



EURO-NET

The Youth European Network



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- to spread European opportunities and initiatives,
- to disseminate the respect of human rights and the awareness about the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity,
- to fight discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance and racism,
- to help, with youth activities, the democratic stability and social inclusion in Europe,
- develop active European citizenship and civil society by giving impetus to the training of youth leaders and youth workers working within a European dimension;
- to promote European youth activities, such as exchanges, seminars, conferences, debates and training courses,
- to encourage exchange of ideas, proposals, experiences and good practises at international level.

NEWSLETTER REALISED BY
THE ASSOCIATION EURO-NET
AS EUROPE DIRECT BASILICATA CENTRE



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1. EC calls to step up ambition in plans to implement Paris agreement

The Commission has published its assessment of Member States' draft plans to implement the EU's Energy Union objectives, and in particular the agreed EU 2030 energy and climate targets.

The Commission's assessment finds that the national plans already represent significant efforts but points to several areas where there is room for improvement, notably as concerns targeted and individualised policies to ensure the delivery of the 2030 targets and to stay on the path towards climate neutrality in the longer term. The European Union is the first major economy to put in place a legally binding framework to deliver on its pledges under the Paris Agreement and this is the first time that Member States have prepared draft integrated national energy and climate plans (NECPs). Yet, with plans currently falling short both in terms of renewables and



energy efficiency contributions, reaching the EU's overall climate and energy goals will require a collective step up of ambition. Vice-President for the Energy Union, Maroš Šefčovič said: *"These first national energy and climate plans bring the Energy Union to the national level: like the EU, Member States all present policies for the climate and energy transition in an integrated way and with a ten-year perspective. Member States have all produced impressive drafts in a relatively short time, but no draft is perfect. Final plans are due by the end of the year and our recommendations show where more effort is needed: for example, stronger ambition, more policy detail, better specified investment needs, or more work on social fairness. Clarity and predictability are a real competitive advantage for the European energy and*

climate policy. So let's make the best of this opportunity and give the national plans a solid final push." Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy, Miguel Arias Cañete said: *"Last November we proposed that the European Union should become climate neutral by 2050. We have shown and led the way forward. It is good to see that a growing number of Member States are following our lead and working towards that goal. Having evaluated Member States draft national plans, I am positive about the significant efforts that have been made. However, in the final plans even more ambition is needed to set the EU on the right track in fighting climate change and modernising our economy. I invite the Council to open a debate around the main priorities identified by the Commission and help ensure that the final plans contain an adequate level of ambition."* The EU is committed to delivering on its commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to delivering secure, affordable and sustainable energy for its citizens. We have created a unique system of energy and climate governance where both the Union and its Member States plan together and deliver collectively on our 2030 targets and on a socially-fair and cost-effective transition to a climate neutral economy by 2050. In its analysis of the draft national plans, the Commission looked at their aggregated contribution to meeting the EU's Energy Union objectives and 2030 targets. As they stand, the draft NECPs fall short both in terms of renewables and energy efficiency contributions. For renewables, the gap could be as big as 1.6 percentage points. For energy efficiency, the gap can be as big as 6.2 percentage points (if considering primary energy consumption) or 6 percentage points (if considering final energy consumption). The good news is that Member States now have 6 months to raise their national level of ambition. The Commission's recommendations and detailed assessments aim to help Member States finalise their plans by the end of 2019, and to implement them effectively in the years to come. The national plans should provide clarity and predictability for businesses and the financial sector to stimulate necessary private investments. The plans will also facilitate Member States' programming of funding from the next multi-annual financial framework 2021-2027.

Next steps

The EU's Energy Union laws require Member States to take due account of the Commission's recommendations or make public their reasons not to. Member States are also required to involve the public in the preparation of the final plans by the end of the year. The deadline for submitting the final plans is set for 31 December 2019. The recommendations and the Commission's Communication are part of a back and forth process with Member States that will

ensure that by then the final versions of the NECPs are sufficiently detailed, robust and ambitious. The Commission stands ready to support Member States in their efforts to finalise their NECPs by the end of 2019, building on the excellent cooperative process to date.

Background

Member States are required, under the new Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and climate action (part of the Clean energy for all Europeans package), which entered into force on 24 December 2018, to establish a 10-year national energy and climate plan for the period from 2021 to 2030. Member States were required to submit their draft NECPs by the end of 2018, which would then be the subject of an in-depth assessment by the Commission. The Regulation states that if the draft NECPs do not sufficiently contribute to reaching the Energy Union's objectives – individually and/or collectively – then the Commission may, by the end of June 2019, make recommendations for Member States to amend their draft plans. The final NECPs for the period 2021-2030 must be submitted by Member States by the end of 2019.

2. The innovation performance of the EU and its regions is increasing

Europe needs to deepen its innovation capability to compete on global markets and maintain and improve the European way of life, as called for by the European Council as recently as June 2018 and March 2019. That is why the Juncker Commission has set a new level of ambition for the EU and its Member States and regions, and proposed Horizon Europe, the most ambitious research and innovation programme ever. This will keep the EU at the forefront of global research and innovation.

The European Commission's 2019 European Innovation Scoreboard and Regional Innovation Scoreboard published show that the EU's innovation performance has been improving for four years in a row. For the first time ever, Europe's innovation outperforms that of the United States. However, the EU continues to lose some ground to Japan and South Korea, and China is catching up fast. The data complements the Commission's recent country-specific recommendations (CSRs) in the framework of the European Semester, which highlight the role of research and innovation and include recommendations to enhance productivity growth and competitiveness. Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, said: *"The Commission's Innovation Scoreboard is about best practices and measuring success. It helps Member States, regions and the EU as a whole to learn from each other and identify in which areas policy reforms are needed to boost Europe's innovation leadership."*



Carlos Moedas, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, added: *"Innovation equals future jobs and growth. I am happy to see general progress in the EU. Yet, to stay ahead in the global race, both the EU and our Member States need to continue investing and developing the right policies for innovation to flourish."* Commissioner for Regional Policy Corina Crețu added: *"The EU's Cohesion policy funds are a main driver for innovation and sustainable development. Start-ups and small enterprises help create new business models in the digital or green sector. However, innovation hubs can also grow in countries with less strong economies, and these findings help us support innovation in regional ecosystems, including in less developed regions."*

The 2019 European Innovation Scoreboard: key findings

- Based on their scores, EU countries fall into four performance groups: innovation leaders, strong innovators, moderate innovators and modest innovators. **Sweden** is the 2019 EU innovation leader, followed by Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands. The United Kingdom and Luxembourg dropped from the top rank of innovation leader status to the strong innovators group, while Estonia joins the strong innovators group for the first time.
- On average, **the innovation performance of the EU has increased by 8.8%** since 2011. Since 2011, the innovation performance increased in 25 EU countries. Performance has increased the most in Lithuania, Greece, Latvia, Malta, the United Kingdom, Estonia, and the Netherlands, and decreased the most in Romania and Slovenia.

- **At the global level, the EU has surpassed the United States.** The EU's performance lead over Brazil, India, Russia, and South Africa remains considerable. However, China is catching up three times as fast as the EU's innovation performance is growing. Relative to Japan and South Korea, the EU has been losing ground.
- In selected areas of innovation, the best performing EU countries are: **Denmark** – human resources and innovation-friendly environment; **Luxembourg** – attractive research systems; **France** – finance and support; **Germany** – firm investment; **Portugal** – SME innovators; **Austria** – linkages; **Malta** – intellectual assets; **Ireland** – employment impacts and sales impacts.

The 2019 Regional Innovation Scoreboard: key findings

The 2019 Scoreboard is accompanied by the Regional Innovation Scoreboard. It provides a comparative assessment of performance of innovation systems across 238 regions of 23 EU Member States, while Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Luxembourg, and Malta are included at the country level. In addition, the Regional Innovation Scoreboard also covers regions from Norway, Serbia, and Switzerland. The most innovative regions in the EU are Helsinki-Uusimaa, Finland followed by Stockholm, Sweden and Hovedstaden, Denmark. For 159 regions, performance has increased in the nine-year observation period. This year's Regional Innovation Scoreboard demonstrates a strong convergence in regional performance with decreasing performance differences between regions.

Background

About two-thirds of Europe's economic growth over the last decades has been driven by innovation. Each euro invested by the programme can potentially generate a return of up to €11 of GDP over 25 years. Investments in research and innovations are expected to generate up to 100,000 new jobs in research and innovation activities between 2021 and 2027. The data of the European Innovation Scoreboard and Regional Innovation Scoreboard help Member States, regions and the EU as a whole to assess areas on which they perform well and the ones on which they need policy reforms to better promote innovation. In addition, in the framework of analysis of the European Semester, the Commission presented recently the 2019 country-specific recommendations (CSRs) that give economic policy guidance to all EU Member States for the next 12 to 18 months. Research and innovation featured prominently in this year's Country Specific Recommendations.

3. EU continues opening up export markets for European firms

The European Commission's report released confirms the continuous rise in barriers encountered by European companies in foreign markets. Thanks to the EU's firm response, 123 such barriers have been eliminated since the beginning of the current Commission mandate, allowing for more than €6 billion extra exports in 2018.

