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Procédures d'infraction du mois de juillet: la Commission prend des mesures en vue d'une mise en œuvre complète, correcte et en temps utile du droit de l'Union dans l'intérêt des citoyens et des entreprises

Pour aider les citoyens et les entreprises à pleinement profiter du marché intérieur, la Commission européenne est en dialogue permanent avec les États membres qui ne respectent pas le droit européen et, au besoin, ouvre des procédures d'infraction à leur égard. Les décisions prises aujourd'hui, dans le cadre des décisions régulières d'infraction, comprennent 52 lettres de mise en demeure. Plus précisément, il s'agit de 51 mises en demeure et 1 mise en demeure complémentaire, 31 avis motivés dont un avis motivé complémentaire, et 5 renvois à la Cour de justice de l'UE au titre de l'article 258 du TFUE. Elle clôt également 108 dossiers en cours lorsque l'État membre concerné, en coopération avec la Commission, a résolu le problème et assuré le respect du droit de l'Union et que, dès lors, une saisine de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne n'est pas nécessaire. Un résumé des principales décisions et les références aux communiqués de presse correspondants figurent [ici](#). Les aspects essentiels des procédures d'infraction de l'UE sont décrits [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations : Eric Mamer – Tél.: + 32 229 94073; Ewelina Juszczak – Tél.: +32 229 91745)

Coronavirus: Over 3 million vaccines doses shared via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism

Following new offers of assistance from EU Member States to countries in need, the Commission has so far supported the sharing of over 3 million COVID-19 vaccines with countries outside of the EU through the [European Civil Protection Mechanism](#). The Commission coordinates the delivery and finances up to 75% of the costs for transporting the assistance. Janez **Lenarčič**, Commissioner for Crisis Management said: *"EU Member States continue to support global vaccination efforts. 3 million vaccines have already been facilitated via the European Civil Protection Mechanism. I thank all countries for showing their solidarity. Vaccination for all is essential to beat this global pandemic."* Currently the EU is supporting the delivery of vaccines to Albania, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Taiwan, Tunisia, Ukraine. Since the start of the pandemic, the EU has also supported the delivery of various in-kind help. The EU member states, via the [European Civil Protection Mechanism](#), have delivered millions of masks, protective suits, disinfectants, and other support such as ambulances and ventilators to help the global fight against COVID-19. The full press release is available [online](#) (For more information: Balazs Ujvari - Tel.: +32 229 54578; Daniel Puglisi - Tel.: +32 229 69140)

L'UE aide la Belgique à faire face aux inondations

Le mécanisme de protection civile de l'UE a été activé pour faire face à de graves inondations, à la suite d'une demande d'aide présentée par la Belgique le 14 juillet 2021. Dans le cadre d'une réaction immédiate, une équipe de sauvetage contre les inondations et un hélicoptère ont été mobilisés depuis la France pour soutenir les opérations locales de sauvetage, principalement dans les zones inondées autour de la ville de Liège. L'Italie et l'Autriche ont également proposé des équipes de sauvetage pour lutter contre les inondations. La Commission coordonne et finance jusqu'à 75 % des frais de transport de l'aide. Janez **Lenarčič**, commissaire chargé de la gestion des crises, a déclaré à ce propos: *« L'UE est pleinement solidaire de la Belgique en ces temps difficiles et apporte un soutien concret. Nous adressons nos condoléances aux familles qui ont perdu des êtres chers. Je tiens à remercier les premiers intervenants locaux et français pour leurs efforts. Nous sommes prêts à fournir une aide supplémentaire. »* En outre, la cartographie satellitaire d'urgence de Copernicus de l'UE fournit des cartes d'évaluation des zones touchées. Le [Centre de coordination de la réaction d'urgence](#) de l'Union européenne, disponible 24 heures sur 24 et 7 jours sur 7, est en contact régulier avec les autorités belges pour suivre de près la situation et acheminer l'aide de l'UE. Plus de détails figurent dans le [communiqué de presse](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Balazs Ujvari – Tél.: +32 229 54578; Daniel Puglisi – Tél.: +32 229 69140)

