



### Daily News 26 / 07 / 2021

Brussels, 26 July 2021

#### **Copyright: Commission calls on Member States to comply with EU rules on copyright in the Digital Single Market**

The Commission has requested Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Finland, France, Croatia, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Slovenia and Slovakia to communicate information about how the rules included in the Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market ([Directive 2019/790/EU](#)) are being enacted into their national law. The European Commission has also requested Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Finland, France, Croatia, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia to communicate information about how Directive [2019/789/EU](#) on online television and radio programmes is enacted into their national law. As the Member States above have not communicated national transposition measures or have done it only partially, the Commission decided today to open infringement procedures by sending letters of formal notice. The two Directives aim to modernise EU copyright rules and to enable consumers and creators to make the most of the digital world. They reinforce the position of creative industries, allow for more digital uses in core areas of society, and facilitate the distribution of radio and television programmes across the EU. The deadline for transposing these Directives into national legislation was 7 June 2021. These Member States now have two months to respond to the letters and take the necessary measures. In the absence of a satisfactory response, the Commission may decide to issue reasoned opinions. *(For more information: Sonya Gospodinova – Tel.: +32 229 66953; Charles Manoury – Tel.: +32 229 13391; Nerea Artamendi Erro – Tel: +32 229 90964)*

#### **The Commission lays out practical solutions for medicines supply in Northern Ireland in the framework of the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland, and for sanitary and phytosanitary measures**

Today, the Commission published a series of 'non-papers' in the fields of medicines and sanitary and phytosanitary measures, in the framework of the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland. A non-paper specifically on medicines lays out the Commission's proposed solution to ensure a continued, long-term supply of medicines in Northern Ireland, from or through Great Britain. This non-paper was shared with the UK prior to [the package of measures](#) announced by the Commission on 30 June 2021, to address some of the most pressing issues related to the implementation of the Protocol in the interest of all communities in Northern Ireland. Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič said: *"These solutions have an unambiguous common denominator – they were brought about with the core purpose of benefitting the people in Northern Ireland. Ultimately, our work is about ensuring that the hard-earned gains of the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement – peace and stability in Northern Ireland – are protected, while avoiding a hard border on the island of Ireland and maintaining the integrity of the EU Single Market."* The solution on medicines involves the EU changing its own rules, within the framework of the Protocol, so that regulatory compliance functions for medicines supplied to the Northern Ireland market only, may be permanently located in Great Britain, subject to specific conditions ensuring that the medicines concerned are not further distributed in the EU Internal Market. The medicines concerned here are primarily generic and over-the-counter products. The solution demonstrates the Commission's commitment to the people in Northern Ireland and to the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement, with a legislative proposal expected in the early autumn in order to be able to finish the legislative process on time. The other non-papers published today relate to a solution identified by the Commission to ease the movement of assistance dogs accompanying persons travelling from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, and a proposal by the Commission to simplify the movements of livestock from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, and to clarify the rules on EU-origin animal products that are moved to Great Britain for storage before being shipped to Northern Ireland. All these papers, outlining the flexibilities offered by the Commission, have been shared with the UK and EU Member States, and are available [online](#) *(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Sinéad Meehan-van Druten – Tel.:*

## **Fight against ransomware: New website to get help faster marks five years of 'No More Ransom' initiative that helped over six million victims recover their data**

Today, Europol, the EU law enforcement agency, marks five years of its 'No More Ransom' project with a revamped [website](#) that allows easy access to decryption tools and other help in over 30 languages. The initiative supplies ransomware victims with decryption tools to recover their encrypted files, helps them report cases to law enforcement authorities and contributes to raising awareness about ransomware. Since its launch five years ago, the project has already helped more than six million victims worldwide and prevented criminals from making almost a billion euro in profits. The Commission is a partner of the project, together with tech companies, law enforcement, and public and private sector entities. Ransomware is a type of malware that locks users' computers and encrypts their data. The criminals behind the malware demand a ransom from the user in order to regain control over the affected device or files. Ransomware represents a growing threat, affecting all sectors including energy infrastructure or health care. Protecting European citizens and businesses against cyber threats, including against ransomware, is a priority for the Commission. You will find more information in the [press release](#) published by Europol. (For more information: Adalbert Jahnz - Tel.: + 32 229 53156; Ciara Bottomley - Tel.: +32 229 69971; Laura Bérard - Tel.: +32 229 55721)