The latest edition of the Trade and Investment Barriers Report (TIBR) identifies 45 new trade barriers put in place in countries outside the EU in 2018, bringing the total number to a record high of 425 measures in 59 different countries, costing EU businesses billions of euros every year. Commissioner for Trade Cecilia **Malmström** said: "*In the complex context we have with a*



growing number of trade tensions and protectionist measures, the EU must keep defending the interests of its companies in the global markets. Making sure that the existing rules are respected is of utmost importance. Thanks to our successful interventions, 123 barriers hindering EU exports opportunities have been removed since I took office in late 2014. Working on specific problems reported by our companies we manage to deliver economic benefits equivalent in value to those brought by the EU's trade agreements. Those efforts certainly must

continue." China and Russia top the overall list, maintaining respectively 37 and 34 problematic trade measures. Most impact for EU exports arises from measures introduced by China, U.S.,

India and Algeria. They concern 80% of all EU exports affected by new measures and focus predominantly on steel, aluminium and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sectors. The EU's efforts to enforce the existing international trade rules are providing clear results. Intervening in close collaboration with EU Member States and businesses under the EU's enhanced Market Access Strategy, the Commission has eliminated last year as much as 35 trade barriers, among others in China, Japan, India and Russia. These measures spanned across eight key EU export and investment sectors including agriculture and fisheries, cars, textiles and leather, wines and spirits, cosmetics, mineral products, aircraft parts and ICT equipment. Some of them also affected various sectors in a horizontal way. Trade and investment barriers eliminated in 2018 included among others: Chinese restrictions on imports of bovine and ovine products; Russian unlawful anti-dumping measures on light commercial vehicles; Duties on electronic goods and mandatory veterinary certificates restricting exports of leather goods in India; Restrictions on use of authorized additives in wine and spirits in Japan; Mandatory labelling of textiles in Egypt.

Background

Enforcement of international trade rules has been identified as a top priority in the Commission's "Trade for All" strategy of 2015. Removing trade barriers is a key Commission's task along with the stronger focus on the implementation of the EU's trade agreements. The EU's enhanced Market Access Partnership aims to ensure that our companies can compete on a level playing field when seeking export and investment opportunities in countries outside Europe. The Commission's Report on Trade and Investment Barriers has been published annually since the beginning of the 2008 economic crisis, and is entirely based on trade and investment barriers on foreign markets, reported by European companies. The Commission has also launched Market Access Days in Member States to raise awareness amongst smaller companies of how the EU can help address the barriers they face. In little more than 12 months, events with local businesses were held in Denmark, Spain, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Portugal and France. Following the publication of the 37th annual Report on the EU's Anti-Dumping, Anti-Subsidy and Safeguard activities on 28 March 2019, this is the second enforcement-related report released by the Commission in 2019. A report presenting advancement in implementation of the EU trade agreements will be published later this year.

4. Europe announces eight sites to host world-class supercomputers

Eight sites for supercomputing centres have been selected across the EU to host the first European supercomputers. They will support Europe's researchers, industry and businesses in developing new applications in a wide range of areas, from designing medicines and new materials to fighting climate change.

In a major step towards making Europe a top supercomputing region globally, the European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking - EuroHPC has selected 8 sites for supercomputing centres located in 8 different Member States to host the new high-performance computing machines. The hosting sites will be located in Sofia (Bulgaria), Ostrava (Czechia), Kajaani (Finland), Bologna (Italy), Bissen (Luxembourg), Minho (Portugal), Maribor (Slovenia), and Barcelona (Spain). They will support the development of major applications in domains such as personalised medicine, drug and material design, bio-engineering, weather forecasting, and climate change. In total, 19 of the 28 countries participating in the Joint Undertaking will be part of the consortia operating the centres. Together with EU funds, it represents a total budget of € 840 million. The exact funding arrangements



for the new supercomputers will be reflected in hosting agreements that will be signed soon. Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, Andrus **Ansip**, said: "These sites will give our researchers access to world-class supercomputers, a strategic resource for the future of European industry. They will be able to process their data inside the EU, not outside it. It is a major step forward for Europe to reach the next level of computing capacity; it will help us to advance in future-oriented technologies like the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, robotics and data analytics." Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, Günther **Oettinger**, stated: "This initiative

demonstrates how joint investment between the EU and its Member States in support of a common objective can contribute to making Europe a leader in a high-technology sector, bringing significant benefits to all European citizens and businesses. We are now looking ahead to the EU's next long-term budget and to our Digital Europe Programme, through which we have proposed a significant amount of investment in deploying a world-class supercomputing and data infrastructure." Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** added: *"The European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking is a good example of how EU countries can cooperate to drive innovation and compete globally in these highly strategic technologies. I am convinced that the new supercomputers that these sites will host will boost Europe's competitiveness in the digital area. We have demonstrated the strength of our European approach which will bring concrete benefits to our citizens and help our SMEs."* In world, high-performance computing capabilities are crucial in generating growth and jobs but also for strategic autonomy and innovation in any field. The range of supercomputing uses is vast. It can, for example, forecast the evolution of local and regional weather patterns and predict the size and paths of storms and floods, making it possible to activate early warning systems for extreme weather events. It is also used in designing new medicines, solving complex physics equations that model the molecular processes and interactions of a new drug with human tissues. The aviation and automotive industries also use supercomputing to perform complex simulations and test individual components and entire planes and cars. Moreover, as they are vital for running large-scale simulations and for data analytics, supercomputers are an extremely important component in the development of artificial intelligence, and to boost Europe's strengths in cybersecurity and blockchain.

Next steps

The Joint Undertaking, along with the selected hosting sites, plans to acquire 8 supercomputers: 3 precursor to exascale machines (capable of executing more than 150 Petaflops, or 150 million billion calculations per second) that will be in the global top 5, and 5 petascale machines (capable of executing at least 4 Petaflops, or 4 million billion operations per second). The precursor to exascale systems are expected to provide 4-5 times more computing power than the current top supercomputing systems of the Partnership for Advanced Computing in Europe (PRACE). Together with the petascale systems, they will double the supercomputing resources available for



European-level use, meaning that many more users will have access to them. In the next few months, the Joint Undertaking will sign agreements with the selected hosting entities and their hosting Consortia. These agreements will reflect the way the procurement process for acquiring the machines will work and the respective budget commitments of the Commission and member countries. The supercomputers are expected to become operational during the second half of 2020 for European users from academia, industry and the public sector. All

the new supercomputers will be connected to the GEANT high-speed pan-European network, like the existing supercomputers that are part of PRACE. In the next few days, senior Commission officials will join representatives of national governments and of the supercomputing centres involved to present this major milestone for European supercomputing.

Background

Proposed by the Commission and supported by the Council of the EU, the EuroHPC Joint Undertaking was established in November 2018 with the aim of equipping the EU with a world-class supercomputing infrastructure by the end of 2020. In February 2019, the Joint Undertaking launched its first calls for expression of interest to select the sites that will host its first supercomputers by the end of 2020. Two calls were opened: one for hosting entities for petascale supercomputers, and one for hosting entities for precursor to exascale supercomputers. Supercomputing is a key priority in the EU's Digital Europe programme proposed by the Commission in May 2018 in the context of the next long-term EU budget, which includes a proposal of € 2.7 billion to fund supercomputing in Europe during the 2021-2027 period. This budget will permit the Joint Undertaking to support the acquisition of exascale supercomputers (capable of executing 10^{18} calculations per second, or a thousand Petaflops) by 2023 and the development of leading applications running on these supercomputers and the skills for using them.

5. DiscoverEU: more young people get the chance to explore Europe

Almost 95,000 young people applied in the third round of this new EU initiative for youth. Around 20,000 18-year-old Europeans have now been selected to receive a DiscoverEU travel pass. They will be able to travel between 1 August 2019 and 31 January 2020 for up to 30 days.

The third round of the DiscoverEU initiative attracted applications from almost 95,000 young people from all EU Member States during a two-week period that ended on 16 May 2019. Around 20,000 young people were selected based on the award criteria and taking into account the quota set for each EU Member State. Commissioner Tibor **Navracsics**, responsible for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, said: *“This month, DiscoverEU is celebrating its first anniversary. In one year, around 275,000 young Europeans applied to become part of the experience, with some 50,000 awarded a travel pass. I am proud to see that more and more young people are exploring the richness of our history and culture, making new friends across borders, becoming more independent and self-reliant, sharing experiences and emotions, and ultimately, discovering themselves.”* The winners of the third round will now be contacted so that they can arrange their trips. They will be able to travel, alone or in groups of maximum five people, between 1 August 2019 and 31 January 2020 for up to 30 days. Most of them will travel by rail, with alternative modes of transport used in exceptional cases. As well as the travel pass, participants will receive technical support and guidance on topics such as sustainable travel and what it means to be a DiscoverEU Ambassador - they will be invited to report back on their experiences, for example through social media tools like Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, or by providing a presentation at their school or to their local community. They will also be able to get in touch with their fellow travellers on social media and share their stories. All participants will also be invited to attend the very first DiscoverEU meet-ups that will be taking place in various locations across Europe, on specific themes such as sustainability or cultural heritage. The first meet-up will take place in Nijmegen (Netherlands) on 12 and 13 July with a focus on sustainability. The Commission is planning to launch the next application round before the end of the year when another 20,000 travel passes will be available.



