



## Daily News 22 / 03 / 2021

Brussels, 22 March 2021

### **Un rapport confirme l'efficacité de l'instrument SURE pour protéger les emplois et les revenus**

La Commission a publié sa première évaluation préliminaire de l'incidence de SURE, l'instrument doté de 100 milliards d'euros et destiné à protéger les emplois et les revenus touchés par la pandémie de la COVID-19. Le [rapport](#) conclut que l'instrument SURE a permis d'atténuer les graves conséquences socioéconomiques de la crise de la COVID-19. Cet instrument a contribué à faire en sorte que, dans les États membres qui en ont bénéficié, la hausse du chômage pendant la crise de la COVID-19 a été nettement moins forte qu'au cours de la crise financière mondiale, malgré une baisse plus importante du PIB. L'instrument a permis d'apporter une aide à 25 à 30 millions de personnes en 2020. Cela représente environ un quart du nombre total de travailleurs salariés dans les 18 États membres bénéficiaires. Le rapport estime également qu'entre 1,5 et 2,5 millions d'entreprises touchées par la pandémie de la COVID-19 ont bénéficié de l'instrument SURE, leur permettant de garder leurs travailleurs. Les États membres ont économisé quelque 5,8 milliards d'euros en paiements d'intérêts, par comparaison à ce qu'ils auraient dû verser s'ils avaient émis de la dette souveraine eux-mêmes. Les versements futurs généreront probablement de nouvelles économies. Un [communiqué de presse](#) est disponible en ligne. (Pour plus d'information: Marta Wieczorek – Tél. : +32 229 58197 ; Enda McNamara – Tél. : +32 229 64976 ; Flora Matthaes – Tel. : +32 229 83951)

### **La solidarité européenne en action: La Commission propose 86,7 millions d'euros pour les récentes catastrophes naturelles en France et en Grèce**

La Commission européenne propose aujourd'hui un soutien financier de 86,7 millions d'euros du [Fonds de solidarité de l'Union européenne](#) (FSUE) pour venir en aide à la population de plusieurs régions de France et de Grèce frappées par des catastrophes naturelles en 2020. La commissaire à la cohésion et aux réformes, Elisa **Ferreira**, a déclaré : « *La semaine dernière, la Commission a offert une importante enveloppe de soutien du Fonds de solidarité de l'UE aux États membres qui font face aux conséquences de l'urgence sanitaire, dont la France et la Grèce. Aujourd'hui, nous tendons également une main secourable aux populations de ces deux pays qui ont subi des catastrophes naturelles en 2020. C'est le visage de la solidarité de l'UE : veiller à ce que personne ne soit laissé pour compte.* » Un montant de 59,3 millions d'euros sera adressé à la France, à la suite des graves dommages causés par la tempête Alex dans la région Provence-Alpes-Côtes d'Azur, tandis qu'un montant total de 27,4 millions d'euros parviendra à la Grèce suite aux dégâts causés par le cyclone méditerranéen Ianos, les inondations dans la région d'Ellada et le tremblement de terre dans les îles de Samos, Ikaria et Chios. La France et la Grèce ont déjà reçu des avances pour ces quatre catastrophes régionales. Une fois que la proposition de la Commission sera approuvée par le Parlement et le Conseil, l'aide financière finale pourra alors être versée. Le FSUE a été créé suite aux graves inondations de l'été 2002 en Europe centrale, pour aider principalement les pays éligibles à mener des opérations d'urgence et de redressement consécutives à des catastrophes naturelles. Entre 2002 et 2020, le FSUE a mobilisé un total de plus de 6,5 milliards d'euros pour des interventions concernant 96 catastrophes dans 23 États membres et un pays en voie d'adhésion. Plus d'informations dans notre [communiqué de presse](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Tim McPhie – Tél.: +32 229 66712; Veronica Favalli – Tél.: +32 229 87269)

