



Daily News 27 / 09 / 2021

Brussels, 27 September 2021

EU Digital COVID Certificate: Commission awards €95 million to boost access to tests

The Commission has awarded grants to 20 Member States totalling €95 million to purchase COVID-19 diagnostic tests to facilitate the delivery of the EU Digital COVID Certificate. This goes hand-in-hand with the continued roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations and is part of the Commission's commitment to support affordable access to fast and accurate testing for those citizens who have not yet been fully vaccinated, in particular those who cannot get vaccinated due to medical reasons. The grants, financed through its [Emergency Support Instrument](#) (ESI), will allow Member States to provide tests. This support, channelled through the national authorities, will cater for the various needs in the different Member States. Stella **Kyriakides**, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said: *"The EU Digital COVID Certificate allowed Europeans to resume safe travelling over the summer and has become a symbol of an open and safe Europe. Whilst vaccination is key and our strongest asset to put an end to the pandemic, fast and accurate testing remains important to tackle the spread of COVID-19. The 20 million rapid tests we purchased for Member States earlier this year and today's announcements of additional funds prove that we stand firm on our commitment to ensure that citizens have access to tests and that our digital certificates are available for everyone, in particular those who cannot get vaccinated."* Didier **Reynders**, Commissioner for Justice, said: *"Over 400 million Europeans have so far benefited from the Certificate, and 42 countries are already linked to the EU certificate system. This is a major European achievement which has been highly valued by our citizens. Today's grants will further contribute to the use of the certificates and ensure that people can continue to move freely and safely. I welcome this decision and I call on the 20 Member States to make the best use of those additional tests."* The ESI provides a needs-based, coordinated emergency response to help Member States address needs related to the immediate acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the exit, recovery and prevention of any resurgence. (For more information: Stefan de Keersmaecker - Tel.: +32 229 62253; Darragh Cassidy - Tel.: +32 229 83978)

Circular Plastics Alliance: a new step towards 10 million tonnes of recycled plastics

Today, the Commission welcomes an [important new step taken by the Circular Plastics Alliance](#) to boost the EU market for recycled plastics and ensure at least 10 million tonnes are recycled by 2025. Since the launch of the Alliance in 2018, good progress has been made with an increase of almost 30% in European production of recycled plastics. The Alliance will now even step up efforts by ensuring recyclability of 26 plastic products in packaging, construction, agriculture and home appliances that altogether account for over 60% of plastic waste collected in Europe. This could alone deliver on the 10 million tonnes objective. In addition, the Alliance has now developed a new roadmap to achieve the 10 million tonnes and adopted the methodology and rules for a new EU-wide monitoring system of recycled plastics. Thierry **Breton**, Commissioner for Internal Market, said: *"With the Circular Plastics Alliance, the plastics value chain is showing great cooperation towards the transition to circular plastics. The mobilisation of all actors, public and private, along the value chain and across key plastics-using sectors, is also improving Europe's resilience by maximising the use of plastic waste as a valuable resource. I welcome these efforts and count on the alliance's continued engagement."* Today, the Alliance represents almost 300 industry, academic and public sector organisations across the whole of the recycled plastics value chain. The first voluntary pledges for recycled plastics made by industry showed that the supply of recycled plastics could reach and exceed the target; however, more work was needed to ensure the use of recycled plastics. In this regard, the Alliance is preparing a report on the requirements and solutions to increase the integration of recycled plastics in products by 2025. The alliance will also regularly update its 'roadmap to 10 million tonnes recycled content' through an open process of dialogue and exchange with national and local authorities and all other interested stakeholders. (For more information: Sonya Gospodinova - Tel.: +32 229 66953; Federica Miccoli - Tel.: +32 229 58300)