Background

DiscoverEU is a travel experience for young individuals or small groups, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, which is accessible and simple. It gives 18-year-olds a chance to learn about European cultural heritage and diversity, to connect with other young people and to explore their European identity. The initiative was launched in June 2018, following a proposal from the European Parliament for a Preparatory Action with a budget of €12 million in 2018. The first two application rounds have given around 30,000 young people the opportunity to travel around Europe. For 2019, the European Parliament has approved €16 million for DiscoverEU. The Commission is planning to launch the next application round before the end of 2019. Specific dates and further information will be announced on the European Youth Portal in due course. Given the interest shown by young travellers in DiscoverEU, the Commission is working to improve the initiative based on the feedback from both travellers and key stakeholders. So far feedback from nearly 5,500 participants from the first round shows that they regard DiscoverEU as a valuable and inclusive learning experience, which contributes to civic engagement, personal growth and skills development. Travelling gives young people the opportunity to gain self-confidence and develop key competences such as foreign language and inter-cultural skills, adaptability, resilience, interpersonal skills, problem-solving or organisational and team building skills. Two-thirds said that they would not have been able to finance their travel pass without DiscoverEU. For some participants, it was the first time they travelled on their own without their parents or guardians. In May 2018, the Commission proposed €700 million for DiscoverEU as part of the future Erasmus programme under the EU's next long-term budget for 2021-2027. If the European Parliament and the Council agree to this, an additional 1.5 million 18-year-olds would be able to travel over those seven years.

6. Over 85% of European bathing sites rated as excellent for water quality

Just over 85% of bathing water sites across Europe monitored last year met the European Union's highest 'excellent' and most stringent quality standards for water cleanliness, according to the latest annual European bathing water quality report. The results published give a good indication of where the best quality bathing waters are likely to be found this summer.

An overwhelming number — 95.4% — of the 21 831 bathing water sites monitored in the 28 EU Member States met the minimum quality requirements under EU rules, according to this



year's report by the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA). In addition, 300 bathing sites monitored in Albania and Switzerland were also included in the report. The level of bathing sites meeting the most stringent 'excellent' quality standards rose slightly from 85.0% in 2017 to 85.1% last year. The number of those meeting the minimum 'sufficient' standing fell from 96% to 95.4% from 2017 to 2018. This minor drop is mostly due to the opening of new bathing waters sites for which the dataset of four bathing seasons required for the classification by the Directive is not yet available. In 2018, 301 (or 1.3%) of all bathing water sites in the EU, Albania and Switzerland were rated as having 'poor' water quality. This is slightly lower than the 1.4 % in 2017. Karmenu Vella,

European Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries said: *"As World Environment Day showed, we face many challenges. But it is also good to celebrate the green success stories of the European Union. The quality of European Bathing Water sites is one such story to which everyone can relate. Through good testing, reporting, monitoring and sharing of expertise, we are sure to continue improving the quality of our favourite swimming spots. Our new Environmental Implementation Review will help Member States learn from each other how best to attain and keep the excellent standards we have achieved during the course of my mandate. I congratulated the EEA for helping to improve standards and also for providing this information in a regular and reliable way. That reliability allows you to make clear choices wherever you take the plunge this summer."* Hans Bruyninckx, EEA Executive Director, said: *"Our report confirms that Member States' efforts over the last 40 years, mainly in wastewater treatment, have paid off. The, most Europeans enjoy excellent bathing water quality. However, this is only one of the many components, ranging from tackling plastic pollution to protecting marine life, we need to work on in order to achieve healthier seas, lakes and rivers."* Bathing water requirements are set out in the EU's Bathing Water Directive. Implementation of its rules has helped to vastly improve the quality of Europe's bathing water over the last 40 years. Effective monitoring and management introduced under the directive combined with the investments in the urban waste water treatment have led to a drastic reduction in untreated or partially treated municipal and industrial waste ending up in the water. Under the rules, local authorities collect water samples at officially identified bathing sites throughout the swimming season. Samples are analysed for two types of bacteria that indicate pollution from sewage or livestock.

Other Key Findings

In four countries, 95% or more of bathing sites were found to have excellent water quality: Cyprus (99.1% of all sites), Malta (98.9% of all sites), Austria (97.3% of all sites), and Greece (97% of all sites). All reported bathing water sites in Cyprus, Greece, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania and Slovenia were of at least sufficient quality in 2018. The three countries with the highest numbers of poor quality bathing water sites are Italy (89 bathing water sites or 1.6%), France (54 sites or 1.6%) and Spain (50 sites or 2.2%). In comparison with 2017, the number of poor quality bathing water sites in France decreased (from 80 in 2017 to 54 in 2018), while there was an increase in poor quality bathing waters in Italy (from 79 to 89) and in Spain (from 38 to 50).

Background

The contamination of water by faecal bacteria continues to pose a risk to human health, especially if it is found at bathing water sites. Swimming at contaminated beaches or lakes can result in illness. The major sources of pollution are sewage and water draining from farms and

farmland. Such pollution increases during heavy rains and floods due to sewage overflow and polluted drainage water being washed into rivers and seas. All EU Member States, plus Albania and Switzerland, monitor their bathing sites according to the provisions of the EU's Bathing Water Directive. The assessment of the bathing water quality under the Bathing Water Directive makes use of the values of two microbiological parameters: Intestinal enterococci and *Escherichia coli*. Bathing water quality is classified, depending on the levels of faecal bacteria detected, as "excellent", "good", "sufficient" or "poor". Where water is classified as "poor", Member States should take measures such as banning bathing or advising against it, providing information to the public, and taking suitable corrective actions.

7. European Semester 2019 Spring Package

The European Commission presents the 2019 country-specific recommendations (CSRs), giving economic policy guidance to all EU Member States for the next 12 to 18 months. The Commission also recommends closing the Excessive Deficit Procedure for Spain and adopts a number of documents under the Stability and Growth Pact.

The European economy is growing for the seventh consecutive year and is set to continue expanding in 2020, with all Member States' economies growing despite less favourable conditions and global uncertainties. The number of people in employment is at a record high and unemployment at a record low. At the same time, there are still significant differences between countries, regions and population groups. Against this backdrop, the Commission calls on Member States to build on the progress made in recent years. Effective reforms, accompanied by



well-targeted investment strategies and responsible fiscal policies, continue to provide a successful compass for modernising the European economy.

Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, said: *"The European Semester has made a real contribution to improving the economic and social situation in Europe. Yet, some important challenges remain, and now risks to the economic outlook are growing. It is worrying to see reform momentum weakening in*

some countries. We call on all Member States to put new energy into making our economies more resilient and into supporting growth that is both sustainable and inclusive. Better targeted investment can make a significant contribution to achieving these objectives." **Marianne Thyssen**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, said: *"This Commission has worked hard to build a fairer Europe, a sustainable and inclusive Europe, a Europe that leaves no one behind. The European Pillar of Social Rights establishes principles and rights for all EU citizens. This has to be implemented at national level. With the world of work changing fast, it is essential that Member States follow up with reforms in initial education and lifelong learning, labour markets and social protection."* **Pierre Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, said: *"With this last spring package of our mandate, we reaffirm our commitment to an intelligent application of the Stability and Growth Pact. That means basing our decisions not on a mechanistic or legalistic application of the rules, but on whether they are good for growth, jobs and sound public finances. Our track record shows that this is the right approach: public finances have been improving steadily without undermining growth. We also stress the need for a number of Member States to pursue and where necessary step up efforts to tackle aggressive tax planning, in the interests of fairness to all taxpayers."*

The 2019 country-specific recommendations

The recommendations give guidance to Member States to respond adequately to persisting and new economic and social challenges and to deliver on their shared key policy objectives. The content of the recommendations reflects the overall priorities set out in the Annual Growth Survey 2019 and the 2019 recommendation on the economic policy for the euro area issued in November. They draw on the detailed analysis of the country reports published in February and

the assessment of the national programmes presented in April. The slowdown in global growth reinforces the need to pursue structural reforms, prioritising those aimed at sustainable and inclusive growth. Member States should advance social convergence in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights. In line with the euro area recommendation, Member States should also proceed towards a more symmetric rebalancing across the euro area and continue their efforts to strengthen the Single Market and deepen Europe's Economic and Monetary Union. The country-specific recommendations for 2019 include a stronger focus on identifying and prioritising investment needs at national level and pay special attention to regional and territorial disparities. This is in line with the thorough analysis of investment needs and bottlenecks identified for each Member State in the country reports published earlier this year and should serve to prioritise the use of EU funds in the next long-term EU budget, or multiannual financial framework 2021-2027.

Progress in implementing the recommendations

Since the start of the European Semester in 2011, Member States have made at least some progress implementing more than two thirds of the country-specific recommendations issued to them. Most progress has been achieved in financial services and employment policies, whereas recommendations to broaden the tax base, in healthcare, and competition in services, show a particularly low implementation rate. In view of the remaining economic and social challenges and downside risks to the economic outlook, stronger reform implementation across the board is crucial to strengthen the resilience of the EU economies.