### **Intellectual property: new advice service for SMEs launched**

Today, the Commission launched the '[Horizon Intellectual Property \(IP\) Scan](#)' service. This tailored, first-line and free IP support service is designed to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to efficiently manage and valorise IP in collaborative research and innovation efforts. The Horizon IP Scan has a particular focus on EU-funded Horizon 2020 or Horizon Europe projects. Building on a vast network of experienced, IP experts covering all EU and Horizon-associated countries, the Horizon

IP Scan team provides an individual, jargon-free assessment of SME's intangible assets. In particular, it aims to show SMEs how to protect their existing IP when starting on a research and innovation project with multiple partners and to assist them in developing a shared strategy with their partners to manage and exploit new IP generated jointly. The service is open to European start-ups and SMEs (according to the [European Commission definition](#)) that are about to sign a Horizon (2020/Europe) Grant Agreement or have recently signed one (up to six months after signature). SMEs interested in the Horizon IP Scan can apply for the service at any time via the [Horizon IP Scan website](#) using the continuous open call. The [Horizon Intellectual Property \(IP\) Scan](#) was announced in the [Action Plan](#) on Intellectual Property published in November 2020. For more information see [here](#). (For more information: Sonya Gospodinova – Tel.: +32 229 66953; Federica Miccoli – Tel.: +32 229 58300)

## **Agriculture : la Commission approuve une nouvelle indication géographique d'Italie**

La Commission européenne a approuvé la demande d'inscription du « Pistacchio di Raffadali » d'Italie dans le registre des appellations d'origine protégée (AOP). Le « Pistacchio di Raffadali » est produit dans la province d'Agrigente, en Sicile. Les conditions très arides de la région et l'exposition des plantations au sud et au soleil permettent d'obtenir un fruit présentant des caractéristiques qualitatives particulières, une saveur douce, agréable et prononcée et un rendement élevé en huile. La culture de la pistache a connu son essor à partir de la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle. Des pâturages entiers et des terres abandonnées ont été transformés en plantations de pistachiers et cette culture s'est retrouvée au cœur de l'ensemble du système agricole et économique de la région. Le choix de maintenir le pistachier à un niveau bas, les branches touchant presque le sol, a également laissé, au fil des ans, son empreinte sur la caractérisation du paysage. Cette nouvelle appellation va rejoindre 1606 produits alimentaires déjà protégés dont la liste est disponible dans la base de données [eAmbrosia](#). Pour plus d'informations, voir aussi les pages sur la [politique de qualité](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Miriam Garcia Ferrer – Tél.: +32 229 99075; Thérèse Lerebours – Tél.: +32 229 63303)

## **Safe and resilient forests: Commission works for wildfire prevention in Europe and globally\***

Today, following the International Day of Forests, the Commission has published [new guidelines](#) to facilitate a better understanding of land-based wildfire prevention and effective responses. They point towards prevention measures that can be taken through governance, planning and forest management, and outline how EU Member States can access EU funding for wildfire resilience and work together at EU level. In recent years, the impact of wildfires on people and nature has increased. The new guidance looks at interconnected factors behind this increase, and provides an overview of existing principles and experiences on managing landscapes, forests and woodlands that can save lives. The [European Green Deal](#) announced a new [EU Forest Strategy](#) for 2021 to ensure effective afforestation, and forest preservation and restoration in Europe. This will help to reduce the incidence and extent of wildfires. The [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#) also aims to contribute to the EU and its Member States being adequately equipped to prevent and respond to major wildfires, which seriously damage forest biodiversity. The [new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change](#) puts emphasis on the need to strengthen the resilience of forests and includes several actions to support this objective. In addition, the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) has developed [country profiles](#) under the [Global Wildfire Information System \(GWIS\)](#) to support wildfire management and disaster risk reduction globally and in particular in Latin America and the Caribbean. This work is part of the EU's comprehensive approach to support conservation and sustainable development of Amazon forests. There are at present more than 50 EU programmes on this regional priority, and the new budget for global Europe will also cover a specific Amazon strategy, coordinated with EU Member States. More information in this [press release](#). Read also the JRC press release [here](#). (For more information: Tim McPhie – Tel: +32 229 58602; Johannes Bahrke – Tel: +32 229 58615; Daniela Stoycheva – Tel.: +32 229 53664 ; Sinéad Meehan-van Druten - Tel.: +32 229 84094)