EU Cohesion Policy: Commission adopts a new report on EU border regions

The Commission has adopted a new [report](#) on EU border regions with analysis and recommendations on how to strengthen the resilience of border regions also in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa **Ferreira** said: *"Border regions were particularly affected by the pandemic. Border controls were established, cross-border workers could not access their workplace and neighboring citizens were separated. At the same time, during the pandemic we could see great examples of stronger cooperation to overcome the constraints together. This report has analyzed the socio-economic situation and collected best practices to show how we can make border regions more resilient to future crises while enhancing their economic potential and preparing for the green transition."* To deepen institutional cooperation the report proposes to extend the [b-solutions initiative](#), the initiative that helps border regions to address very practical cross-border obstacles and to support the production and analysis of cross-border data. In order to make border regions more resilient to future health crises, the Commission will foster the development of strong cross-border public services. To increase labour mobility, it is recommended to further support the [EURES cross-border partnerships](#) or raise awareness about the [European Qualifications Framework](#). Lastly, the report focuses on the contribution of EU border regions to the [European Green Deal](#) calling, among others, for more cooperation in Member States' national adaptation strategies and more attention to the cross-border dimension in [Natura 2000](#). (For more information: Vivian Loonela - Tel.: +32 229 66712; Veronica Favalli - Tel.: +32 229 87269)

Green, safe and smart transport networks: Additional €242 million for transport infrastructure studies

The EU is supporting 68 studies to prepare the ground for projects that will build missing transport links and eliminate bottlenecks across the continent, enhance sustainable transport and create jobs. The €242.2 in funding from the [Connecting Europe Facility](#) (CEF) contributes to the European Commission's commitment to delivering a transport network that is environmentally performant, safe for its users and driven by smart solutions. Commissioner for Transport, Adina **Vălean**, said: *"This week we adopted important legislative proposals that will help the EU reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030. The studies that we are supporting today via the Connecting Europe Facility contribute to the same aim. They are a starting point for many projects that will help accelerate the transition to a smart and sustainable transport network. Looking ahead, we are going to release new funds worth €30 billion for transport, digital and energy projects for 2021-2027, via the Connecting Europe Facility programme for 2021-2027, bringing us closer to achieving our European Green Deal goals."* Over half of the supported projects will help create a stronger European railway network by boosting and reinforcing cross-border links and essential sections – this is of particular interest during this [European Year of Rail](#). The projects will also improve infrastructure and solve capacity challenges for inland waterway transport and maritime ports, notably through the installation of on-shore power supply to cut emissions from docked ships. All of these projects will help the Commission deliver on its climate objectives, as laid out in the [European Green Deal](#). (For more information: Stefan De Keersmaecker – Tel.: +32 229 84680; Anna Wartberger – Tel.: +32 229 82054)

Visa Code: The Commission proposes temporary visa measures for Bangladesh, Iraq and The Gambia to improve cooperation on return and readmission

Today, the Commission is proposing to the Council to adopt temporary restrictive measures on short-stay visas for visa applicants who are nationals of Bangladesh, Iraq and The Gambia. Under the revised Visa Code in force since February 2020, the EU's short-stay visa policy is linked to cooperation with partner countries on readmitting their nationals who do not have the right to stay in the EU. The proposals adopted today aim to improve the three countries' cooperation with the Member States on readmission. Effective return and readmission as well as sustainable reintegration are essential elements of comprehensive, balanced, tailor-made and mutually beneficial migration partnerships with countries outside the EU. Fostering co-operation is an important element of this policy and the EU needs to mobilise all available tools, including development co-operation, trade or visa. Improved and sustained cooperation could also potentially open the path to more favourable visa measures. A [press release](#) and [Q&A](#) are available online. (For more information: Adalbert Jahnz - Tel.: + 32 229 53156; Ciara Bottomley - Tel.: +32 229 69971; Laura Bérard - Tel.: +32 229 55721)

