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EUROSTAT: November 2016- Euro area unemployment at 9.8%- EU28 at 8.3%

The **euro area** (EA19) seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 9.8% in November 2016, stable compared to October 2016 and down from 10.5% in November 2015. This is the lowest rate recorded in the **euro area** since July 2009. The **EU28** unemployment rate was 8.3% in November 2016, down from 8.4% in October 2016 and from 9.0% in November 2015. This is the lowest rate recorded in the **EU28** since February 2009. These figures are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. Full text available [here](#)

EU promotes sustainable urban mobility

In line with the objectives of the Energy Union's low-emission mobility strategy, the EU is investing over €432 million from the Cohesion Fund in the extension of the Warsaw Metro.

Cities are hubs of growth and innovation, but also home to major challenges, not least air pollution and traffic congestion. With Cohesion Policy investments, the European Commission is delivering on the EU-wide goals of low-emission mobility and better quality of life for commuters.

The [major project](#) adopted today for Warsaw will fund the extension of the Metro Line 2, linking the Eastern part of the city to the West.

Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu** said: *"Sustainable urban mobility is crucial to the quality of life in our cities. By investing in the extension of the metro in Warsaw, we encourage people to change their habits, leave their cars and enjoy access to a fast and modern public transport system."*

The €432 million investment will finance the construction of six new metro stations: "Trocka", "Targówek", "Szwedzka" on the North-East section of the line and "Księżca Janusza", "Młynów" and "Płocka" on the West section. It will also finance the construction of a technical terminal, the purchase of 13 new trains as well as preparatory works for further extension of the line. Works are expected to be completed by November 2019. More information [here](#)

Investment Plan for Europe: Unlocking EUR 360 million for Italian SMEs

The European Investment Fund (EIF) has signed an umbrella agreement with six Italian financial institutions to provide EUR 360 million worth of guarantees to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the north and centre of Italy over the next three years. EIF is providing a counter-guarantee that will enable Artigiancredito Toscano (ACT), together with five 'confidis', to grant 10,000 Italian SMEs access to finance that would otherwise not have been available to them. This transaction was completed under the European Commission's [COSME programme](#) and benefits from the support of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the heart of the [Investment Plan for Europe](#). European Commission Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, said: *"Italian SMEs are already benefiting from the opportunities offered by the EFSI. I am proud that, with today's agreement, we will see 10,000 more benefit from the improved financing solutions that will allow them to innovate, grow and create jobs."* A full press release is [available here](#).

EU aid operations in Iraq: planes deliver over 260 tonnes of relief assistance

The European Commission is currently working alongside EU Member States to facilitate emergency aid deliveries in Iraq, to help people affected by the crisis in Mosul. Three additional planes carrying emergency assistance from Austria and France have now touched ground in Iraq, bringing the total number of flights facilitated and co-financed by the Commission to nine. To date, Austria, Germany, Denmark, Finland, France, Sweden as well as Norway have offered 266 tonnes (1636 cubic metres) of relief assistance through the [EU's Civil Protection Mechanism](#) to assist civilians displaced due to the Mosul military operations. *"The EU's aid operations in Iraq have now delivered urgently needed material such as tents, blankets, generators, hygiene articles, five tonnes of medicine and medical equipment. Let me thank all countries who have channelled support through the EU's Civil Protection Mechanism. This aid can make a real difference for civilians trapped inside Mosul and other locations affected by the conflict and those displaced by the fighting who are facing extremely dire conditions. It is crucial to ensure the protection of all civilians and the respect of International Humanitarian Law during and after the conduct of hostilities,"* said Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides**. Winterisation support and emergency trauma care are key priorities. Additional material will be shipped to Iraq in the coming weeks. The material assistance complements the EU's humanitarian aid to Iraq, of over €159 million in 2016 alone.

Upcoming events

- [Wednesday 11 January: the College travels to Valetta to meet the Maltese presidency of the Council](#)

MEX/17/22



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