## **Migration: Vice-President Schinas met with Ministers ahead of the MED 5 Informal Ministerial Meeting**

Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis **Schinas** met with Ministers ahead of the MED 5 Informal Ministerial Meeting in Athens on Friday 19 March. The Vice-President joined the Home Affairs ministers from the Med 5 Member States, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain, to discuss the [New Pact on Migration and Asylum](#). The Commission will continue supporting the co-

legislators in taking this important work forward. Vice-President **Schinus** said: "I was happy to see the enthusiasm of the Mediterranean 5 States who are ready to engage constructively to find solutions that work for all. We are now at a stage of the negotiations where we have to move from expressing statements to finding concrete compromises." The Vice-President's statement is available on [EbS](#). (For more information: Adalbert Jahnz - Tel.: + 32 229 53156; Ciara Bottomley - Tel.: +32 229 69971; Laura Bérard - Tel.: +32 229 55721.)

## **Aides d'État: la Commission autorise un régime d'aides français visant à indemniser les exploitants de remontées mécaniques pour les dommages causés par la pandémie de COVID-19**

La Commission européenne a autorisé, en vertu des règles de l'UE en matière d'aides d'État, un régime d'aides français doté d'un budget compris entre 140 et 700 millions d'euros et destiné à indemniser les exploitants de remontées mécaniques pour les dommages subis en raison des mesures restrictives prises par le gouvernement pour limiter la propagation du coronavirus. Dans le cadre du régime, les exploitants auront droit à une indemnisation sous la forme de subventions directes pour les dommages subis entre le 1<sup>er</sup> décembre 2020 et le 30 avril 2021 ou la date de fin des restrictions gouvernementales frappant les remontées mécaniques, la date la plus proche étant retenue. La date de fin de la période éligible dépendra de la prolongation ou non des restrictions gouvernementales en vigueur, mais ne peut en aucun cas dépasser la fin avril 2021. Les subventions couvriront jusqu'à 49 % de la perte de chiffre d'affaires estimée. La Commission a examiné la mesure au regard de l'[article 107, paragraphe 2, point b](#)), du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne (TFUE), qui permet à la Commission d'autoriser les aides d'État accordées par les États membres afin d'indemniser certaines sociétés ou certains secteurs (sous la forme de régimes d'aides) pour des dommages causés directement par des événements extraordinaires. La Commission a estimé que le régime d'aides français permettrait la réparation de dommages directement liés à la pandémie de coronavirus. La Commission a donc conclu que le régime était conforme aux règles de l'UE en matière d'aides d'État. Margrethe **Vestager**, vice-présidente exécutive chargée de la politique de concurrence, a déclaré: « *Les vagues persistantes de coronavirus ont mis les remontées mécaniques à l'arrêt pendant toute la saison hivernale, ce qui a entraîné des pertes importantes pour leurs exploitants et pour les stations de skis en général. Ce régime d'aides permettra à la France d'indemniser les exploitants de remontées mécaniques pour les dommages subis du fait des mesures restrictives prises pour contenir la pandémie de coronavirus. Nous continuons à travailler en étroite collaboration avec les États membres pour trouver des solutions efficaces pour soutenir les entreprises en ces temps difficiles, dans le respect des règles de l'UE.* » Pour plus d'informations, un communiqué de presse est disponible [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Arianna Podesta – Tél. +32 229 87024; Giulia Astuti – Tél.: +32 229 55344; Maria Tsoni – Tél.: +32 229 90526)

## **State aid: Commission approves €3 million Czech scheme to support tour operators affected by the coronavirus outbreak**