## **Joint Research Centre report: Loneliness has doubled across the EU since the pandemic**

One in four EU citizens reported feeling lonely during the first months of the coronavirus pandemic, according to a [report](#) from the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), presented today. The report contains the latest scientific evidence on loneliness and social isolation in the EU, and analyses the [survey](#) by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, showing that feelings of loneliness doubled across all age groups in the early months of the pandemic. There was a four-fold increase in loneliness among 18-35 year olds, compared to 2016. Media coverage across the EU on the phenomenon of loneliness also doubled during the pandemic, with awareness of the issue varying widely across Member States. The JRC report explores initiatives to tackle loneliness in 10 EU Member States. Vice-President for Democracy and Demography, Dubravka **Šuica**, said: "The coronavirus pandemic has brought problems like loneliness and social isolation to the fore. These feelings already existed, but there was less public awareness of them. With this new report, we can start to better understand and tackle these problems. Together with other initiatives, like the Green Paper on Ageing, we have an opportunity to reflect on how to build together a more resilient, cohesive society and an EU that is closer to its citizens." Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya **Gabriel**, added: "Loneliness is a challenge that is increasingly affecting our young people. But to address any challenge effectively we first need to understand it. Our scientists at the Joint Research Centre are providing valuable insights into loneliness and how people have been impacted by the pandemic. This new report gives us a baseline for broader analysis, so that loneliness and social isolation can be fully understood and addressed in Europe." The report is the first step of broader collaborative work between the European Parliament and the Commission. The project will include new EU-wide data collection on loneliness, to be carried out in 2022, and the establishment of a web platform to monitor loneliness over time and across Europe. Read more here and the full report [here](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta - Tel.: +32 229 87024; Sinéad Meehan-van Druten - Tel.: +32 229 84094)

## **Incendies de forêts en Sardaigne: l'UE a mobilisé une aide immédiate à l'Italie**

En réponse à la demande d'aide de l'Italie par l'intermédiaire du mécanisme de protection civile de l'UE pour lutter contre les incendies de forêts en Sardaigne, l'UE a mobilisé un soutien immédiat mis à disposition par la France et la Grèce. Les deux pays déploient chacun deux avions de lutte contre les feux de forêts (Canadair). Janez **Lenarčič**, commissaire chargé de la gestion des crises, a déclaré: « Je remercie la France et la Grèce pour leur solidarité avec l'Italie pour aider à éteindre ces incendies dévastateurs. Le centre de coordination de la réaction d'urgence de l'UE reste en contact étroit avec les autorités italiennes pour suivre l'évolution de la situation sur le terrain et coordonner toute aide supplémentaire si nécessaire. » Les avions offerts par la France appartiennent à la réserve européenne de protection civile, tandis que ceux offerts par la Grèce font partie des actifs de rescEU. Les incendies de forêts ont frappé la région de Montiferru, dans le centre-ouest de l'île, suite à des températures très élevées. Les premiers rapports indiquent que plus de 4 000 hectares ont été brûlés, et 355 personnes ont dû être évacuées. Plus d'informations dans le [communiqué de presse](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Balazs Ujvari - Tél.: +32 229 54578; Daniel Puglisi - Tél.: +32 229 69140)