WTO takes important steps towards global trade rules for sustainable fishing

Today, the World Trade Organization (WTO) held a ministerial meeting on fisheries subsidies, which confirmed the commitment to set the course for a successful outcome on negotiations before the WTO's Ministerial Conference starting in November 2021. While some divergences remain, the consolidated text proposed by the Chair of the negotiations, Ambassador Santiago Wills of Colombia, provides a solid basis for the final leg of the negotiations. The European Union (EU), in its [Common Fisheries Policy](#), has long prioritised an approach that ensures that fishing is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. This has been the result of a deep reform process, phasing out harmful subsidies in favour of positive subsidies that promote sustainable fishing and strengthening systems to manage fishing activities. Based on this positive experience, the EU also advocates that WTO rules must be based on sustainability. Executive Vice-President and Commissioner for Trade Valdis **Dombrovskis**, in his [remarks to his counterparts](#) across the world, said: *"Protecting global fisheries resources is a shared responsibility and, as such, achieving a multilateral outcome is the only way to address the issue of harmful subsidies. We welcome Director-General Okonjo-Iweala's commitment to reaching an agreement ahead of the 12th Ministerial Conference and we are fully committed to this objective. The mandate laid out in UN Sustainable Development Goal 14.6 must remain our guide in these negotiations."* More information is available [here](#). (For more information: Miriam García Ferrer – Tel.: +32 229 99075; Álvaro Rangel Hernández – Tel.: +32 2 291 3665)

Education: EIT selects 23 pilot projects to unlock higher education's innovation potential in Europe

Today, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) [announced 23 winning consortia](#) of the Pilot Call for Proposals for their new initiative '[Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education](#)'. The new initiative will support Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) with expertise and coaching, funding, and access to the EIT's innovation ecosystem, Europe's largest innovation network. 135 HEIs and 140 non-academic organisation from 32 countries will benefit from the initiative, which will see up to €27.5 million of funding supporting the innovation capacity of HEI across Europe. Mariya **Gabriel**, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, said: *"Universities have a critical role to play in the development and growth of local and regional innovation ecosystems. This new initiative will help them boost their entrepreneurial capabilities at all levels and unlock their innovation potential. I congratulate the selected consortia for putting bold and promising ideas on the table, and now it's time to step into action and make them a reality!"* 64 consortia representing nearly 750 organisations from across Europe applied to the Pilot Call that closed in May 2021. The Pilot Call for Proposals invited HEIs and local partners across Europe to design institution-wide action plans to improve their entrepreneurial and innovation capacity across all institutional levels. By supporting such activities, this new EIT initiative will create systemic impact, empowering HEIs and fostering sustainable growth and jobs across Europe. The selected projects can be awarded up to €1.2 million each and will run until July 2023. A second call for proposals will be announced in late 2021 for projects that will start in 2022. More information about the EIT's HEI Initiative and the pilot projects is [available online](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sinéad Meehan-van Druten – Tel.: +32 229 84094)

Women in Venture Capital Group presents recommendations to increase venture capital for women-led companies

Today, at a dedicated event, the European Women in Venture Capital Group handed over a new report on Women led Venture Capital in Europe, which proposes concrete recommendations for the European Commission and the European Investment Bank on how to increase venture capital for companies led by women. Mariya **Gabriel**, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, opened the event, emphasising on the need to support women who have started their own businesses and to ensure that they are well-represented, including in decision-making roles, in the venture capital industry. Commissioner **Gabriel** said: *"The rich talent and expertise of women innovators is essential to strengthening our European innovation ecosystem. Horizon Europe, the new framework programme for Research and Innovation has the ambition, tools and funding to help increase women's participation, foster gender equality in research and innovation and support female led companies and venture capitals."* Kinga Stanislawska, head of the European Women in Venture Capital Group and member of the [European Innovation Council](#) Advisory Board, and Laura González-Estéfani, general partner of the Venture City Fund, presented the report and the accompanying five case studies during a live stream event with statements from at least 10 different women-led venture capital funds. You can find the recording of the event [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Charles Manoury – Tel.: +32 229 13391)

