and many more can be found in the series of Statistics Explained articles on second generation immigrants that have just been published by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. A larger range of data is available in the Eurostat database. More information [here](#)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Federica Mogherini travels to Cyprus, Tunisia and Malta**

High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Federica **Mogherini** is today in [Cyprus](#) and she will travel to [Tunisia](#) on Monday 1 November and to [Malta](#) on 2 November. In Cyprus, together with Commissioner Christos **Stylianides**, she will meet with President Nicos Anastasiades, Foreign Minister Ioannis Kassoulides as well as Mustafa Akıncı, leader of Turkish Cypriot community. The Cyprus issue and the latest foreign affairs developments are on the agenda of the visit. The visit to Tunis comes just after the adoption of the Joint Communication '[Strengthening EU support to Tunisia](#)' strengthening the European Union's support to Tunisia's democratic transition and to promoting the country socio-economic development. The HRVP will meet with Beji Caïd Essebsi, President of the Republic, Youssef Chahed, Head of Government, Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs, other members of government, as well as representatives of young leaders' associations. She will then participate at the inauguration of the project on the depollution of the Lake of Bizerte (North Tunisia) and on the Mediterranean Sea together with Tunisians authorities, the Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean, European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In Bizerte, Federica **Mogherini** will also meet students and civil society representatives. On Wednesday, the HRVP will travel to Malta where she will meet Prime Minister Joseph Muscat, Minister for Foreign Affairs George Vella, and Minister for Home Affairs and National Security Hon Carmelo Abela. Federica Mogherini will then address the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC) and students at the University of Malta. . Her speech, followed by a Q&A session, will focus on the region of the Mediterranean. Federica **Mogherini** will also meet the Parliamentary Committee for Foreign and European Affairs and the Leader of the Opposition Simon Busuttil at the House of Representatives. More info on the debate is available [here](#). Videos and photos of the visit will be available on [EbS](#).

## **STATEMENTS**

## Statement by Commissioner Stylianides on deadly attacks on schools across Syria

Following deadly attacks on schools across Syria over recent days, Commissioner Christos **Stylianides** issued a statement calling for those responsible to be brought to justice. *"Deadly attacks on schools across Syria in Idlib, Western Aleppo and Douma which have left more than 25 children and several teachers dead are totally unacceptable. At this sad time of mourning, my first thoughts and condolences are with those who lost their beloved sons and daughters, mothers and fathers. (...) There cannot be any justification or impunity for such acts. Those responsible should be brought to justice. Civilians and civilian infrastructure, like schools and hospitals are meant to be protected by International Humanitarian Law. (...) I urge all parties to the conflict to ensure that the basic principles of humanity are respected and innocent lives are spared from the hostilities. This conflict has already brought enough suffering to the Syrian people. The EU remains committed to supporting the Syrian people with lifesaving humanitarian assistance."* Read the full statement [here](#).

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