## **Aviation : modification et extension des règles d'allègement des créneaux horaires pour les compagnies aériennes**

Le 23 juillet 2021, la Commission européenne a proposé de modifier le règlement sur les créneaux horaires et a prolongé les règles d'allègement des créneaux horaires ayant été adoptées en février 2021. Alors que le secteur de l'aviation commence à se remettre de l'impact de la crise du COVID-19, la Commission reste déterminée à maintenir l'allègement des règles ordinaires d'attribution des créneaux horaires pour les compagnies aériennes. L'allègement sera donc étendu à la prochaine saison de planification des horaires d'hiver, qui va du 31 octobre 2021 au 27 mars 2022. Au lieu de l'obligation ordinaire d'utiliser au moins 80 % d'une série de créneaux donnés pour conserver les droits historiques sur ces derniers, les compagnies aériennes pourront n'utiliser que 50 % d'une série de créneaux donnés. La Commissaire chargée des transports, Adina **Vălean**, a déclaré : « *Je suis convaincue qu'un taux d'utilisation des créneaux de 50 % est adéquat pour toutes les parties prenantes afin de garantir une utilisation efficace des capacités aéroportuaires tout en profitant aux consommateurs. Nous sommes toujours confrontés à des incertitudes dans la crise du COVID-19, et l'exception de la 'non-utilisation justifiée des créneaux', lorsque des mesures imposées par l'État entravent gravement la capacité des passagers à voyager, reste en place pour faire face à de futures circonstances imprévues sans bloquer indûment les capacités aéroportuaires.* » (Pour plus d'informations: Stefan de Keersmaecker Tel.: +32 229 62253; Anna Wartberger Tel.: +32 229 82054)

## **Consumer Protection: Commission and national consumer authorities call on Google to be more transparent**

The Commission and [Consumer Protection Cooperation authorities](#), under the lead of the Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets and the Belgian Directorate General for Economic Inspection, have sent a letter to Google asking them to be more transparent and comply with EU law. Consumers need to know how the results of their search in Google's online search engine are ranked and if payments may influence the ranking. The prices of flights and hotels showcased on Google should be final and include fees or taxes that can reasonably be calculated in advance. In addition, Google should revise the standard terms of Google Store, because the Consumer Protection Cooperation network found that, in some cases, there is a significant imbalance of rights between the trader and the consumer to the detriment of the latter. Furthermore, when the Consumer Authorities report content in breach of consumer protection rules, Google should remove or disable access to such content faster. Commissioner for Justice, Didier **Reynders**, said: "*EU consumers cannot be misled when using search engines to plan their holidays. We need to empower consumers to make their choices based on transparent and unbiased information.*" Google is expected to follow up and communicate changes in its practices to the Commission and the CPC authorities within the next two months. The Commission will support national consumer authorities in evaluating the response from Google, taking into account any commitments to modify their websites and services. If the commitments made by Google are not deemed sufficient, a follow-up dialogue will take place. National authorities may ultimately decide to impose sanctions. You will find more information [here](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand - Tel.: +32 229 62253; Katarzyna Kolanko - Tel.: +32 229 63444; Jördis Ferroli - Tel.: +32 229 92729)

## **Aides d'État : la Commission ouvre une enquête approfondie concernant la rémunération versée par la Française des Jeux à la France pour l'octroi de droits exclusifs**

La Commission européenne a ouvert une enquête approfondie afin de déterminer si l'octroi de droits exclusifs à la Française des Jeux pour une durée de 25 ans est conforme aux règles de l'UE en matière d'aides d'État. L'octroi de droits exclusifs concerne l'exploitation d'une part des jeux de loterie commercialisés en réseau physique de distribution et en ligne, et d'autre part des paris sportifs commercialisés en réseau physique de distribution. Suite à la réception de deux plaintes portant sur la somme de 380 millions d'euros versée par la Française des Jeux à la France, en rémunération des droits exclusifs accordés, la Commission vérifiera la conformité de la rémunération aux conditions du marché et n'exclut pas à ce stade que la mesure puisse procurer un avantage économique indu à la Française des Jeux. L'ouverture d'une enquête approfondie donne à la France et à toutes les parties intéressées l'occasion de formuler leurs observations sur la mesure en cause. Elle ne préjuge en rien de l'issue de l'enquête. Plus d'informations sont disponibles sur le site web de la Direction Générale de la [Concurrence](#) de la Commission dans le [registre](#) des aides d'État, sous les numéros SA.56399 et SA.56634. (Pour plus d'informations: Arianna Podesta - Tél.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni - Tél.: +32 229 90526)