Macroeconomic imbalances continue to be corrected

Progress in correcting macroeconomic imbalances continues, but further policy action is required. Some Member States continue to record private and public debt at historically high levels, which reduces the room for manoeuvre to address negative shocks. Some other Member States see signs of possible overheating related to the dynamic house price growth and raising unit labour costs. All Member States require further measures to enhance productivity, boost investment, and promote potential growth. In February, the Commission concluded that 13 Member States were experiencing imbalances (Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, Romania, and Sweden) and that three countries of these were experiencing excessive imbalances (Cyprus, Greece, and Italy). As in previous years, these imbalances require continued specific monitoring under the Macroeconomic Imbalances Procedure (MIP).

Guidance and decisions under the Stability and Growth Pact

Based on the assessment of the 2019 Stability and Convergence Programmes, the Commission has taken a number of steps under the Stability and Growth Pact. The Commission recommends that the Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) be abrogated for Spain. Once the Council takes this decision, all the excessive deficit procedures dating from the crisis will be closed. In 2011, 24 Member States were in the corrective arm of the Pact. The Commission also adopted reports for Belgium, France, Italy and Cyprus under Article 126(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU), in which it reviews their compliance with the deficit and debt criteria of the Treaty. For Italy, the report concludes that a debt-based EDP is warranted. Hungary and Romania have been subject to Significant Deviation Procedure since 2018 and 2017 respectively. The Commission addressed a warning to Hungary and Romania that a significant deviation was observed in 2018 and recommends to the Council to recommend they correct the significant observed deviation. The Commission also adopted the third report for Greece under the Enhanced Surveillance framework that was put in place following the conclusion of the European Stability Mechanism stability support programme. The report notes that Greece has made a reasonable start to the post programme environment since August 2018, but finds that reform implementation in Greece has slowed in recent months, and that the consistency of some measures with commitments given to European partners is not assured and poses risks to the achievement of agreed fiscal targets.

Background

The country-specific recommendations build on the wider priorities outlined in the President's State of the Union address and the Annual Growth Survey. They are revised every year to reflect the progress made and the changing environment. Euro area Member States also receive recommendations on the economic policy of the euro area. The recommendations under the



European Semester are coherent with the longer-term vision of the Europe 2020 strategy. Since taking office, this Commission has implemented a number of changes to the European Semester, to make it more effective and relevant. For instance, the number of recommendations has been reduced and their content has been made sharper, while leaving room for Member States to act in line with their national practices and situations. Greater focus has been put on the challenges arising from the aggregate situation of the euro area, including possible spill-overs between national situations. The euro area recommendation has been presented earlier in the cycle (in November), to allow Member States to consider the euro area perspective in their plans. Social considerations have been prioritised and mainstreamed in all steps of the assessment, in line with the priorities of the European Pillar of Social Rights and through the use of the Social Scoreboard. Moreover, in this year's cycle, the Commission has zoomed in on the investment needs of each Member State, as a way to prepare for the programming of the future generation of EU funds and to make sure that reform and investment priorities are well aligned at national level, so that EU support can be best used. In addition, the Commission has taken several initiatives to promote dialogue, reach out to stakeholders and increase national ownership of reforms. It has consulted with Member States on the analytical parts of their country reports prior to the publication. In the past months, the Commission met with national authorities and stakeholders to address key challenges and verify how these could translate into country-specific recommendations. In parallel, the Commission holds regular consultations with social partners and has invited Member States to be more receptive to national social partners' contributions. The Commission's Structural Reform Support Service also provides targeted reform assistance to Member States, at their request, to support them in design and implementation of reforms. In February, the Commission presented its detailed analysis of the economic and social situation of each Member State, in the form of country reports, as part of the European Semester Winter Package 2019. In April, Member States presented their National Reform Programmes and their Stability Programmes (for euro area countries) or Convergence Programmes (for non-euro area countries), including any follow-up to the Winter Package. The recommendations are based on these dialogues, the national programmes, data by Eurostat and the recently published Commission 2019 Spring Economic Forecast.

Next steps

The Commission calls on the Council to endorse these country-specific recommendations and on Member States to implement them fully and in a timely manner. The Commission will continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure broad ownership and effective follow-up and implementation. EU ministers are expected to discuss the country-specific recommendations before EU Heads of State or Government are due to endorse them. It is then up to Member States to implement the recommendations by addressing them through their national economic and budgetary policies. The country-specific recommendations and the underlying analysis in the country reports will also serve as analytical basis for the programming of the EU Cohesion Policy funds in 2021-2027.

8. Deepening Europe's Economic and Monetary Union

Ahead of the Euro Summit on 21 June 2019, the European Commission takes stock of the progress made to deepen Europe's Economic and Monetary Union since the Five Presidents' Report and calls on Member States to take further concrete steps.



In the four years since the publication of the report, marked progress has been made to strengthen the single currency area and make Europe's Economic and Monetary Union more robust than ever. Many of the gaps revealed by the post-2007 economic, financial and social crisis have been addressed. Yet, important steps still need to be taken. The single currency and the coordination of economic policy-making are means to an end: more jobs, growth, investment, social fairness and macroeconomic stability for the members of the euro area as well as the EU as a

whole. European Commission President **Jean-Claude Juncker** said: *"This Commission has*

fought hard for the completion of the Economic and Monetary Union: a lot has been achieved but a lot remains to be done. This is about creating jobs, growth and social fairness for our citizens. It is about preserving the stability and resilience of our economies and it is about Europe's capacity to take its future into its own hands." Ahead of the Euro Summit of 21 June, the Commission invites EU leaders:

- To reach an agreement on the main features of the **Budgetary Instrument for Convergence and Competitiveness** with a view to supporting a swift adoption by the European Parliament and the Council. To agree on its size in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework.
- To finalise the changes to the **Treaty establishing the European Stability Mechanism** with a view to a swift ratification by the euro-area Member States, including an operational and effective common backstop, the provision of liquidity in resolution and active and effective precautionary instruments. To preserve a clear delineation of responsibilities between actors and the possibility to adjust the EU Single Rulebook for banks according to the Community method. To integrate the European Stability Mechanism into EU law over time.
- To make a renewed effort to **complete the Banking Union** starting with political negotiations on the European Deposit Insurance Scheme.
- To accelerate progress on the **Capital Markets Union** and step up work to strengthen the international role of the euro.

The Commission also reviews the main progress of recent years beyond the deliverables expected at the Euro Summit of June 2019 and maps out the way forward for the coming years. Since the Euro Summit of December 2018, discussions have proceeded on the future **Budgetary Instrument for Convergence and Competitiveness** for the euro area, building on the Commission's proposal for a Reform Support Programme; a compromise is within reach and should be taken forward with determination. Discussions have also taken place on the reform of the **European Stability Mechanism**, in particular to provide for a backstop to the Single Resolution Fund in the form of a credit line. The backstop is expected to serve as a last resort to support effective and credible bank crises management within the Single Resolution Mechanism. It will be repaid via contributions from the European banking sector. The completion of the Banking Union and Capital Markets Union (CMU) is also essential when it comes to bolstering the resilience and stability of the euro. Significant progress has been made in further reducing risk in the **Banking Union**. The Commission's latest progress report shows that the ratio of non-performing loans for all EU banks continues to decline and is down to 3.3% in the third-quarter of 2018, continuing its downward trajectory towards pre-crisis levels. Looking ahead, it is essential to progress with a common deposit insurance scheme for the euro area. The **CMU** will foster further market integration and help ensure that Europe's capital markets can withstand major internal or external challenges to the stability of the Economic and Monetary Union. Encouraged by Leaders in December to continue its work on the file, the Commission also takes stock of the ongoing work towards developing the **international use of the euro**. The euro is twenty years young and is the world's second currency, which remained strong even at the height of the financial and debt crisis. To understand better how to boost the global use of the euro – and to identify any obstacles to this – the Commission in recent months actively consulted market participants in different sectors (foreign exchange, energy, raw materials, agricultural commodities and transport). These consultations showed that: there is broad support for reducing dependence on a single dominant global currency; the euro is the only currency with all of the necessary attributes that market participants seek to use as an alternative to the US dollar; the energy sector will remain a key currency driver of use of the euro, with scope to further increase its use, such as in the gas sector; there is recognition that the EU, through the euro, can reinforce its economic sovereignty and play a more important global role to benefit EU business and consumers. The Commission, together with the European Central Bank, will continue to work with Member States, market participants and other stakeholders, and calls upon the European Parliament, the Council and all interested parties to support the efforts increase the international role of the euro.



Background

Almost exactly four years ago, President Jean-Claude Juncker, together with the President of the Euro Summit, Donald Tusk, the then-President of the Eurogroup, Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the President of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, and the then-President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, published an ambitious plan on how to deepen Europe's Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) by latest 2025. Building on the vision of the Five Presidents' Report, the Commission followed up with the White Paper on the Future of Europe of March 2017, the thematic Reflection Papers on the Deepening of the Economic and Monetary Union and the Future of EU Finances in May 2017. In December 2017, the Juncker Commission set out a roadmap and adopted a number of concrete proposals with the overall aim of enhancing the unity, efficiency and democratic accountability of Europe's Economic and Monetary Union by 2025.

