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La Commission verse 14 milliards d'euros au titre de SURE à neuf États membres

La Commission européenne a versé 14 milliards d'euros à neuf États membres, correspondant à la quatrième tranche de l'assistance financière apportée aux États membres au titre de l'instrument SURE. Il s'agit du premier versement en 2021. Dans le cadre des transactions réalisées ce jour, la Belgique a reçu 2 milliards d'euros, Chypre 229 millions d'euros, la Hongrie 304 millions d'euros, la Lettonie 72 millions d'euros, la Pologne 4,28 milliards d'euros, la Slovénie 913 millions d'euros, l'Espagne 1,03 milliards d'euros, la Grèce 728 millions d'euros et l'Italie 4,45 milliards d'euros. Les neuf États membres avaient déjà bénéficié d'un soutien financier au titre de SURE en 2020, au titre de l'une des trois premières opérations d'émission et de versement qui ont eu lieu en 2020. Ce soutien, qui prend la forme de prêts, permettra à ces États membres de faire face à l'augmentation soudaine des dépenses publiques destinées à préserver l'emploi. Plus précisément, il aidera à couvrir les coûts directement liés au financement des dispositifs nationaux de chômage partiel et des autres mesures similaires qu'ils ont mises en place en réaction à la pandémie de coronavirus, y compris pour les travailleurs indépendants. Les versements effectués aujourd'hui font suite à l'émission de la quatrième obligation sociale au titre de l'instrument SURE de l'UE, qui a suscité un intérêt considérable de la part des investisseurs. À la suite des versements effectués aujourd'hui, 15 États membres ont reçu un montant total de 53,5 milliards d'euros au titre de l'instrument SURE. Lorsque tous les versements au titre de l'instrument SURE auront été effectués, la Belgique aura reçu 7,8 milliards d'euros, Chypre 479 millions d'euros, la Hongrie 504 millions d'euros, la Lettonie 192 millions d'euros, la Pologne 11,2 milliards d'euros, la Slovénie 1,1 milliards d'euros, l'Espagne 21,3 milliards d'euros, la Grèce 2,7 milliards d'euros et l'Italie 27,4 milliards d'euros. Plus de détails figurent dans le [communiqué de presse](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Balazs Ujvari — Tél.: + 32 229 54578; Claire Joawn— Tél.: + 32 229 56859)

Rule of Law: Commission opens stakeholder consultation for 2021 Rule of Law Report

The European Commission has launched a [targeted stakeholder consultation](#) to ask stakeholders for information on developments related to the rule of law in the Member States and in the Union, in view of the preparation of the second annual Rule of Law Report. The objective of the consultation is to feed the Commission's assessment with factual information on developments on the ground. In the previous edition of the Rule of Law Report, the Commission had successfully carried out the first targeted stakeholder consultation, where over 200 stakeholders provided written input. This included EU agencies, national and European civil society organisations, and professional associations. The Rule of Law Report lies at the heart of the new comprehensive European Rule of Law Mechanism, a preventive tool aimed at promoting the rule of law and preventing challenges from emerging or deteriorating. The first [Rule of Law Report](#) was published on 30 September 2020, as one of the key initiatives of the Commission's work programme for 2020. The consultation is available online [until 8 March 2021](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand - Tel. + 32 229 62253; Katarzyna Kolanko - Tel.: + 32 229 63444; Jördis Ferrolí - Tel.: + 32 229 92729)

European Green Deal: Commission launches public consultation on new EU Soil Strategy

The Commission launched today an [online public consultation](#) on the development of a new EU Soil Strategy. Healthy soils are essential for achieving the objectives of the [European Green Deal](#) such as climate neutrality, biodiversity restoration, zero pollution, healthy and sustainable food systems and a resilient environment. Yet our soils are degrading due to unsustainable management, overexploitation, climate change and pollution. For that reason, the [EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030](#) announced the adoption of a new Soil Strategy in 2021. Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus **Sinkevičius**, said: "A quarter of our planet's biodiversity is present in soil. This is literally a treasure under our feet, and our food and our future depend on it. We must equip the European Union with a robust soil policy that will allow us to reach our ambitious climate,

biodiversity and food security goals, and step up our efforts to manage soil in a way that it can deliver for people, nature and climate.” The aim of the new EU Soil Strategy will be to address soil- and land-related issues in a comprehensive way and to help achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030 - i.e. restoring to a 'healthy status' same amount of soil as has been degraded by human activity. This is one of the key targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Healthy soils produce our food and raw materials, clean our drinking water, reduce flood risks and store huge amounts of carbon. The Strategy will therefore look into how to protect soil fertility, reduce erosion and increase soil organic matter and take into account the EU's international commitments. Citizens, organisations and relevant actors are invited to participate in the public consultation which will remain open for feedback for 12 weeks until 27 April 2021. More information is in the [news release](#). (For more information: Vivian Loonela - Tel.: +32 229 66712; Daniela Stoycheva - Tel.: +32 229 53664)

