NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2018

GREEK MARKET

1. The Independent Authority for Public Revenue has received detailed information on all the assets – real estate properties, deposits, investments – held by 100,000 Greek taxpayers in 10 other European Union countries. This information does not constitute evidence of tax evasion, but will be cross-checked with the income statements submitted in Greece to establish whether those assets have been declared and taxed; otherwise fines, interest and penalties will be imposed. The tax authority will receive the data on a yearly basis and will be informed about changes to taxpayers' fortune in comparison with the 2016 data.

2. Greek private sector bank deposits decreased by 1.26 percent in January, halting a three-month rise, central bank data showed on Tuesday. Business and household deposits fell to 124.76 billion euros from 126.35 billion in December. Greek banks have seen small deposit inflows over the space of more than two years after the country clinched a third bailout to stay in the eurozone in July 2015.

The capital controls, now in their 33rd month, will ease as of Thursday, with the monthly cash withdrawal limit raised from 1,800 to 2,300 euros per customer per bank. This is the first substantial increase in the limit since the restrictions were imposed in June 2015. Among the other changes that apply from Thursday are the lifting of all restrictions on the opening of a new bank account, as well as on the addition of other users to existing accounts. The sum of cash that travelers can take abroad has also been increased, from 2,000 to 2,300 euros per trip, while it is now easier to transfer funds abroad online through banks.

3.From March, tens of thousands of engineers in Greece – from civil engineers to chemical engineers – will have to pay 86 percent of their average monthly takings in social security contributions.This concerns their current contributions to their fund, additional dues for auxiliary social security and toward retirement lump-sums, as well as past contributions that they are being asked to pay now as there was no calculation in place in previous years.

4. Apartment transactions in parts of Athens, including the center, are expected to soar in the next few months – with prices set to jump too – as the Greek residential property market has become the focus of dozens of foreign real estate agents, as well as Chinese travel agencies. Their aim is to sell the properties at attractive prices (for foreign markets), with the additional bonus of immediate yields if the assets are rented out on home-sharing platforms. This particular activity has attracted a huge number of foreign players, who view investing in the local market as very profitable. In recent months arrivals of Chinese, Turkish, Syrian and Lebanese agents have increased significantly. They seek properties from Greek agencies and offer a guaranteed number of buyers as long as they obtain a sizable commission of between 40 and 80 percent of each property's value, depending on the property and the asking price.

5. Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos came away from Monday's meeting of eurozone finance ministers without their approval for the release of 5.7 billion euros in bailout funding. The money from the fourth tranche is not expected to fill Greek coffers until at least mid-March, as the Eurogroup is demanding that Greece complete two pending prior actions from 110 reforms it needed to implement in order to wrap up the program.

6. The total value of the Greek-owned merchant fleet is almost $100 billion, according to data compiled by VesselsValue, making it by far the world's biggest. The international ship valuation company found that the fleet controlled by Greeks adds up to $99.589 billion, with $36 billion of that concerning tankers, $35.75 billion dry-bulk carriers and $13.5 billion liquefied natural gas (LNG) carriers. The Greek-owned fleet also includes 75 LNG carriers, 144 liquefied petroleum gas carriers, another 133 small dry-bulk carriers, plus many other vessels utilized by the offshore hydrocarbon drilling industry.

7. All property auctions are gradually being transferred to the online platform. Already 1,341 auctions – mainly by banks, and a few by individuals – have been transferred to the electronic system.The curtain on physical auctions at courts will officially fall on February 28, after which all foreclosed assets will have to be auctioned online.

GLOBAL MARKETS

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) agreed to a coalition deal that will see the Finance Ministry taken over by the current SPD mayor of Hamburg, Olaf Scholz

1.The global economy is enjoying unusual synchronicity, with every major region expanding at the same time. With unemployment low and inflation dormant, we face the possibility of several years of "high pressure" growth, in which wages and other rewards to workers will rise, after a decade of anemia. The unusual bonuses paid by some companies to workers in the wake of the U.S. tax bill are partly an acknowledgment of that trend.

Trump's hard-line "America first" trade agenda was retrofitted at Davos into a more reasonable "America first, but not America alone." It remains to be seen what that means in practice, but the cooler rhetoric has reduced fears of a trade fiasco.

The rapid advance of technology–and, in particular, the increasing ability to take proliferating pools of digital data and turn them into useful intelligence–carries the promise of a sea change in business productivity as well as potential solutions to a host of difficult social problems. U.K. Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond said AI could "double economic growth rates in advanced economies by 2035."

2. The world economy is growing fast and according to a respected UK economic forecaster, that is behind an improved British growth forecast. As ever though, the outcome of Brexit decides all. A leading economic forecaster says the UK economy will recover well in 2018, thanks to a strong global economy and a relative easing of concerns over Brexit.

3. As part of a push to get more Russian business leaders involved in education, President Vladimir Putin sat down with some of the country's most gifted pupils for a televised chat about the value of life, love and learning. They gathered at Sirius, an educational center Putin established in Sochi after the 2014 Winter Olympics with backing from multiple billionaires. Promoted by the Kremlin as a model for grooming talent, Sirius runs 600 exceptional students a month through intensive courses in everything from physics and coding to chess and ballet. Putin's own aggression on the world stage has become an unexpected catalyst for an investment boom in Russian education. As U.S. and European leaders continue to work to isolate Russia over alleged election meddling and the conflict in Ukraine, a growing number of tycoons are pulling their children out of western schools and putting money into private projects that will aid Putin's attempts to reverse a decline in national academic rankings.

4. Iraq needs close to $90 billion to rebuild after a 3-year war with the "Islamic State" group, a donor conference has heard. Having spent billions on the conflict, Washington is unlikely to pledge any new funds. The Iraqi government needs $88.2 billion (€71.92 billion) for reconstruction efforts after its victory against the "Islamic State" (IS) militant group, Iraqi Planning Minister Salman al-Jumaili said at the opening of an international conference on the issue in Kuwait on Monday. Although US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson will attend the donor conference on Tuesday, he will instead call for multinational companies and banks to boost their activities in the war-torn country. Thousands of private sector delegates, including representatives from more than 100 American firms are expected to attend. Housing is one of the most urgent priorities, delegates heard, after some 140,000 homes were destroyed during the conflict against the jihadist group.

5. EU leaders meet informally in Brussels to discuss how to deal with the loss of funds from the UK when it leaves the bloc. The group of 27 is also discussing how to chose the next President of the European Commission.When the UK leaves the European Union, it is also expected to leave up to €12 billion ($15 billion) per year in a funding gap for the remaining members to find.

DELTA FINANCE
business consultants

Contact Us
2 Kalavriton str & Kaiafa|P.C.14564, New Kifissia
T.+30 210 6257500 |F.+30 210 6257555
E. info@deltafinance.gr |W. www.deltafinance.gr