Media freedom and pluralism: launch of the media ownership monitoring project

Today the Commission has kick-started the EU-funded Euromedia Ownership Monitor. The monitor, coordinated by the Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg, will provide a country-based database containing information on media ownership, as well as systematically assess relevant legal frameworks and identify possible risks to media ownership transparency. Vice-President for Values and Transparency, Věra **Jourová**, said: "It's getting increasingly difficult to understand who owns the media in the EU. This cannot be the case, because in democracy people deserve to know who provides them with information. This new tool will help inform the understanding of the media market and future policy initiatives." Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry **Breton**, added: "As a key pillar of our democracies, it is crucial to address and highlight the existing threats to independent media. We remain determined to present new initiatives such as the Media Freedom Act and increase our support for projects promoting transparency in the sector." This new tool will inform policy and regulatory assessments and initiatives dedicated to supporting media freedom and pluralism. It will pinpoint where media ownership lies, making potential concentration issues more visible and thereby increase the understanding of the media market. The amount of EU support dedicated to the project is €1 million and the project is expected to last until September 2022. Furthermore, a second call for proposals will be published in the coming weeks. The beneficiaries of this pilot project have been selected following a [call for proposals](#), targeting stakeholders working in the field of media freedom and pluralism at a European, regional, and local level. This initiative is part of a broader effort in the field of [media freedom and pluralism](#), as outlined in the [European Democracy Action Plan](#). More information on this and other calls related to the field of media, either ongoing or under preparation, is also available [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Charles Manoury – Tel.: +32 229 13391).

EU-supported film was awarded at the San Sebastian Film Festival

The winners of the [69th edition of the San Sebastian International Film Festival](#) were announced on Saturday 25 September, with a film funded by the EU being awarded. Noche de Fuego/Prayers for the Stolen by Tatiana Huezo took home the Horizontes award. In total [four EU-supported films](#) were competing within the Official Selection of the Festival. The EU supported these highly international works, involving several countries both within the EU and beyond, in their development, international coproduction and distribution through the [MEDIA](#) strand of the [Creative Europe programme](#). These and many other productions also feature within the context of the [30 years of MEDIA campaign](#), which celebrates the EU's continued support to the audiovisual industry throughout the decades, highlighting the work of the industry in front and behind the camera, and the true impact of EU support. The Festival, in association with Creative Europe MEDIA, also hosted a livestreamed edition of the [European Film Forum](#): 'The transformation of the European audiovisual ecosystem: towards a more sustainable and digital industry'. (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Marietta Grammenou – Tel.: +32 229 83583)

L'UE annonce 25 millions d'euros pour l'éducation dans des contextes de crise et 140 millions d'euros pour soutenir la recherche sur des systèmes alimentaires durables

S'exprimant lors de l'événement mondial « [Global Citizen Live](#) », la présidente **von der Leyen** a [annoncé](#) que l'Union européenne s'engageait à verser 140 millions d'euros pour soutenir la recherche sur les systèmes alimentaires durables et lutter contre la faim alimentaire par l'intermédiaire du [CGIAR](#), ainsi que 25 millions d'euros supplémentaires pour [Education Cannot Wait](#), un fonds mondial pour l'éducation des enfants dans les situations d'urgence et de crises prolongées, en particulier les filles, les enfants handicapés, les minorités et d'autres enfants marginalisés. Le nouveau financement porte la contribution totale de l'UE au programme « Education Cannot Wait » à 52,5 millions d'euros, ce qui accélère son impact et sa portée dans le monde entier. Ursula **von der Leyen**, présidente de la Commission européenne, a déclaré : « *Nous devons unir nos forces pour lutter contre le coronavirus et reconstruire le monde encore mieux. L'Europe fait sa part. Depuis le début, les Européens ont expédié 800 millions de doses de vaccins dans le monde, même lorsque nous n'avions pas assez pour nous-mêmes. Aujourd'hui, nous devons redoubler les efforts pour contribuer fin à cette pandémie à l'échelle mondiale, mettre un terme à la faim et offrir aux enfants partout dans le monde des chances égales. Team Europe s'est déjà engagée à donner 500 millions de doses de vaccins aux pays vulnérables d'ici l'été prochain. En outre, la Commission européenne engage aujourd'hui 140 millions d'euros pour améliorer la sécurité alimentaire mondiale et réduire l'extrême pauvreté, et 25 millions d'euros pour Education Cannot Wait, soutenant ainsi l'éducation des enfants, vivant à travers des conflits et des crises, dans le monde entier.* » La commissaire chargée des partenariats internationaux Jutta **Urpilainen** a déclaré: « *Nous devons unir nos efforts pour remettre les ODD sur la bonne voie. Comme nous continuons à le constater, nous ne pouvons jamais*