9. EU reports on progress in fighting disinformation

The Commission and the High Representative report on the progress achieved in the fight against disinformation and the main lessons drawn from the European elections, as a contribution to the discussions by EU leaders next week.

Protecting our democratic processes and institutions from disinformation is a major challenge for societies across the globe. To tackle this, the EU has demonstrated leadership and put in place a robust framework for coordinated action, with full respect for European values and fundamental rights. The joint Communication sets out how the Action Plan against Disinformation and the Elections Package have helped to fight disinformation and preserve the integrity of the European Parliament elections. High Representative/Vice President Federica **Mogherini**, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus **Ansip**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality Věra **Jourová**, Commissioner for the Security Union Julian **King**, and Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** said in a joint statement: “The record high turnout in the European Parliament elections has underlined the increased interest of



citizens in European democracy. Our actions, including the setting-up of election networks at national and European level, helped in protecting our democracy from attempts at manipulation. We are confident that our efforts have contributed to limit the impact of disinformation operations, including from foreign actors, through closer coordination between the EU and Member States. However, much remains to be done. The European elections were not after all free from disinformation; we should not accept this as the new normal. Malign actors constantly change their strategies. We must strive to be ahead of them. Fighting disinformation is a common, long-term challenge for EU institutions and Member States. Ahead of the elections, we saw evidence of coordinated inauthentic behaviour aimed at spreading

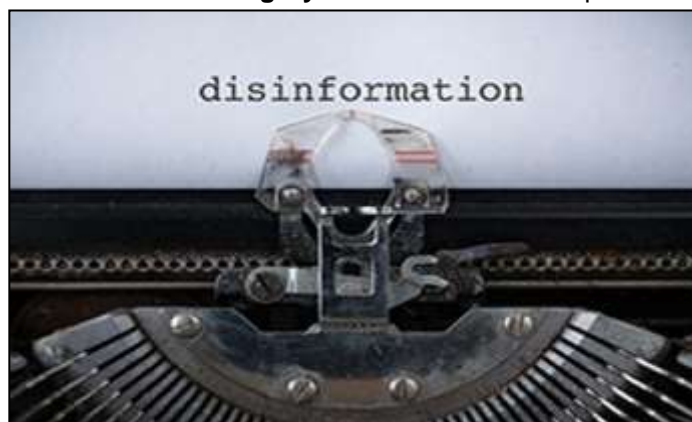
divisive material on online platforms, including through the use of bots and fake accounts. So online platforms have a particular responsibility to tackle disinformation. With our active support, Facebook, Google and Twitter have made some progress under the Code of Practice on disinformation. The latest monthly reports, which we are publishing, confirm this trend. We now expect online platforms to maintain momentum and to step up their efforts and implement all commitments under the Code.” While it is still too early to draw final conclusions about the level and impact of disinformation in the recent European Parliament elections, it is clear that the actions taken by the EU – together with numerous journalists, fact-checkers, platforms, national authorities, researchers and civil society – have helped to deter attacks and expose attempts at interfering in our democratic processes. Increased public awareness made it harder for malicious actors to manipulate the public debate. In particular, EU action focused on four complementary strands: The EU has strengthened its capabilities to identify and counter disinformation, via the Strategic Communication Task Forces and the EU Hybrid Fusion Cell in the European External Action Service. It has also improved the coordinated response by setting up a Rapid Alert System to facilitate the exchange of information between Member States and the EU institutions. The EU

worked with online platforms and industry through a voluntary Code of Practice on disinformation to increase transparency of political communications and prevent the manipulative use of their services to ensure users know why they see specific political content and ads, where they come from and who is behind them. The Commission and the High Representative, in cooperation with the European Parliament, helped increase awareness and resilience to disinformation within society, notably through more dissemination of fact-based messaging and renewed efforts to promote media literacy. The Commission has supported Member States' efforts to secure the integrity of elections and strengthen the resilience of the Union's democratic systems. The establishment of election networks at EU and national level, with links to the Rapid Alert System, improved cooperation on potential threats. However, more remains to be done to protect the EU's democratic processes and institutions. Disinformation is a rapidly changing threat. The tactics used by internal and external actors, in particular linked to Russian sources, are evolving as quickly as the measures adopted by states and online platforms. Continuous research and adequate human resources are required to counter new trends and practices, to better detect and expose disinformation campaigns, and to raise preparedness at EU and national level.

Update by online platforms under the Code of Practice

Online platforms have a particular responsibility in tackling disinformation. The Commission also publishes the latest monthly reports by Google, Twitter and Facebook under the self-regulatory Code of Practice on Disinformation. The May reports confirm the trend of previous Commission assessments. Since January, all platforms have made progress with regard to the **transparency of political advertising** and public disclosure of such ads in libraries that provide useful tools for the analysis of ad spending by political actors across the EU. Facebook has taken steps to ensure the transparency of issue-based advertising, while Google and Twitter need to catch up in this regard. Efforts to ensure the **integrity of services** have helped close

down the scope for attempted manipulation targeting the EU elections but platforms need to explain better how the taking down of bots and fake accounts has limited the spread of disinformation in the EU. Google, Facebook and Twitter reported improvements to the **scrutiny of ad placements** to limit malicious click-baiting practices and reduce advertising revenues for those spreading disinformation. However, no sufficient progress was made in developing tools to increase



the transparency and trustworthiness of websites hosting ads. Despite the achievements, more remains to be done: all online platforms need to provide more detailed information allowing the identification of malign actors and targeted Member States. They should also intensify their cooperation with fact checkers and empower users to better detect disinformation. Finally, platforms should give the research community meaningful access to data, in line with personal data protection rules. In this regard, the recent initiative taken by Twitter to release relevant datasets for research purposes opens an avenue to enable independent research on disinformation operations by malicious actors. Furthermore, the Commission calls on the platforms to apply their political ad transparency policies to upcoming national elections.

Next Steps

As set out in its conclusions in March, the European Council will come back to the issue of protecting elections and fighting disinformation at its June Summit. The report will feed into this debate by EU leaders who will set the course for further policy action. The Commission and the High Representative remain committed to continue their efforts to protect the EU's democracy from disinformation and manipulation. Still this year, the Commission will report on the implementation of the elections package and assess the effectiveness of the Code of Practice. On this basis, the Commission may consider further actions to ensure and improve the EU's response to the threat.

Background

The European Union has been actively tackling disinformation since 2015. Following a decision of the European Council in March 2015, in order to challenge Russia's ongoing disinformation campaigns, the East StratCom Task Force in the European External Action Service (EEAS) was set up. In 2016, the Joint Framework on countering hybrid threats was adopted, followed by

the Joint Communication on increasing resilience and bolstering capabilities to address hybrid threats in 2018. In April 2018, the Commission outlined a European approach and self-regulatory tools to tackle disinformation online. In October 2018, the Code of Practice was signed by Facebook, Google, Twitter and Mozilla as well as the trade associations representing online platforms, the advertising industry, and advertisers. In addition, Facebook, Google and Twitter committed to report monthly on measures taken ahead of the European Parliament elections. The Commission, with support by the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) closely monitored the progress and published monthly assessments together with the submitted reports. On 22 May also Microsoft joined the Code of Practice and subscribed to all its commitments. The Code of Practice goes hand-in-hand with the Recommendation included in the election package announced by President Juncker in the 2018 State of the Union Address to ensure free, fair and secure European Parliament elections. The measures include greater transparency in online political advertisements and the possibility to impose sanctions for the illegal use of personal data to influence the outcome of the European elections. Member States were also advised to set up a national election cooperation network and to participate in a European election network.

10. EC receives mandate to start negotiating international rules

EU Member States agreed to give two mandates to the Commission to engage in international negotiations to improve cross-border access to electronic evidence in criminal investigations. The Council agreed to provide the Commission with negotiating mandates for negotiations with the United States and for the Second Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe “Budapest” Convention on Cybercrime. Both mandates include provisions on strong fundamental rights safeguards on data protection, privacy and the procedural rights of individuals, which will have to be an integral part of any future agreement.

