

TODAYS  
News

Wednesday, 28 June, 2017

### **A European budget for tomorrow: Commission opens the debate on the future of EU finances**

While the EU has never done so much to protect its citizens, empower them and defend them, our resources are already exploited to the limit. At a time when Europe is facing its future, our Union needs a more adapted budget, where every euro is used to serve the citizens. The European Commission today publishes its discussion paper on the future of EU finances, which examines options for such a budget. In describing the potential budgetary implications of the choices available to us, the issues raised in this fifth and final reflection paper are at the heart of the debate launched on 1 March by the [Commission White Paper on the future of 'Europe](#). Commissioner Günther H. Oettinger, responsible for Budget and Human Resources, said: "If Europe faces new challenges, money must come from somewhere, we can spend less or find new revenues. In any case, every euro from the European budget must have added value and a positive impact on the daily lives of people." The Commissioner for Regional Policy, Corina Crețu, added: "It is time for us to give a new lease of life to our budget. Let's make it simpler, more flexible and reflect with ambition and imagination on how we can Making a powerful instrument that will help our economies grow faster, will encourage us to move closer and closer together, and leave no one behind in globalization." [A full press release is available here](#)

### **EU strengthens girls' visibility and participation in fighting violence against women and girls**

Tomorrow, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica**, will give the keynote speech at the launch event of a new global campaign by the aid agency World Vision, with the aim to end violence against women and girls. In this context, Commissioner **Mimica** said: *"Violence against girls has dramatic and life-long consequences – on its victims, their families, and on whole societies. It's up to all of us not to let this continue a day longer. The EU is already investing huge efforts to provide an empowering and safe environment for girls – from helping to reform legislation to protect girls from femicide and harmful practices to supporting girls who are victims of sexual violence. In order to increase our impact globally, we are currently working together with the United Nations on a ground-breaking Initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls around the world. We intend to officially launch it in September – so join us to make this change happen!"* The EU initiative and the new World Vision campaign come at the right time: a [recent report](#) found that in 2015, less than 0.6% of total global development spending was allocated to ending violence against children. The European Commission leads by example: between January 2011 and March 2017, the EU has supported children's rights through all sectors of its external relations with over €8 billion in 142 developing countries – almost 10% of which was directly dedicated to tackling child labour, trafficking of children, supporting children in armed conflicts, preventing harmful practices and sexual exploitation, as well as other violence-related projects.

## **Juncker Plan: nearly EUR 16 million to upgrade production facilities in Poland**

The [Juncker Plan](#) has backed a nearly EUR 16 million European Investment Bank (EIB) loan agreement with [Sits](#), a Polish furniture-making company. The agreement will allow Sits to expand its manufacturing and warehousing facilities, located in Grudziądz, in order to meet expected demand. Up to 500 new jobs are expected to be created in the construction phase of the project. More direct and indirect jobs are expected to be created once the plant becomes operational. This agreement was made possible by the support of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). The EFSI is the central pillar of the European Commission's Investment Plan for Europe, the so-called "Juncker Plan", and helps to ensure that European companies have the tools they need to compete in the global marketplace. Commissioner Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, responsible for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, said: *"Investment helps companies to upgrade their production and expand operations across Europe. I am glad that today's Juncker Plan-backed loan agreement will help the Polish furniture maker Sits to expand their facilities in Poland, grow its range of high-quality products and create new jobs along the way."* The Juncker Plan is now expected to trigger over EUR 6.5 billion in investments in Poland and EUR 209 billion across Europe. For the latest figures country-by-country, see [here](#). A full press release is available [here](#).

## **Juncker Plan: EUR 15 million to upgrade and expand healthcare facilities in Romania**

The [Juncker Plan](#) has backed a EUR 15 million European Investment Bank (EIB) loan agreement with Regina Maria, a private healthcare network in Romania. The agreement will allow Regina Maria to upgrade and expand its network of outpatient and inpatient facilities in Bucharest and elsewhere in the country through the construction and renovation of two hospitals and 15 outpatient centres. In addition to increasing healthcare capacity and improving the quality of medical services, this project is expected to support approximately 2,000 jobs. This agreement was made possible by the support of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). The EFSI is the central pillar of the European Commission's Investment Plan for Europe, the so-called "Juncker Plan". Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina **Crețu** said: *"The European Investment Bank is playing an important role in supporting economic growth in Romania. With the backing of the European Commission's Juncker Plan it can do even more. This agreement demonstrates the EU's strong commitment to supporting crucial social infrastructure upgrades."* The Juncker Plan is now expected to trigger almost EUR 800 million in investments in Romania and EUR 209 billion across Europe. For the latest figures country-by-country, see [here](#). A full press release is available [here](#).

