



### Daily News 06 / 05 / 2021

Brussels, 6 May 2021

#### **President von der Leyen at the State of the Union conference, hosted by the European University Institute**

This morning, the President of the European Commission, Ursula **von der Leyen** gave a speech at the 10th anniversary edition of the State of the Union conference, hosted by the European University Institute, via videoconference. President **von der Leyen** called for a European Renaissance, to overcome the crisis and deliver for the future of Europe's citizens. Looking back on the past year, the President said: *"Today, the enormous gains delivered by our unity are obvious for everybody. We see that our European vaccination campaign is a success."* 200 million doses of vaccines have been distributed in the EU so far. Noting that Europe exports vaccines to over 90 countries, President **von der Leyen** made clear that Europe remains open for business: *"Europe achieved this success, while remaining open to the world. While others keep their vaccine production for themselves, Europe is the main exporter of vaccines worldwide. So far, 200 million doses of vaccines produced in Europe have been shipped to the rest of the world. Europe exports as many vaccines as it delivers to its own citizens. To be clear, Europe is the only democratic region in the world that exports vaccines on a large scale. The European Union is also ready to discuss any proposal that addresses the crisis in an effective and pragmatic manner. That is why we are ready to discuss how the U.S. proposal for a waiver on intellectual property protection for COVID-19 vaccines could help achieve that objective. In the short run, however, we call upon all vaccine producing countries to allow exports and to avoid measures that disrupt supply chains."* Ahead of the Global Health Summit due to take place on 21 May, she also urged for cooperation on the global health preparedness: *"We must now move from the ad-hoc solutions of this year, towards a sustainable system. A system that works for the whole world. Because viruses know no borders. In Rome, we want to discuss international cooperation in health emergencies. Yes, preparedness comes at a cost. But the cost of preparedness is tiny compared to the cost of inaction. The world needs a new beginning on health policy. And our health Renaissance begins in Rome."* The speech is available [online](#) and you can watch it [here](#). (For more information: Eric Mamer – Tel.: +32 229 94073; Dana Spinant – Tel.: +32 229 90150)

#### **EU celebrates 10,000 grantees of the European Research Council**

Today, the EU celebrates a new milestone in the area of research and innovation: the 10,000th researcher that has been awarded a grant from the European Research Council (ERC), namely Professor Inga Berre from the University of Bergen, Norway. During an online ceremony, President of the European Commission, Ursula **von der Leyen**, President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, and Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya **Gabriel**, together with other European leaders, expressed their strong support for frontier research and the European Research Council. Commissioner **Gabriel** said: *"Congratulations to Professor Inga Berre - she is the 10,000<sup>th</sup> researcher awarded an ERC grant! Today we celebrate all 10,000 ERC grantees. These bright minds from Europe and beyond are pushing the boundaries of our knowledge. The pandemic has reminded us that long-term investments in fundamental research have proven crucial in moments of crisis. The many years of research behind mRNA technology allowed the development of new vaccines in record time. It is precisely because we cannot anticipate all the challenges we may face tomorrow that we must continue to invest in frontier research. We do so through the European Research Council, a widely recognised success story for Europe, fourteen years after its launch."* With an [ERC Consolidator Grant](#), Professor Inga Berre will be able to advance her cutting-edge research in geothermal energy, contributing to the path towards clean and sustainable energy for future generations. Selected based on excellence, the project will ultimately also contribute to the [European Green Deal](#) that supports the EU aim of becoming climate neutral by 2050 and a just and inclusive transition. More information is available in this [ERC press release](#). The video message of President **von der Leyen** is available [here](#) and the recording of the ceremony is [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Marietta Grammenou – Tel.: +32 229 83583)

## **Coronavirus: Commission proposes €6.8 million in total to support 1,700 dismissed workers of air carriers KLM and Finnair\***