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos said: “*Criminals operate across borders and the evidence we need to investigate their crimes is often in other jurisdictions. Our law enforcement authorities need to be able to swiftly get access to this evidence. We can get to work in negotiating these frameworks with the United States and the Council of Europe.*” Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality



Věra Jourová said: “*I welcome the strong support from Member States to the Commission approach for an EU-wide agreement with the United States. For most criminal investigations it is necessary to obtain online evidence from service providers abroad. It is therefore crucial to address conflicts of law and establish clear common rules. Any agreement will of course have to guarantee at least the same strong fundamental rights safeguards as within the EU.*” Commissioner for the Security Union

Julian King said: “*For far too long, criminals and terrorists have been abusing modern technology to commit their crimes. By setting international standards to obtain access to electronic evidence, we are taking yet another step to close the space in which they operate by ensuring law enforcement authorities can more effectively investigate and prosecute them, with full regard for fundamental rights.*” With the majority of criminal investigations requiring access to evidence based online and often outside the EU, it is crucial to ensure an effective cooperation and compatible rules at international level. The decisions adopted by the Council provide the Commission with the directives to negotiate an agreement with the U.S. and on the Second Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe “Budapest” Convention on Cybercrime, more specifically: **Negotiations with the United States:** The agreement should address legal conflicts and set common rules for orders by a judicial authority in one country to obtain electronic evidence held by a service provider in another. It should also allow for a transfer of electronic evidence directly, and on a reciprocal basis, by a service provider in one country to a requesting authority in another. **Negotiations on a Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention:** The Commission has been given a mandate to engage in the negotiations on behalf

of the European Union and its Member States to ensure that the agreed Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Budapest Convention on Cybercrime is compatible with EU law, as well as the proposed EU rules on cross-border access to electronic evidence. In both cases, the mandates require strong and specific safeguards on data protection, privacy and the procedural rights of individuals based on fundamental rights, freedoms and general principles of EU law in the Treaties and Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Next Steps

The negotiations on the Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention have been ongoing since 2017, and as of now the Commission will negotiate on behalf of the European Union. Before an agreement can be signed and concluded, the Commission will have to obtain a separate authorisation from Member States. The European Parliament will also be informed and will have to consent before an agreement can be signed and concluded. Moreover, the Commission's objective remains to first finalise the EU's internal rules on cross-border access to electronic e-evidence before finalising international agreements.

Background

Electronic evidence is needed in around 85% of criminal investigations, and in two-thirds of these investigations there is a need to obtain evidence from online service providers based in another country. Currently, the largest service providers have their headquarters in the U.S. The number of requests to the main online service providers continues to increase and grew by 84% in the period 2013-2018. In June 2017, the Parties to the Council of Europe 'Budapest' Convention on Cybercrime already agreed to start negotiations for a Second Additional Protocol to the Convention enhancing international cooperation on cybercrime and electronic evidence. In the April 2015 European Agenda on Security, the Commission committed to review obstacles to criminal investigations. Following the tragic events in Brussels on 22 March 2016, EU Ministers for Justice and Home Affairs prioritised passing measures to secure and obtain digital evidence more efficiently and effectively. The issue has since been discussed several times by EU Ministers and in April 2018 the Commission proposed new rules for cross-border access to electronic evidence. In October 2018, European Leaders called on the Commission to urgently submit negotiating mandates for the international agreements on electronic evidence. It has also been discussed in the context of the EU-U.S. Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial meetings. The Commission presented two negotiating mandates, one for negotiations with the United States and one on the Second Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe "Budapest" Convention on Cybercrime in February 2019.

11. Young European Artist Award 2019

Trieste Contemporanea presents this Award with the aim of promoting young artists from Central Eastern Europe on the international art scene. 2019 marks the 20th anniversary of the Award. The winner will be given the opportunity of conceiving and developing a solo show for the Trieste Contemporanea's exhibition space in Trieste, Italy, and will have a relevant catalogue published.

There is no entry fee. **The deadline is on the 19th August 2019.** You may be eligible if you were born on or after 18 August 1989 in one of the following countries:

Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine. Any groups wishing to participate should fill out the form with the name and ID of the group leader and just list names, countries and dates of birth of group members (that also have to be born in the countries to which the call is open and be aged up to 30). Applicants should complete the online form and attach an updated portfolio (pdf format, max 3MB) and an identification document (pdf or jpg format, max 500 KB).

The portfolio should be composed of the following: images, of at least 5 recent works (each of them with caption and a brief description); curriculum vitae; artistic statement (max 500 words). All texts should be written in English. All eligible applications will be examined by a judging committee comprising European experts and curators of contemporary art. [Application form.](#)
[Read more about the Young European Artist Award.](#)



12. #EUinmyregion 2019 - Contest

The European Commission's Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy hereby invites



you to participate in the Europe in My Region "Stories" Contest, to showcase EU-funded projects around you. Stories must be about an EU-funded project or programme. Stories can take any form: photo, video, blog post, audio, posts on social media platform, canvas, Twitter threads, etc. Stories must be permanent and public. Participants may enter the Europe in My Region Contest by sending an email with a link to the

published story to info@euinmyregion.eu. Participants should choose between two categories: "**citizens**" and "**experts**" – The category should appear in the object of the email after: "EUinMyRegion Storytelling". Experts are persons working for Managing Authorities, Intermediate Bodies, Joint Technical Secretariats, beneficiaries of EU funding, or EU-funded project communication officer.

Eligibility

Entrants must be 18 or over; Employees and immediate relatives of employees of the Promoter or of its respective parent, subsidiary or affiliated companies or any other person connected with this contest are excluded from participation. All entries will be carefully moderated.

Entries

Participants may submit as many stories as they wish. All stories that meet the rules and are submitted by the deadline will be accepted. Editorial independence is guaranteed. The European Commission will translate your stories into English (if necessary), send you the translation and promote your stories via social channels ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)) using the [#EUinmyRegion](#) hashtag.

Copyright

All entries must be original work and the participant must either be the sole owner or the transferee of the copyright. By entering the contest, participants retain full copyright of their images and text. Participants also grant the European Commission the right to publish and exhibit submitted stories. No fee will be payable by the European Commission for this use. Participants must obtain written consent from any individuals aged 18 or above who are identifiable in a story. Participants taking a photograph of anyone under 18 must ensure that they obtain the written consent of that child's parent/guardian. It is the participants' responsibility to ensure that the necessary consent has been obtained. Participants must retain all release forms obtained as they may be asked to prove that consent has been given. Download the release form [here](#). Participants should retain the original digital file/negative of their entry as they may be asked to prove ownership of the work, as well as providing the Promoter with the photo in the highest possible resolution.

Moderation

All stories are checked to make sure that they meet the contest rules before being accepted. Only the stories, which are compliant with the rules of the contest will be added to the contest web pages. Once a story has been reviewed, participants will receive an email with notification of whether it has been accepted or rejected.

Entry period

Stories may be submitted to the contest at any time during the period **1 April to 18 August 2019**, 23:59 Central European Summer Time.

Prizes

The three winners of the "**citizens**" category will join a 2-week tailor-made full-immersion programme into EU-communication experiencing the work of a communication department in an EU- institution, in a communication agency and in a media outlet covering the Brussels sphere. The programme will take place from 29 September to 13 October in Brussels. The three winners of the "**experts**" category will join a dedicated high-level training course on communication in Brussels from 5 to 7 October in Brussels.

Acceptance of Contest Rules

By entering this photo Contest, the participants agree to be bound by the Contest Rules, including assurances on the copyright of entries. [Terms and conditions](#). [Statement of release](#).

13. Landscape scholarships fourth call 2018-2019

The fourth edition of the landscape scholarships of Fondazione Benetton entails activation of **an annual scholarship**, concerning the thematic area *Theories and policies for landscape*, inspired by the personality of Rosario Assunto. Applicants will be required to submit a research project based on the topics and contents of the research project *Outstanding places*, carried out by the Foundation in 2007-2012, whose original materials are stored at the Foundation's archive and partly published on www.fbsr.it, the outcome of which is summarised in the book of the same title published in 2016. Like the project *Outstanding places*, the research must focus on the issue of the person-place and community-place relationship in the local area (Treviso province) and should offer an up-to-date and original interpretation. **The deadline for submitting the applications is set without exception to 31 August 2018. The duration of the scholarship is from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019.** Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche, within the framework of research activities on landscape and the care for places developed with its Scientific Committee, since 2015 establishes landscape study scholarships respectively named after *Sven-Ingvar Andersson* (1927-2007), *Rosario Assunto* (1915-1994) and *Ippolito Pizzetti* (1926-2007), key figures for the Foundation's scientific work since its inception. The legacy of their tutelage continues to inspire and guide landscape studies and research. The residential scholarships focus on three thematic areas that represent their cultural profile and operation field: *Landscape project* (Sven-Ingvar Andersson); *Theories and policies for landscape* (Rosario Assunto); *Nature and gardens* (Ippolito Pizzetti). More information are available at the following [link](#).



14. EFSA Traineeships Call 2019

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), based in Parma, Italy is opening positions for **Trainees** (All Units and Departments) **Deadline for applications: 1st July 2019** at midnight (local time). Are you a young graduate looking for a challenging experience in a stimulating, dynamic and multicultural working environment? Do you want to contribute to our effort to keep the food of more than 500m people safe? Look no further and apply for a traineeship at EFSA! As a trainee you will have a rich first-hand experience in an EU



Agency taking part in several interesting activities together with our staff and partners. Seize the opportunity for a rewarding and challenging experience!

Your key objectives

Under the supervision of your traineeship adviser within the unit of assignment, you will have the opportunity to: Get a first-hand experience into the workings of a scientific EU Agency, developing new competencies and skills in line with your personal interests and professional aspirations; Contribute to the overall

objectives of the unit by supporting in drafting documents and reports, handling scientific and/or administrative work, searching and reviewing literature, and ensuring timely communication of outcomes; Contribute to specific projects and activities with new ideas and innovative solutions; Contribute to the planning and monitoring of the unit's activities.