Denmark joins the 1+ Million Genomes Initiative

Denmark has signed the declaration of cooperation that aims to link genomic health data throughout the EU and achieve access to at least 1 million sequenced genomes by 2022. Since its launch in 2018 the Commission has been supporting the '[1+ Million Genomes](#)' initiative, which already involves 24 countries that have signed the declaration. Executive Vice-President for a Europe Fit for the Digital Age, Margrethe **Vestager**, welcomed Denmark into the programme: *"Every signature is important for this initiative that aims to improve disease prevention, allow for more personalised diagnosis and treatments and provide a sufficient scale for new clinically impactful research. Together we are making new strides in developing methods and tools that will serve the wellbeing of Europeans."* Thierry **Breton**, Commissioner for Internal Market, added: *"At this time of unprecedented public health challenges, we have seen how important it is to advance our cooperation in the medical field. The 1+ Million Genomes initiative is an excellent example of ensuring better access to health data. Through enhanced cooperation across the EU, it will keep improving our scientific understandings and developing innovative treatments and diagnostics for the benefit of all citizens."* Responding to the emerging needs, the initiative has recently included infectious diseases among its use cases and will leverage the genomic data to deepen our knowledge of human susceptibility to serious conditions that are related to the COVID-19 disease. More information on the initiative is available [here](#) and in a [brochure](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke - Tel.: +32 229 58615; Marietta Grammenou - Tel.: +32 229 83583)

Les ministres de l'Union pour la Méditerranée s'engagent à renforcer l'économie bleue et à promouvoir une croissance durable

Les ministres des États membres de l'Union pour la Méditerranée, y compris l'Union européenne et les 15 pays du sud et de l'est de la Méditerranée, se réunissent aujourd'hui pour effectuer un grand pas en faveur d'une économie bleue durable en Méditerranée. Les ministres adopteront une déclaration dans laquelle ils s'engageront fermement à coopérer étroitement pour relever les défis communs dans les secteurs économiques clés liés à la gestion et à la préservation des océans. L'objectif est de promouvoir la reprise économique de la région et de relever les défis environnementaux et climatiques. Le commissaire à l'environnement, aux océans et à la pêche, Virginijus **Sinkevičius**, a déclaré : *« Aujourd'hui, les ministres de l'Union pour la Méditerranée sont convenus de la transition vers une économie bleue véritablement durable, dans le cadre de notre stratégie de relance consécutive à la crise de Covid-19 et de lutte contre les graves conséquences du changement climatique et de la dégradation de l'environnement. C'est une étape déterminante vers la gestion durable de la Méditerranée - notre mer commune - et une contribution aux ambitions du Pacte vert européen. »* Six ans après [la première déclaration ministérielle de l'Union pour la Méditerranée sur l'économie bleue](#), les ministres conviendront de la meilleure façon d'utiliser les clusters maritimes et la planification de l'espace maritime. De nouvelles activités et de nouveaux projets communs seront mis en place pour soutenir le passage à des technologies à faibles émissions et à une économie bleue circulaire, notamment des compétences pour les activités économiques océaniques et côtières, la lutte contre les déchets marins, les énergies renouvelables marines et le tourisme tourné vers la nature. La région méditerranéenne est très exposée au changement climatique, se réchauffant 20 % plus vite que la moyenne mondiale, avec des impacts visibles sur l'environnement marin. Cette situation perdurera si de nouvelles mesures d'atténuation et d'adaptation ne sont pas prises pour réduire les émissions de carbone et renforcer la résilience des habitats marins et côtiers. Pour de plus amples détails, voir [la communication jointe](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Vivian Loonela - Tél.: +32 229 66712; Daniela Stoycheva - Tél.: +32 229 53664)

State aid: Commission approves €5 million Slovenian public support to compensate the Fraport Slovenija for damages caused by coronavirus outbreak

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, a €5 million Slovenian aid measure to compensate Fraport Slovenija, d.o.o., the operator of Jože Pučnik Ljubljana Airport for the damage it suffered due to the coronavirus outbreak. Jože Pučnik Ljubljana Airport is Slovenia's only airport for international scheduled passenger flights. Due to the measures that Slovenia implemented to limit the spread of the virus, all airlines operating at Jože Pučnik Ljubljana Airport had to cease their flight operations on 17 March 2020. This resulted in high operating losses for the airport. The flight restrictions were gradually lifted by Slovenian authorities as of 12 May 2020 and air traffic operations started resuming on 29 May 2020. However, in the absence of domestic scheduled passenger flights within Slovenia, the airport depended on the lifting of travel restrictions in other countries to start again its operations and thus traffic only started to resume noticeably in July 2020. The aid measure, which will take the form of a direct grant, will allow the Slovenian authorities to compensate the airport for the revenue losses suffered during the period between 17 March and 30 June 2020. The aid measure includes a claw-back mechanism, whereby any possible public support in excess of the actual damage received by the beneficiary will have to be paid back to the Slovenian State. The risk of the State aid exceeding the damage is therefore excluded. The Commission assessed the measure 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 for the damages directly caused by exceptional occurrences, such as the coronavirus outbreak. The Commission found that the measure will compensate the damage that is directly linked to the coronavirus outbreak. It also found that the measure is proportionate, as the envisaged compensation does not exceed what is necessary to make good the damage. The Commission therefore concluded that the measure is in line with EU State aid rules. More information on 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.59994 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 joint control of Galp Gás Natural Distribuição by Allianz Capital Partners, Marubeni and Toho Gas

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of Galp Gás Natural Distribuição, S.A. ('GGND') of Portugal by Allianz Capital Partners GmbH ('ACP') of Germany, Marubeni Corporation ('Marubeni') and Toho Gas Co. Ltd. ('Toho Gas'), both of Japan. GGND is currently jointly controlled by Marubeni, Toho Gas and Galp New Energies S.A., and is active in the distribution and retail of natural gas in Portugal. ACP is active in private equity, infrastructure and renewable energy investments. Marubeni is active in global trading across various industries, including energy and energy related projects. Toho Gas supplies natural gas and related services in Japan. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because it would not result in any overlaps between the activities of the companies. 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.10084](#). *(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel. +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

[Liste des points prévus](#) à l'ordre du jour des prochaines réunions de la Commission

Veillez noter que ces informations sont données sous réserve de modifications.

[Eurostat](#): communiqués de presse