The European Commission approved an approximately €3 million (CZK 75 million) Czech scheme to support tour operators which were prevented from carrying out their activities due to the measures that the Czech government had to introduce to limit the spread of the coronavirus. The scheme was approved under the State aid [Temporary Framework](#). The public support, which will take the form of direct grants, will cover a percentage of the beneficiaries' 2020 projected revenues. The aim of the scheme is to help the beneficiaries address their liquidity needs and, at the same time, preserve employment and maintain the operation of businesses and the supply of services in the tourism sector, which was severely hit also by the second wave of the pandemic. The Commission found that the Czech scheme is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, (i) the support will not exceed €1.8 million per company; and (ii) the scheme will run until 30 June 2021. The Commission concluded that the measure is necessary, appropriate and proportionate to remedy a serious disturbance in the economy of a Member State, in line with Article 107(3)(b) TFEU and the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. On this basis, the Commission approved the measure under EU State aid rules. More information on the Temporary Framework and other actions taken by the Commission to address the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic can be found [here](#). The non-confidential version of the decision will be made available under the case number SA.60280 in the [State aid register](#) on the Commission's [competition](#) website once any confidentiality issues have been resolved. (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel. +32 229 87024; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

## **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Guala by Investindustrial**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Guala Closures S.p.A. ('Guala') of Italy by Investindustrial S.A. of Luxembourg. Guala is active in the manufacture and supply of bottle closures made from different materials and for a variety of end-uses. Investindustrial is an investment fund that, among others, controls Benvic SAS, a manufacturer of suspension PVC compounds used in the production of liners for bottle closures and other applications. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given the limited vertical links between the companies' activities. The transaction was examined under the normal merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.10118](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel. +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

## **STATEMENTS**

### **World Water Day: Joint Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell and Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius**

On World Water Day 2021, we celebrate all of the different ways in which water benefits our lives. We resolve to value water properly and safeguard it effectively for everyone. This year's theme focuses on the 'value of water'. Access to drinking water and sanitation are basic human needs and rights, and are fundamental for human dignity. At the same time, water is a shared resource, a critical ecosystem, and its use underpins various sectors of the economy. Together we must give water its true value, safeguarding this most precious of natural resources for everyone. Let's make every drop count. A joint statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep **Borrell** and Commissioner Virginijus **Sinkevičius** on the occasion of the World Water Day is available [here](#). (For more information: Tim McPhie – Tel: +32 229 58602; Nabila Masrali – Tel: +32 229 88093; Daniela Stoycheva – Tel.: +32 229 53664 ; Xavier Cifre Quatresols - Tel.: +32 229 73582)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **New Pact on Migration and Asylum: First meeting of the new European contact group on search and rescue**

This morning, Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva **Johansson**, opened the work of the new European contact group on search and rescue. The contact group is a key action of the [New Pact on Migration and Asylum](#) to address the issue of search and rescue at sea. It provides a framework for cooperation, information exchange and sharing of good practices between different actors involved in search and rescue operations including EU Agencies, international organisations and private entities, such as non-governmental organisations and merchant vessels associations. Its first meeting has brought together national coastguard authorities in Member States and Schengen associated countries. Commissioner **Johansson** said: "Saving lives at sea is a moral duty, as well as a legal obligation for Member States. As outlined in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, we need a predictable and reliable framework for search and rescue in the Mediterranean. The EU cannot impose solutions but with this new tool, we are bringing all those with responsibilities around one table to find solutions. This is an essential step forward in managing this complex and essential issue." Commissioner **Johansson** published a [blog article](#) and her [speech](#) is available online. (For more information: Adalbert Jahnz - Tel.: + 32 229 53156; Ciara Bottomley - Tel.: +32 229 69971; Laura Bérard - Tel.: +32 229 55721.)