Why EFSA

You will play an active role in an organisation that makes a difference to the lives of 500 million EU citizens. EFSA employs approximately 440 staff members and its Scientific Committee and Panels engage highly qualified and independent scientific experts. Every position within EFSA plays an important part in creating an inspirational environment in which to work and develop.

EFSA key priorities are

Prioritise public and stakeholder engagement in the process of scientific assessment; Widen EFSA's evidence base and maximise access to its data; Build the EU's scientific assessment capacity and knowledge community; Prepare for future risk assessment challenges; Create an

environment and culture that reflect EFSA's values of cooperation, innovation, openness, independence and scientific excellence. Read more about [EFSA Strategy 2020](#).

Benefits

The selected trainees would receive a monthly grant of €1,160. For more information on benefits and working conditions please consult the "[Decision of the Executive Director of EFSA on traineeship at EFSA](#)".

Selection procedure

EFSA applies a policy of equal opportunities and does not discriminate on any grounds. The selection is made on the basis of the eligibility criteria and of the candidates' competencies, with due regard to an appropriate balance of nationality and gender. A position as Trainee is offered on the basis of the business needs of the organisation and budget availability.

Steps of the selection procedure

1. Candidates apply electronically via the online recruitment tool (selecting 2 areas of interest in order of preference). Candidates can update or withdraw their applications at any time.
2. Applications are screened against the eligibility criteria defined in the Traineeship Call.
3. Eligible candidates will be screened by EFSA's units taking into account the candidates' preferences indicated in the application and their competencies.
4. The shortlisted candidates are required to undergo a telephone or on-line interview to discuss suitability for the role, mutual expectations and possible starting date.
5. As a result of the interview, candidates can be selected, rejected or placed in a reserve list for future positions.
6. Successful candidates will receive a Traineeship offer, stating the starting date, the tasks, the duration of the traineeship and the list of documents to be submitted before the start date.

EFSA will welcome trainees in two main intakes, according to availability and business needs: 1st November 2019 and 1st February 2020. Please note that EFSA units can contact trainees placed in a reserve list at any time during the traineeship period, either due to last minute withdrawal of the candidate or early termination of a trainee's traineeship. Non-EU candidates are required to obtain the relevant VISA. For more information on the conditions of the Traineeship scheme, you can consult the "[Decision of the Executive Director of EFSA on traineeship at EFSA](#)". If you have any questions regarding this call please contact us at traineeships@efsa.europa.eu. Please note that the [ANNEX I](#) represents an integral part of this call and should be consulted before completing the on-line application form. More information are available at the following [link](#).

15. Eurodesk Brussels Link is looking for a Web editor Intern

With a network of national coordinators connected to over 1.000 local information providers through Eurodesk Centres in 36 European countries, Eurodesk is the main source of information on European opportunities for young people and those who work with them. The network manages several online tools and co-manages the European Youth Portal for the European Commission. Eurodesk Brussels Link coordinates the activities of the network. **Eurodesk Brussels Link** is seeking one highly motivated web editor intern. The intern will assist with tasks related to **European Youth Portal** (europa.eu/youth) such as publishing news items, answering enquiries and managing social media communication and newsletters. This internship is an excellent opportunity to participate in all stages of content creation from inception to publishing and developing new skills and working methods on social media and information tools. Proposed length of internship is six (6) months.



Tasks: Answering enquiries from young people received on the European Youth Portal; Proposing content for the European Youth Portal; Proposing and updating content on Eurodesk Opportunity Finder; Writing and planning posts for various social media platforms; Occasionally creating social videos and stories, and recording interviews; Other duties as directed by the director.

Profile and skills required: An academic background in journalism, communication or equivalent is requested; Excellent writing/editing skills in English with an eye for details; Interest

in youth policy and youth related issues; Knowledge of social media platforms; Knowledge of Adobe InDesign, Illustrator and Photoshop is a plus; Able to work in a fast-paced, deadline-driven, international environment; Have a valid work permit for Belgium.

Conditions

An agreement will be made according to the Belgian Convention d'immersion professionnelle contract. The trainee receives a monthly allowance. The traineeship is on a full time basis in line with the regular working hours of Eurodesk Brussels Link (38h/week).

Applications

If your profile matches the requirements, please send your CV and a concise application letter (max. 1 page) in English to internship@eurodesk.eu. **Deadline to apply:** 7 July 2019 (23:59 Brussels time). A pre-selection online test will take place on **10 or 11 July 2019**. Short-listed candidates should be available between 09h00-12h00 to receive and finalise a test. Interviews will take place on 15 July 2019 in Brussels or online. The successful candidate should be available to start work on the **1 September 2019**.

Privacy notice

If you decide to send us your CV and motivation letter, your personal information will not be retained for a longer period than required by our administrative procedures. Once you apply any of your personal data will only be kept in our systems only during the recruitment process this data will only be shared within the Eurodesk Brussels Link recruitment team and permanently deleted from our systems after 31st July 2019 (if you're not selected). Find out more about Eurodesk's compliance with the new GDPR [here](#). More information are available at the following [link](#).

16. Experiential Pedagogy Of The Oppressed For Adults: second training

In the period 7-16 July will take place in Skopje, Macedonia, the joint staff training event of the project "Experiential Pedagogy Of The Oppressed For Adults", that was approved by Turkish National Agency in the framework of the programme Erasmus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education. The partnership is composed by: Gaziantep Egitim ve Genclik Dernegi (Turkey) project coordinator; Association of citizens CEFE Macedonia Skopje (FYROM); Association for education and development of disable people (Greece); EURO-NET (Italy); Balkanska Agenciya za Ustoychivo Razvitie (Bulgaria). The project aims to develop the capacities of refugees; helping their social integration, developing their skills, empowering them in conflict management, improving their living conditions, literacy, access to public services, IT and language skills, fostering intercultural learning and physical-social development. You can already follow the development of the activities on the official Facebook page of the project at the link: <https://www.facebook.com/bottomupeducation>.



17. E+ Round Trip: second project meeting in Italy

In the days 21-22 June will take place in Potenza, Italy, the second meeting of the project "E+ Round Trip Online Preparation for Young People" that is an initiative approved by the Romanian



National Agency Erasmus Plus in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Youth). This project is the third part of a trilogy which started with "The suitcase, the map and the voyage of a youth worker" which had great positive results in terms of indicators, continued with "Online Training Courses for E+ Youth Workers" in order to arrive now to a more modern, dynamic, committed and professional environment and takes the results on a higher level and connect them with young people as well. The partnership is composed by: S.C. Predict Csd Consulting S.R.L. (Romania) project coordinator; EURO-NET (Italy); Dacorom Council For Voluntary Service LTD (UK); Asociatia Millennium Center Arad (Romania); Grobes Schiff (Austria). You can already follow the development of the activities on the official Facebook page of the project at the link: <https://www.facebook.com/eplusroundtrip/>.

18. Concluded the second project meeting "BIM" in Berry-Belfast

In the days 10 and 11 June took place in Berry-Belfast the second meeting of progetto "Borders in the Mind" (acronimo "BIM"), approved in Spain in the framework of the program Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education. The project proposes modern and relevant reception services designed by residents of local communities to inform visitors about where they are located. The main objective of the project is to devise and provide innovative, practical and relevant tools and methodologies to promote tolerance and celebrate difference and identity. The project will also explore the intangible cultural heritage, observing how current cultural beliefs, traditions and lifestyles have been influenced and continue to be influenced by events in our past, even though many people are unaware of it. The project will bring to life this hidden cultural heritage, sometimes misunderstood. Partner of the project are the following organisations: Interacting S.L. (Spain), project coordinator; Youth Power (Cyprus); EURASIA NET (France); Youth Center of Epirus (Greece); EURO-NET (Italy); Stichting chain foundation (The Netherlands); THE NERVE CENTRE (UK). During the meeting the partners took stock of the activities to be developed and defined the steps of the project to be implemented in the coming months. More information are available on the Facebook page at the web link https://www.facebook.com/Borders-in-the-Mind-2227951067468445/?modal=admin_todo_tour.



19. PEACE LENS: first JSTE in Copenhagen



From 30 May to 6 June took place in Copenhagen, Denmark the first training course (a JSTE) of the project "Peace Lens-Creation of new generation of peace promoters", approved by the Luxembourg National Agency in programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Youth as action n°2018-2-LU01-KA205-037345. At JSTE participated also various staff members for EURO-NET who led the entire partnership in the experimental development of the board game foreseen in the project. "Peace lens", in fact, wants to provide youth workers with a powerful tool to strengthen their profiles and integrate innovative methods in their daily work with young people. The partnership is composed by: Lisel asbl (Luxembourg); Intercultural Youth Dialogue Association IYDA e.V. (Germany); Crossing Borders (Denmark) and obviously also EURO-NET (Italy). The aim of this project is to give to workers in youth fields a powerful tool in order to improve their professional skills and innovative methods to reach better results in their daily activities with young people. Through the game that will be developed during the project, this youth operators will both improve their teaching competencies, therefore they will satisfy better young people needs, and also will be able to work with intergenerational and intercultural groups. You can follow project activities on the official Facebook page available on the web link <https://www.facebook.com/PeaceLens-351960512225188/>.