## **Aides d'État: la Commission autorise la prolongation de la mesure de compensation de La Banque Postale d'un montant de 1,77 milliard d'euros pour la réalisation de la mission d'accessibilité bancaire en France**

La Commission européenne a autorisé, en vertu des règles de l'UE en matières d'aides d'État, une compensation de 1,77 milliard d'euros pour La Banque Postale, afin de continuer d'assurer le service d'intérêt économique général (« SIEG ») d'accessibilité bancaire en France pendant la période 2021-2026. La Commission a déjà autorisé deux mandats de la Banque Postale au regard des SIEG en 2013 et en 2017. En France, le livret A est un compte d'épargne réglementé et rémunéré dont les fonds sont disponibles à tout moment. Tous les établissements bancaires peuvent le proposer. Les autorités françaises imposent à La Banque Postale un certain nombre d'obligations supplémentaires liées à la distribution du Livret A. L'objectif de ces obligations est d'assurer un accès facile et non stigmatisant à un compte bancaire de base aux personnes défavorisées qui risqueraient, en l'absence de telles obligations, de se trouver en situation d'exclusion bancaire en raison de leur situation sociale et/ou financière. En vertu de la convention relative à la mission d'accessibilité bancaire applicable en France, La Banque Postale est tenue: (i) d'ouvrir gratuitement un compte Livret A à toutes les personnes qui en font la demande; (ii) d'offrir gratuitement dans toutes ses agences un certain nombre d'autres services bancaires, tels que les dépôts et retraits d'espèces gratuits, y compris pour des montants très faibles; et (iii) de maintenir une présence territoriale dans des zones où les autres banques sont peu présentes afin de garantir l'accès à son Livret A. La Commission a évalué la mesure au sens de l'article 106, paragraphe 2, du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne et au regard des [règles SIEG](#). La Commission a constaté que la compensation n'excède pas les coûts relatifs à la mission d'accessibilité encourus par La Banque Postale, y compris un profit raisonnable et qu'il n'y a donc pas de risque de surcompensation. La Commission a aussi constaté que la mesure remplit les autres conditions de [l'Encadrement SIEG 2012](#). En conséquence, la Commission a conclu que la mesure était conforme aux règles de l'UE en matière d'aides d'État. La version non-confidentielle de la décision sera accessible sous le numéro SA.57570 dans le [registre des aides d'État](#) sur le [site internet](#) de la direction générale de la concurrence, après résolution des questions de confidentialité. (Pour plus d'informations: Arianna Podesta – Tél.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tél.: +32 229 90526)

## **State aid: Commission approves €88.8 million budget increase for Danish scheme supporting reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from farming**

The European Commission has found that a budget increase of €88.8 million (DKK 660 million), made available through the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) for an existing Danish scheme to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from farming, is in line with EU State aid rules. The increased budget to be funded via the RRF, following the Commission's positive assessment of the Danish recovery and resilience plan and its adoption by Council, (SA.63890) is allocated to an existing Danish scheme ([SA. 58791](#)) already approved by the Commission on 21 May 2021. The measure will be in place until 31 December 2026, and had an initial budget of €238 million (DKK 1.8 billion). The primary objective of this scheme is to contribute to the Danish target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 70% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. The aid will contribute to removing carbon-rich farmland from production and subsequently to transforming the land into nature areas by restoring its natural hydrology through the disconnection of drains and re-wetting of the land. The existing scheme was assessed based on its compliance with [EU Guidelines for State aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas](#), which allow aid to facilitate the development of certain economic activities – in this case the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from farming. The Commission has now concluded that the additional funding allocated to the existing Danish scheme through the RRF does not change the initial assessment of the scheme, which remains in line with EU State aid rules. All investments and reforms entailing State aid contained in the national recovery plans presented in the context of the RRF must be notified to the Commission for prior approval, unless covered by one of the State aid block-exemption rules, in particular the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) and, for the agricultural sector, the Agricultural Block Exemption Regulation (ABER). The Commission will assess such measures as a matter of priority and has provided guidance and support to Member States in the preparatory phases of the national plans, to facilitate the rapid deployment of the RRF. At the same time, the Commission makes sure in its decision that the applicable State aid rules are complied with, in order to preserve the level playing field in the Single Market and ensure that the RRF funds are used in a way that minimises competition distortions and do not crowd out private investment. The non-confidential version of the decision will be made available under the case number SA.63890 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)