## **Steering Committee of EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey meets today**

Today, the 7<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting of the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey takes place in Brussels. It brings together the European Commission, representatives of EU Member States, representatives of Turkey and the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee's rapporteur for Turkey Ms Kati Piri. On the occasion, Commissioner **Hahn** stressed: *"The EU Facility for Refugees continues to make a difference in the daily lives of many refugees. EU support gives Syrian refugees and host communities the opportunity to boost their skills and thus succeed on the labour market. I remain fully committed to helping Turkey improve the living conditions of the refugees in the country and I look forward to visiting some of our refugee support projects next week when I travel to Turkey."* Commissioner **Stylianides** added: *"We have already reached over 680,000 people through the Emergency Social Safety Net and the additional funding committed in May will enable us to reach 1.3 Million refugees by the end of the year. The Conditional Cash Transfer for Education programme has already reached the families of 56,000 refugee children. This is the EU's largest humanitarian aid operation ever and we continue working hard to provide vulnerable refugees in Turkey with aid, a sense of dignity, and hope."* During the Steering Committee meeting, the European Commission will report on the continuous progress under the EU

Facility. A full press release of the meeting will be available after 1pm [here](#). More information on the Facility [here](#)..

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of both Zur Mühlen and Asset Groups by Clemens and Robert Tönnies**

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control of both Zur Mühlen Group and the Asset Group by Clemens Tönnies and Robert Tönnies, all based in Germany. The Zur Mühlen Group and the Asset Group are active in meat processing in Germany and Poland. Currently, these undertakings are controlled by Clemens Tönnies and his son Maximilian Tönnies. With the transaction, both undertakings will be integrated into the Tönnies Family Holding, which is a meat industry business, primarily active in Germany and other European countries. The Commission concluded that the proposed change of control would raise no competition concerns given that the companies' activities have limited market shares in vertically related markets and only minimal direct overlaps. 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.8510](#).

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Bringing the EU closer to citizens – Commission launches new prize**

The European Commission has today started an EU-wide contest for the "Altiero Spinelli Prize for Outreach: Spreading Knowledge about Europe". This Prize will reward outstanding contributions that communicate the founding values, history, action and key benefits of the EU to citizens. Eligible participants include, for example, scholars, researchers, scientists, writers, journalists and artists who can contribute to articulating what Europe stands for today and tomorrow. This first-time Prize complements the [Jean Monnet Actions](#) – an Erasmus+ funded initiative supporting teaching and academic research programmes on EU studies. European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor Navracsics, said: *"I am pleased that the 'Altiero Spinelli Prize for Outreach' will recognise and reward quality works that effectively and creatively spread knowledge about Europe. We need to bring the EU, its benefits and achievements closer to citizens – giving visibility and European level recognition to such works will help us reach that goal."* The Altiero Spinelli Prize will award six first prizes of EUR 50.000; six second prizes of EUR 30.000 and ten third prizes of EUR 17.000. More information including the application documents and rules is available [here](#).

### **Commission appoints Director to its financial services department**

The Commission decided today to appoint Ms Nathalie de Basaldua Lemarchand to the position of Director for Investment and Company Reporting in its Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union department (DG FISMA). Ms De Basaldua, who holds a double Spanish and French nationality, joined the Commission in 1986. Throughout her career Ms De Basaldua worked on corporate finance, securities markets and banking issues, including as deputy chief of the private offices of two Commissioners, Charlie McCreevy and Jonathan Hill. She first became Head of Unit in 2004 and has been holding different management positions ever since. She is currently Acting Director for Investment and Company Reporting in DG FISMA.



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