Today, the European Commission proposes to support 1,200 former workers of KLM in the Netherlands and 500 former workers of Finnair in Finland, who lost their jobs due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on passenger air transport. The proposed total of €6.8 million from the [European Globalisation Adjustment Fund \(EGF\)](#) will help them find new jobs through further education or training or support them to start their own business. The measures co-financed by the EGF range from job-searching advice and vocational orientation, to training, hiring benefits and support to start a business. Participants may receive additional incentives, such as allowances for travel, accommodation and moving house to cover related expenditure incurred during job-seeking or training. In the case of former workers of Finnair in Finland, the total estimated cost of the support measures is €2.9 million, of which the EGF will provide €1.8 million. In the case of former workers of KLM in the Netherlands, the total estimated cost of the support measures is €8.4 million, of which the EGF will provide €5 million. The remaining amounts will be financed in the case of dismissed workers of KLM by the company, and in the case of dismissed workers of Finnair by Finnish authorities. The Commission's proposal will need to be approved by the European Parliament and the Council. A [press release](#) is available online. (For more information: Marta Wieczorek – Tel.: +32 229 58197; Flora Matthaes – Tel.: +32 229 83951)

## **Le vice-président Schinas annonce l'équipe de l'UE pour le premier défi international en matière de cybersécurité**

Aujourd'hui, lors de sa première visite à l'Agence européenne de la cybersécurité (ENISA), Margaritis **Schinas**, le vice-président chargé de la promotion de notre mode de vie européen et responsable de la stratégie de l'Union européenne en matière de sécurité, a annoncé l'équipe de l'UE qui participera au tout premier défi international en matière de cybersécurité. Les 36 jeunes joueurs motivés qui feront partie de cette « équipe UE » ont entre 18 et 26 ans et viennent de 17 pays européens différents. L'ENISA organise ce premier défi international en matière de cybersécurité ensemble avec plusieurs organisations régionales et internationales. Des équipes du monde entier seront confrontés à une série de défis, comme des applications web et l'exploitation des systèmes, la cryptographie, l'ingénierie inverse, des défis matériels, la criminalistique et des jeux d'évasion. Depuis 2015, l'agence coordonne également [le défi européen en matière de cybersécurité](#), un concours annuel qui vise à encourager les jeunes à poursuivre une carrière dans ce domaine de la cybersécurité, tout en renforçant leurs compétences. Margaritis **Schinas**, vice-président de la Commission, a déclaré à ce propos : « L'ENISA a été placée au cœur de notre stratégie de l'Union européenne de la sécurité, parce que la cybersécurité reste une priorité en raison des défis permanents et croissants auxquels nous sommes confrontés dans ce domaine. L'éducation et les compétences en matière de cybersécurité permettent de nous préparer à nos défis sécuritaires. Je tiens à féliciter les jeunes sélectionnés qui représenteront l'UE lors du premier défi international en matière de cybersécurité et à leur souhaiter bonne chance pour le concours. Ce nouveau concours en matière de cybersécurité fait partie de nos actions en faveur d'une main-d'œuvre qualifiée dans ce domaine en Europe. » Juhan Lepasaar, directeur exécutif de l'Agence européenne de la cybersécurité, a ajouté : « Le défi international en matière de cybersécurité aidera les États membres à former leurs jeunes, tout en favorisant un échange d'expertise à l'échelle mondiale. » Le vice-président **Schinas** a également rencontré des membres du personnel de l'ENISA et discuté de la manière dont l'agence contribue à la sécurité de l'UE et aux priorités de [l'Union européenne de la sécurité](#), ainsi qu'à la mise en œuvre du [règlement sur la cybersécurité de l'UE](#) et de la [législation NIS](#). De plus amples informations sont disponibles dans ce [communiqué de presse de l'ENISA](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tél.: +32 229 58615; Marietta Grammenou – Tél.: +32 229 83583)

## **Publication des derniers chiffres du commerce agroalimentaire: le commerce agroalimentaire de l'UE diminue en janvier 2021**