Le Plan d'investissement pour l'Europe soutient les activités de recherche et développement du groupe pharmaceutique français Théa

La Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI) et les laboratoires pharmaceutiques Théa annoncent la signature d'un accord de financement d'un montant de 50 millions d'euros. L'investissement de la BEI est garanti par le [Fonds européen pour les investissements stratégiques](#) (FEIS), le pilier central du [Plan d'investissement pour l'Europe](#). L'opération concerne le financement pour Théa d'activités de recherche et développement (R&D) en vue de la mise au point de nouvelles molécules, de formulations galéniques et de systèmes innovants d'administration de médicaments à usage ophtalmique. Cette opération contribue également à préserver et à accroître les possibilités d'emploi qualifié dans le domaine de la recherche et du développement d'une entreprise européenne très compétitive et en pleine croissance au niveau mondial sur ses marchés. Paolo **Gentiloni**, commissaire chargé de l'économie, a déclaré : « *Je me félicite de cette opération de la BEI en faveur du groupe pharmaceutique Théa dans le cadre du plan d'investissement pour l'Europe. Cet investissement qui va permettre de soutenir une entreprise très performante positionne également l'Europe au premier plan de la recherche et développement dans le domaine pharmaceutique en favorisant la préservation d'emplois qualifiés.* » Jusqu'à présent, le [Plan d'investissement pour l'Europe](#) a mobilisé 546 milliards d'euros d'investissements dans l'ensemble de l'UE, dont plus de 90 milliards d'euros en France. Le [communiqué de presse](#) est disponible en ligne. (Pour plus d'informations: Arianna Podesta – Tél.: +32 229 87024; Flora Matthaes – Tél.: +32 229 83951)

State aid: Commission approves a €900 million Swedish compensation scheme for the damages suffered due to the coronavirus outbreak

The European Commission has approved a SEK 9.1 billion (approximately €900 million) scheme to compensate damages suffered by companies due to the coronavirus outbreak. The aim of the scheme is to compensate companies for the damages they would suffer in case of business disruption due to the coronavirus outbreak and prohibition measures that the Swedish government may adopt until 30 September 2021 to limit the spread of the virus. If such prohibition measures are adopted, companies who suffered at least a 25% decline in their total net turnover in the compensation period compared to the same month in 2019 due to the measures will be eligible to receive aid. The public support will take the form of direct grants, with a maximum amount per beneficiary of SEK 40 million (approximately €4 million) for each period of one month where a restrictive measure applied. In order to ensure there is no overcompensation, it is envisaged that the fixed costs do not cover the totality of an undertakings' fixed costs and a specific cap is foreseen for loss-making companies. The Commission assessed the scheme under Article 107(2)(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which enables the Commission to approve State aid measures granted by Member States to compensate specific companies or specific sectors for the damages directly caused by exceptional occurrences, such as the coronavirus outbreak. In particular, the Swedish aid scheme will compensate damages that are directly linked to the coronavirus outbreak and related prohibition measures. The Commission found that the measure is proportionate, as the foreseen compensation does not exceed what is necessary to make good the damage. On this basis, the Commission therefore concluded that the scheme is in line with EU State aid rules. More information on the 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.62406 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; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Xexec by Castik and Abry