### **Long-term vision for rural areas: Vice-President Šuica and Commissioner Wojciechowski open 'Rural Vision Week'**

Today is the first day of [Rural Vision Week](#), dedicated to imagining the future of Europe's rural areas. Organised by the European Network of Rural Development, in close co-operation with the European Commission, the event will explore stakeholders' aspirations for rural areas, the various challenges and opportunities rural areas face today and expect in the future. The event includes workshops on a fair and green transition, strengthening urban-rural partnerships, the role of farming, food production and digital innovations in rural areas, and finding smart solutions to demographic change. Vice-President for Democracy and Demography, Dubravka **Šuica** and Commissioner for Agriculture, Janusz **Wojciechowski**, will participate in the opening session alongside the Portuguese Minister of Agriculture, Maria do Céu Antunes. Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms Elisa **Ferreira** will participate in the high-level closing plenary on Friday 26 March. This event and its outcomes will feed into the Commission's long-term vision for rural areas Communication to be published mid-2021. The Communication will draw attention to the specific needs of rural areas and commit to new actions to mobilise European, national, regional and local authorities and stakeholders to act on the needs and aspirations of rural areas and their residents. The results of the public consultation on the vision are available [here](#). More information on the agenda [here](#). (For more information: Miriam Garcia Ferrer – Tel.: +32 229 99075; Thérèse Lerebours – Tel.: +32 229 63303, Sinéad Meehan - van Druten - Tel.: +32 229 84094)

### **Commissioner Breton in Latvia and Estonia to accelerate ramping-up of vaccine production**

Commissioner Thierry **Breton**, in charge of the Internal Market and responsible for the Task Force on Industrial Scale-up of COVID-19 vaccine production, is this morning in Latvia for several high-level meetings to accelerate the ramping up of vaccine production as well as create a robust vaccine supply network and fight together Covid-19. Commissioner **Breton** met with the Latvian Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš. During his trip, the Commissioner had also a meeting with Jānis Vitenbergs, Minister of Economics; Mr Kaspars Rožkalns, Director General, Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (LIAA). In addition, Commissioner **Breton** had an exchange with Latvian companies. In the afternoon, Commissioner **Breton** will be in Estonia for a meeting with Kersti Kaljulaid, President of the Republic. On this occasion, Commissioner **Breton** will have bilateral meetings with Andres Sutt, Minister of Entrepreneurship and Information Technology and Tanel Kiik, Minister of Health and Labour. Commissioner **Breton** will attend a virtual meeting with the Chairwoman of the Board of Chemi-Pharm AS, Dr. Ruth Oltjer, and the Founder and CEO of Icosagen OÜ, Mart Ustav. (For more information: Sonya Gospodinova – Tel.: +32 229 66953; Federica Miccoli – Tel.: +32 229 58300)

### **Climate diplomacy: EU, China and Canada co-convene the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial on Climate Action (MoCA)**

Tomorrow, Executive Vice-President Frans **Timmermans**, Mr Huang Runqiu, China's Minister for Ecology and Environment, and Mr Jonathan Wilkinson, Canada's Minister for Environment and Climate Change, will co-convene the 5th session of the Ministerial on Climate Action (MoCA). The [annual meeting](#), hosted this year by China, will be held virtually for the second time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The MoCA is the first major ministerial meeting of the year on international climate action, and will be an important stepping stone towards the COP26 in November. Discussions will focus on how to enhance global ambition on emission reductions, while supporting cooperation and solidarity between the Parties. It is also an important forum for understanding country-specific challenges and opportunities in implementing low-carbon, resilient and sustainable policies and measures in a green recovery world. Participants will include Ministers from G20 countries and other key parties in the UN climate negotiations. The EU will urge its international partners to follow its commitment to net zero emissions by mid-century and undertake significant emission cuts by 2030 to put their countries on a pathway to uphold their Paris Agreement commitments. (For more information: Tim McPhie – Tel: +32 229 58602; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel: +32 229 74959)

\* UPDATED ON 22-03-201; at 14:20

[Eurostat](#): communiqués de presse