20. Training course of project EU-ACT

In the period 16-20 June (including travel days) took place in Belfast (UK) the training course (a JSTE) of project "EU-ACT" (action n° 2018-1-IT02-KA204-048011), approved by Italian National Agency Indire in the programme Erasmus+ KA2. The aim of this project is to develop a new kind of tourism, to promote local traditions, to pay attention on sustainability, to protect and valorize the cultural heritage, natural beauty and local culture in line with the new tourism market and tourists need. The partners are from Italy, Poland, Hungary, Germany and UK. During the JSTE in UK the



participants learned how to realize their theatre activities. More information on the project can be found on the official website <http://www.europecitytellers.eu> or on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Europe-City-Teller-1552751178163969/>.

21. Concluded the last JSTE planned in the project STRATE.GEES

In the period 13-17 June (including travel days) took place in Warsaw, Poland, the last JSTE of



the project "Strategies for refuGees (STRATE.GEES)". The project is directed to realise an exchange of good practices among various countries in the sector of refugees. It wants to find, understand and share the good practices to have the opportunity to applicate them in the local territories, helping consequently the situation, offering best services and guiding the population to accept and respond positively to all the humanitarian needs. The project partners are: KBM Consultants Ltd (United Kingdom); EURO-NET (Italy); Spoleczna Akademia Nauk (Poland); Center of non formal education (Greece); Confederacion

Espanola De Centros De Ensenanza Asociacion C.E.C.E. (Spain); Kirsehir Valiligi (Turkey); MV International (Italy); Asociatia Millenium Center Arad (Romania). Two members of our staff participated in the training course, specifically Palma Bertani and Chiara Santarsiero. More information on the project is available on the website <http://www.strategiesforrefugees.com/> or on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Strategiesforrefugees/>.

22. Second meeting of the project "Creative Training" in Italy

In the days 24 and 25 June will be realised in Potenza, Italy the second meeting of the Project "Creativity training for Europe" that is an initiative approved by the Erasmus Plus Spanish National Agency in the framework of the programme Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education. During the meeting the participants will take stock of the activities to be developed in the coming months and the steps that the project partners, coming from 5 different countries, namely Spain (Academia Postal 3 Vigo SL), Italy (EURO-NET), Holland, will be defined (Stichting Amsterdam European Mobility), UK (Lancaster and Morecambe College), and Cyprus (A & A Emphasys Interactive Solutions Ltd), will have to implement over the next few months. More details on the meeting will be given on our next newsletters. More details on the project are available on the web page: <https://creativitytrainingproject.netsons.org/> or on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/CT-656366741444085>.



23. Second meeting of the project "INDI"



In the period 1-4 July will be realized in Tallin, Estonia, the second meeting of the project The project "Intercultural dialogue: a holistic approach to teaching drama, storytelling and video making techniques" (acronym InDi) that is an initiative approved by the UK Erasmus Plus National Agency in the framework of the program Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for adult education - Exchange of Good Practices. The partnership is composed by: Sirius Training C.I.C. (UK) project coordinator; EURO-NET (Italy); Mitra France (France);

EESTI People to People (Estonia); Youth Information Centre-Municipality Kordelio Evosmosi

(Greece). The objectives of the project are: to share best practices among project partners; to increase professional development of adult educators; to collect and develop methods of intercultural dialogue; to develop and reinforce EU networks for teaching and learning; to enrich partnership of adult education providers in partners' countries and Europe; to support social and educational value of European cultural heritage. Educators who work in adult education - teachers, tutors, mentors, social workers involved in lifelong learning in partners' institutions - will be main target group. The final beneficiaries are adult learners, including people with fewer opportunities. During the meeting the partners will take stock of the activities to be developed in the coming months and will define the steps of the project to be implemented. More details on the meeting will be provided in our next newsletters. More information on the project is available on the official Facebook page at the link: <https://www.facebook.com/IN-DI-1421157744681293/>.

24. Second meeting of the project “My Community” 2020 in Bulgaria

in the period 15-17 July will be realized in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, the second project meeting of "My Community 2020" that is an initiative approved by the UK Erasmus Plus National Agency in the framework of the program Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for adult education. The project aims to improve the digital skills, self-esteem and occupational skills of adult learners, as well as encourage them to play an active role in their community as citizens. The project involves the realization of the following 3 intellectual outputs:



1. **Design training course Digital Skills to Create Local History:**

The purpose of the training course is to create a product which combines meeting the needs of improving digital skills, provide confidence in engaging, meeting and interviewing others, raising interest in and making an important contribution to local cultural heritage. Combining these different aspects into one training course will provide an innovative way to widen interest in local history and cultural heritage.

2. **Development of a pilot training course:**

Development of training course in order to gain an appreciation of what works well and what can be improved, as well as enabling the creation of materials for the online platform.

3. **My Community Handbook:**

The aim is to create a manual that can be used as a kit to effectively implement the activities developed in intellectual products 1 and 2.

The partnership is composed by: Dacorum Council for Voluntary Service LTD (UK) project coordinator; EURO-NET (Italy); Magenta Consultoria Projects SL (Spain); Gulbenes novada dome (Latvia); Pistes Solidaires (France); Catro Bulgaria (Bulgaria); Exchange House Ireland (Ireland). The European initiative can already be followed on the official Facebook page at the link: <https://www.facebook.com/My-Community-2020-893155357540688/>.

25. IOT for Everyone: first meeting in Tunisia concluded

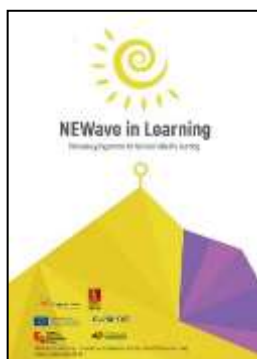


In the period 25-28 May was held in Hammamet, Tunisia, the kick off meeting of the project "IoT for everyone" that is an action approved in Poland in the framework of the program Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education - Good Practice Exchange. Partners of the project are the following organisations: Antares Foundation (Poland), project coordinator; HIRD (Tunisia); Fundación

Cibervoluntarios (Spain); EURO-NET (Italy). The project includes 4 meetings to be held respectively in the project partner countries with two participants per meeting for each partner organization. During the first project meeting, attended by EURO-NET two delegates of our association, the partners took stock of the activities to be developed and defined the steps of the

project to be implemented in the coming months. More information on the project can be found at the official Facebook page at the web link <https://www.facebook.com/lot-for-Everyone-Erasmus-project-426230398158902/>.

26. Last meeting of the project "NEWave in learning" in Spain



in the period 18-20 July will take place in Salamanca, Spain, the last meeting of the project "NEWAVE IN LEARNING". The Strategic Partnership (action n.2016-1-BG01-KA204-023812) is coordinated by the Bulgarian organization Narodno chitalishte "Badeshte sega 2006". The project, approved under the Erasmus Plus program KA2, aims to develop and improve the skills of trainers and teachers in the field of adult education through the implementation in their educational practice of an innovative methodology for the development, design, teaching and evaluation of training results. The project partners are: EURO-NET (Italy); Narodno chitalishte "Badeshte sega 2006" (Bulgaria); Centar za neformalno obrazovanje TRIAGOLNIK (FYROM) and Biderbost, Boscan & Rochin (Spain). More information can be found on the site

<http://newaveinlearning.eu/> or on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/NEWave-in-Learning-610958659354709>.

27. Concluded the training course of the project "Life Styles"



In the period 21-25 May was held in Stara lubovna, Slovakia, the training course of the project "Life Styles, Deviance and Prevention: Non Formal Education and Interdisciplinary Resources for Vulnerable Youth" that is an initiative approved by the Slovak Erasmus Plus National Agency in the framework of the program Erasmus Plus KA2 Strategic Partnerships for Youth. Some members of EURO-NET participated at the training course. More information on the project can be found on the Facebook page at the web link:

<https://www.facebook.com/YouthLifestyles-deviance-and-prevention-330204640941364/>.

28. REUERHC: second meeting in Copenhagen concluded

In the days 23 and 24 May was held in Copenhagen, Denmark, the second meeting of the project "Reinforce EU economies, reinforcing human capital" (acronym REUERHC). The project aims to: help the integration of the target group (represented by migrants and refugees); give this target group the opportunity to develop opportunities for self-employment; also help the national economies of the hosting countries of the migrants. The partnership is composed by: Università Ca' Foscari Venezia (Italy) project coordinator; EURO-NET (Italy); S.C. Predict CSD Consulting S.R.L. (Romania); Pro IFALL AB (Sweden); Crossing Borders (Denmark); Kirsehir Valiligi (Turkey). At the JSTE participated 2 staff members for each partners' organisations. For more information you can consult the official Facebook page of the project at the link: <https://www.facebook.com/Reuerhc-Reinforce-EUeconomies-reinforcing-human->



[capital-653532511711152/](#) or the website of the initiative at the internet address <https://reuerhc.eu/>.