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Xexec Limited ('Xexec') of the UK, by Castik Capital S.à r.l. ('Castik') of Luxembourg and Abry Partners II LLC ('Abry') of the US. Xexec is active in the employee engagement technology sector. Castik is an investment company and Abry is a private equity firm. The transaction gives rise to horizontal overlaps between the activities of Xexec and portfolio companies of Castik and Abry (including RG Engagement Group Limited) in the markets for Enterprise Application Software, Enterprise Resource Planning, Human Capital Management and HR solutions for large corporations. The Commission found that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because of its limited impact on the markets concerned. 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 case number [M.10309](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of RG by Castik and Abry

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of RG Engagement Group Limited ('RG') of the UK, by Castik Capital S.à r.l. ('Castik') of Luxembourg and Abry Partners II LLC ('Abry') of the US. RG is active in the employee engagement technology sector and offers its solutions through its software platform SmartHub. Castik is an investment company and Abry is a private equity firm. The transaction gives rise to horizontal overlaps between the activities of RG and a portfolio company of Abry in the markets for Enterprise Application Software, Enterprise Resource Planning, Human Capital Management and HR solutions for large corporations. The Commission found that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because of its limited impact on the markets concerned. 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 case number [M.10308](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Culligan Group by BDT Capital Partners

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition, of the Culligan Group, currently controlled by Advent International Corporation, by BDT Capital Partners, LLC ('BDT') both of the US. The Culligan Group is an international provider of water treatment solutions, engaged in the business of developing and distributing water treatment products for homes, businesses and industrial facilities as well as portable, 'on-the-go', solutions. BDT is a global merchant bank specialised in investments in family-owned and founder-led businesses. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given that the companies are not engaged in business activities in the same product and geographic market and do not have any vertical links either. The operation was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public case [register](#) under the case number [M.10351](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NextGenerationEU: President von der Leyen in Ireland to present the Commission's assessment of the national recovery plan

Tomorrow, Friday, 16 July, Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** will be in Ireland to present the Commission's assessment on the national recovery and resilience plan under [NextGenerationEU](#). On Friday morning, President **von der Leyen** will travel to Dublin to meet Taoiseach Micheál Martin, together with Commissioner Mairead **McGuinness**. They will also visit the Grangegorman campus of the Technological University Dublin, which will receive funding from the Recovery and Resilience Facility and see several tech projects designed by the students. (For more information: Eric Mamer – Tel.: +32 229 94073; Dana Spinant – Tel.: +32 229 90150; Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024)

EU Vaccines Strategy : Commissioner Kyriakides visits Romania and meets with Minister of Health

Tomorrow, 16 July, Commissioner **Kyriakides** will be in Bucharest, Romania, where she will meet with Minister of Health, Ms. Ioana Mihăilă. Discussions will focus on the EU Vaccines Strategy and the roll out of the national vaccination campaign in Romania, as well as the way forward on the proposals under the European Health Union. The meeting will be followed by a visit to Petrești Vaccination Centre. Ahead of the meeting and visit to the vaccination centre, Stella **Kyriakides**, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said: "The EU delivered on its commitment to distribute enough doses, some 500 million, to vaccinate 70% of the EU's adult population. We will now work as closely as possible with our Member States to make sure they reach their targets on the ground. The more transmissible Delta variant currently present across the EU, and which we know will circulate extensively this summer, is a very serious risk for unvaccinated people. With only 30% of the adult

*population fully vaccinated, Romania needs to double up on vaccination efforts as we progress through the summer. The message is clear: vaccination is and will be our strongest weapon against variants. I am looking forward to discussing how the EU can further support the roll-out of the Romanian national vaccination campaign.” Today's actions are part of the Commission's on-going efforts and Commissioner **Kyriakides**'s commitment to support the roll-out of Member States national COVID-19 vaccination campaigns. (For more information: Stefan De Keersmaecker – Tel.: +32 229 84680; Darragh Cassidy – Tel.: +32 229 83978)*

[Tentative agendas](#) for forthcoming Commission meetings

Note that these items can be subject to changes.

[Eurostat](#) press releases

The Spokesperson's Service has re-opened the Berlaymont press room to a limited number of journalists. For more information, please see [here](#).

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