Le dernier rapport mensuel sur le commerce agroalimentaire [publié aujourd'hui](#) montre une baisse des exportations agroalimentaires de l'UE de 11 % par rapport à janvier 2020, pour atteindre une valeur totale de 13,5 milliards d'euros. Cette baisse intervient après une période plus longue d'augmentation continue des exportations. Pour la même période, les importations ont atteint une valeur de 9,1 milliards d'euros, soit 16 % de moins qu'en janvier 2020. Cela s'est traduit par un excédent commercial agroalimentaire de janvier 2021 à 4,4 milliards d'euros, soit une augmentation de 3,6 % par rapport à janvier 2020. La valeur des exportations vers la Chine a augmenté de 146 millions d'euros, tirée par la demande croissante de viande porcine et de céréales secondaires, ainsi

que d'huiles de colza et de tournesol. Des valeurs d'exportation accrues ont également été enregistrées en ce qui concerne le Chili, le Pakistan et la Norvège. Les exportations de l'UE vers le Royaume-Uni ont diminué en valeur de 792 millions d'euros par rapport à janvier 2020. Des baisses ont également été enregistrées dans la valeur des exportations vers les États-Unis, la Russie, le Japon et l'Arabie saoudite. Concernant les importations, leur valeur en provenance du Royaume-Uni a baissé de 874 millions d'euros par rapport à janvier 2020. De nouvelles baisses ont été enregistrées dans les valeurs des importations en provenance d'Argentine, des États-Unis et d'Indonésie. Cependant, les valeurs ont augmenté pour les importations en provenance de Malaisie, d'Inde, du Brésil et du Nigéria. En termes de catégories de produits, la valeur des exportations d'aliments pour animaux de compagnie a augmenté de 17 millions d'euros, avec des hausses également enregistrées pour les huiles de colza et de tournesol, les agrumes, les tourteaux et la pâte et la poudre de cacao. Cependant, les valeurs des exportations ont diminué pour des catégories de produits telles que le vin, les aliments pour nourrissons, les préparations de légumes et de fruits, le chocolat et les confiseries. Le [rapport complet](#) est disponible en ligne et de plus amples informations sur la politique agroalimentaire sont disponibles [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Miriam Garcia Ferrer – Tél.: +32 229 99075; Thérèse Lerebours – Tél.: +32 229 63303)

### **Investment Plan for Europe in Belgium: support for innovation, research and development activities of company in the textiles sector**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and Vandewiele (VDW), a Belgian technology company active in the textiles sector, have agreed a €100 million loan to boost VDW's investments in research, development and innovation, as well as for improving the company's carbon footprint. The loan is backed by the [European Fund for Strategic Investments \(EFSI\)](#), the main pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe. The funds will support the ongoing digitalisation of the company as well as the development of innovative products. At the same time, the company aims to lower its environmental footprint by reducing its energy use, waste production and use of raw materials, which will also be part of the activities financed under this operation. Commissioner for the Economy, Paolo **Gentiloni**, said: "Thanks to support from the Investment Plan for Europe and the EIB, the Belgian technology company Vandewiele will be able to boost its investments into innovation, digitalisation and production with a reduced environmental impact. This is a remarkable example of how the EU can help companies invest into future-proof technologies and make their green and digital transition a success." The [Investment Plan for Europe](#) has so far mobilised €546.5 billion of investment, including €11 billion in Belgium. The [press release](#) is available online. (For more information: Marta Wieczorek – Tel.: +32 229 58197; Flora Matthaes – Tel.: +32 229 83951)