## **State aid: Commission approves €110 million aid to compensate Athens international airport for the damage suffered due to the coronavirus outbreak**

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, a €110 million aid to compensate Athens International Airport S.A., the operator of Athens international airport Eleftherios Venizelos, for the damage suffered due to the coronavirus outbreak and the travel restrictions that Greece and other countries had to implement to limit the spread of the virus. This measure will enable Greece to compensate the operator of Athens international airport for the damage suffered during the period between 23 March and 30 June 2020 as a direct result of the coronavirus outbreak and the travel restrictions in place. The aid will take the form of a direct grant and of a cancellation of concession fees. The measure was approved under [Article 107\(2\)\(b\)](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which enables the Commission to approve State aid measures granted by Member States to compensate companies for the damage directly caused by exceptional occurrences, such as the coronavirus outbreak. The Commission found that the notified measure will compensate damage that is directly linked to the coronavirus outbreak. It also found that the measure is proportionate, as the compensation does not exceed what is necessary to make good the damage. On this basis, the Commission concluded that the scheme 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.62052 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 Tech Data by SYNEX**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Tech Data Corporation by SYNEX Corporation, both of the US. Tech Data is a wholesale distributor of technology products and solutions to resellers on a global basis. SYNEX is a provider of technology products and solutions for IT systems to resellers and retail customers outside the European Union as well as of comprehensive logistics, distribution, systems design, and integration services for the technology industry. In Europe, SYNEX is only active in the development and sale of custom-made servers and storage solutions for datacenters users. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns in the European Economic Area, given the absence of horizontal overlaps and vertical relationships 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.10268](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

## **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Vision 7, WAVS, Fuse Project and Metta by CVC and CDPQ**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Vision 7 International Inc. ('Vision 7') of Canada, We Are Very Social Ltd. ('WAVS') of the UK, Fuse Project LLC of the US and Metta Communications Ltd. ('Metta') of Hong Kong (together: the 'Target') by CVC Capital Partners SICAV-FIS S.A. ('CVC') of Luxembourg and Caisse de Dépôt et Placement du Québec ('CDPQ') of Canada. The Target is a group of entities active in the provision of marketing and communication services and media buying services. In particular, WAVS is active in Europe as a provider of social media and brand strategy services. CVC and its subsidiaries manage investment funds and platforms. CDPQ is a long-term institutional investor that manages funds globally in major financial markets, private equity, infrastructure and real estate. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given the very limited horizontal overlaps and vertical relationships 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.10313](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

## **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Beuparc Utilities by Macquarie**

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

Beuparc Utilities Holdings Limited ('Beuparc Utilities') of Ireland, by Macquarie Group Limited ('Macquarie') of Australia. Beuparc Utilities is active in the collection, sorting, processing and treatment of non-hazardous waste in Ireland, the UK and the Netherlands. Beuparc Utilities is also active in the generation, wholesale and retail supply of electricity and in the retail supply of gas in Ireland. Macquarie is a global provider of banking, financial, advisory, investment and funds management services. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because there are no 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.10354](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

[Tentative agendas](#) for forthcoming Commission meetings

*Note that these items can be subject to changes.*

[Eurostat](#) press releases

MEX/21/3902