### **Antitrust: Commission publishes findings of the evaluation of rules on horizontal agreements between companies**

The European Commission has published today a [Staff Working Document](#) that summarises the findings of the evaluation of the two horizontal block exemption regulations on Research & Development and specialisation agreements ("R&D BER" and "Specialisation BER" respectively, together "HBERs"), together with the Horizontal Guidelines. The aim of the evaluation was to allow the Commission to determine whether it should let the HBERs lapse, prolong their duration or revise them. The [final report of the study](#) is also published today. The evaluation has shown that (i) the HBERs and the Horizontal Guidelines are still relevant and (ii) several areas were identified where their effectiveness can be improved. During the next weeks, the Commission will launch the impact assessment phase of the review to look into the issues identified during the evaluation with a view to having revised rules in place by 31 December 2022 when the current rules will expire. Stakeholders will have the possibility to comment on the inception impact assessment and to provide their views in the context of a public consultation, which is planned for the middle of this year. At the beginning of next year, the Commission will publish a draft of the revised rules for stakeholder comments. Executive Vice-President Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: "The evaluation has shown that the rules on horizontal agreements between companies and the Horizontal Guidelines are useful tools for businesses. At the same time, the evaluation has identified several areas where the rules are not sufficiently adapted to digitisation and the pursuit of sustainability goals. The Commission will now reflect on how to revise these rules in order to ensure that they remain fit for purpose." A press release is available [online](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel. +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of MedRisk by CVC and Carlyle**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of MedRisk

Holdco, LLC ('MedRisk') of the U.S. by CVC Capital Partners SICAV-FIS S.A. ('CVC') of Luxembourg and The Carlyle Group, Inc. ('Carlyle') of the U.S. MedRisk supplies managed physical therapy for the workers' compensation industry and related market sectors in the U.S. CVC manages investment funds holding interests in various industries primarily in Europe, the U.S. and the Asia-Pacific region. Carlyle is a global alternative asset manager of funds active across different investment disciplines. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because there are no horizontal overlaps or vertical relationships between the business activities of MedRisk and those of CVC and Carlyle within the European Economic Area. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.10215](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel. +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Honshu Chemical by Mitsui Chemicals and Mitsui Bussan**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Honshu Chemical Industry Co., Ltd. ('Honshu Chemical') by Mitsui Chemicals, Inc. and Mitsui & Co., Ltd. ('Mitsui Bussan'), all of Japan. Both Honshu Chemical and Mitsui Chemicals are engaged in the production and sale of chemical products. Mitsui Bussan is a global trading organisation which is active in various sectors, including, inter alia, the sale of chemical products. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns in view of the absence of horizontal overlaps and the existence of only limited vertical links between the activities of the companies involved. 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.10147](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel. +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Rapports d'entreprise sur la durabilité: La Commission organise une conférence de haut niveau sur les prochaines étapes**

La Commission organise aujourd'hui une conférence de haut niveau sur les rapports d'entreprise sur la durabilité. La [directive sur la publication d'informations non financières \(en anglais NFRD\)](#) impose à certaines grandes entreprises de rendre compte des questions sociales, environnementales, de droits de l'homme ou de corruption. Toutefois, les informations actuellement communiquées ne répondent pas aux besoins croissants des investisseurs et des autres parties prenantes. Les entreprises qui doivent produire les rapports ont besoin de clarté sur les informations qu'elles devraient publier en matière de durabilité de manière ordonnée, cohérente et rentable. La Commission européenne a récemment revu la directive sur la publication d'informations non financières afin de remédier à tout cela. En conséquence, elle a publié en avril 2021 une [proposition de directive sur les rapports d'entreprise sur la durabilité](#) pour examen par le Parlement européen et le Conseil. La conférence de haut niveau d'aujourd'hui est l'occasion pour tous d'en savoir plus sur les questions clés et les objectifs de la proposition, ainsi que ses implications concrètes. La conférence alternera entre panels d'experts et discours. Elle accueille des dirigeants européens et internationaux y compris Valdis **Dombrovskis**, vice-président exécutif de la Commission européenne, Mairead **McGuinness**, commissaire européenne chargée des finances, Christine Lagarde, présidente de la BCE, Daniele Franco, ministre de l'économie et des finances d'Italie, Andrej Šircelj, ministre des finances de la Slovénie, Olivia Grégoire, secrétaire d'État à l'économie sociale de la France et des députés européens entre autres. Les panels examineront notamment le rôle des normes d'information en matière de durabilité dans la promotion d'une meilleure publication d'informations par les entreprises en matière de durabilité. La conférence débute [en ligne](#) à 13h15 (CEDT). Les participants sont invités à soumettre leurs questions via Twitter à l'aide des hashtags [#NFRDReview](#) ou [#CSRD](#). Notre compte Twitter est le suivant: [@EU\\_Finance](#). Le programme complet de la conférence et de plus amples informations sont disponibles [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Daniel Ferrie – Tel.: +32 229 86500; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

### **Social Europe: President von der Leyen and College members to participate in Porto Social**

## Summit

Tomorrow, President **von der Leyen** will participate in the [Social Summit in Porto](#), organised by the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU. Executive Vice-Presidents **Vestager** and **Dombrovskis**, High Representative/Vice-President **Borrell** as well as Commissioners **Gabriel**, **Schmit** and **Ferreira** will also take part. The Porto Social Summit will bring together EU institutions, Heads of State or Government, social partners and civil society representatives. The summit will be an opportunity to renew the joint commitment to a strong social Europe and a fair, inclusive and resilient recovery. In March, the Commission put forward an [Action Plan](#) to further implement the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) and address the socioeconomic consequences of the pandemic, as well as more long-term demographic, societal and technological challenges. The Action Plan also proposes EU-level targets for employment, skills and social protection to be achieved by 2030. Dedicated sessions will focus on the topics 'From Gothenburg to Porto' and 'Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights', followed by three parallel workshops dedicated to 'Work and employment', 'Skills and innovation' and 'Welfare state and social protection'. Speeches at the opening and closing sessions of the first day of the Summit will be live on [EBS](#), as well as the press conference with Presidents **von der Leyen**, Sassoli and Michel and Portugal's Prime Minister Costa which will take place at +/- 19:40 CEST. A press release on the outcomes of the first day of the Summit will be published in the evening. More information about the programme of the Porto Social Summit as well as media arrangements is available on [this website](#). (For more information: Eric Mamer – Tel.: +32 229 94073; Dana Spinant – Tel.: +32 229 90150; Marta Wieczorek – Tel.: +32 229 58197; Flora Matthaes – Tel.: +32 229 83951)

## Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans attends Petersberg Climate Dialogue

Tomorrow 7 May, Executive Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** participates in the 12th Petersberg Climate Dialogue, an annual high-level political meeting of over 30 ministers from around the world, co-hosted by the German government and the COP26 Presidency. The meeting will start at 14:00 CEST today with remarks by UN Secretary-General António Guterres, Federal Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Their speeches will be live-streamed [here](#). This year's Petersberg Dialogue will focus on the preparations for the upcoming COP26 climate conference in Glasgow. It will address pressing issues such as enhancing countries' climate-resilience and adaptation capacity, scaling up international climate finance, and promoting transparent international carbon market rules. The meeting will be held virtually for the second year in a row due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission will publish Executive Vice-President **Timmermans'** remarks climate finance on Friday [here](#). For more information see [here](#). (For more information: Tim McPhie – Tel: +32 229 58602; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel: +32 229 74959)

## Commissioner Johansson travels to Ankara, Turkey

Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva **Johansson**, will meet Turkey's Vice-President Fuat Oktay, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and Minister of Interior Süleyman Soylu in Ankara tomorrow. The discussions will focus on migration management, including the implementation of the relevant aspects of the EU-Turkey Statement, following up on the visit by President **von der Leyen** and President of the European Council Charles Michel on 6 April. (For more information: Adalbert Jahnz - Tel.: + 32 229 53156; Ciara Bottomley - Tel.: +32 229 69971; Laura Béard - Tel.: +32 229 55721)

[Eurostat](#): communiqués de presse

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