considérer l'accès à l'éducation comme acquis. Des actions mondiales coordonnées seront décisives pour parvenir à une transformation durable des systèmes alimentaires sur les plans environnemental, social et économique. » De plus amples informations sont disponibles en ligne dans [le communiqué de presse](#) et dans la [fiche d'information](#) sur la réaction mondiale de Team Europe à la COVID-19. (Pour plus d'informations: Ana Pisonero — Tél: +32 229 54320)

Le plan d'investissement pour l'Europe soutient un prêt de 280 millions d'euros d'investissements dans la décarbonation du secteur sidérurgique

Le prêt de 280 millions d'euros accordé à ArcelorMittal par la Banque européenne d'investissement (BEI) et soutenu par le [Fonds européen pour les investissements stratégiques](#) (EFSI) contribuera à financer le programme européen de recherche et de développement du groupe pour la période 2021-2023. Le financement vise en particulier à soutenir les activités de recherche d'ArcelorMittal et les dépenses en capital liées à ces activités dans le domaine des projets environnementaux, climatiques et énergétiques. Il aidera le groupe à atteindre ses objectifs ambitieux en matière de climat et, partant, à réduire l'empreinte environnementale de ses installations de production, de ses produits sidérurgiques et de ses solutions technologiques. Les activités de recherche et de développement soutenues par les nouveaux investissements seront principalement menées dans les installations de recherche et développement déjà existantes d'ArcelorMittal en France, en Belgique, au Luxembourg et en Espagne. Paolo **Gentiloni**, commissaire chargé de l'économie, a déclaré: « *Grâce à une garantie du plan d'investissement pour l'Europe, ArcelorMittal investira 280 millions d'euros dans des activités de recherche et de développement afin d'atteindre ses objectifs climatiques et de réduire l'empreinte environnementale de ses installations de production. Cet accord montre que l'innovation est cruciale pour permettre aux entreprises de contribuer aux ambitions climatiques tout en maintenant leur compétitivité. J'espère voir de nombreuses autres entreprises suivre cet exemple.* » Le Fonds européen pour les investissements stratégiques (EFSI) est le principal pilier du [plan d'investissement pour l'Europe](#), qui a jusqu'à présent mobilisé 546,5 milliards d'euros d'investissements, dont un quart soutient des projets de recherche, de développement et d'innovation. Le [communiqué de presse](#) est disponible en ligne. (Pour plus d'informations: Veerle Nuyts — Tél.: +32 229 96302; Flora Matthaes — Tél.: +32 229 83951)

Union de la défense : une mobilité militaire plus rapide et plus efficace

Le 24 septembre, la Commission et le haut représentant ont adopté le [troisième rapport conjoint sur la mise en œuvre du plan d'action pour la mobilité militaire](#). Le rapport conjoint décrit les très bons progrès accomplis depuis octobre 2020 dans la mise en œuvre du plan d'action. Cela inclut [l'appel à propositions de projets](#) lancé ce mois-ci en vue de cofinancer des projets d'infrastructures à double usage au moyen du [mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe](#), doté d'un budget de 330 millions d'euros, ainsi que la décision d'inclure le développement d'un système numérique pour l'échange sécurisé et rapide d'informations relatives à la mobilité militaire dans le programme de travail annuel 2021 du [Fonds européen de la défense](#) dans le cadre d'un appel à propositions d'un montant de 50 millions d'euros. Le rapport rend également compte des progrès accomplis en ce qui concerne les questions de procédure et de réglementation, par exemple l'achèvement des travaux sur un document d'orientation sur certaines formalités douanières dans l'UE qui facilitera le déplacement ou l'utilisation de biens militaires à des fins d'exportation, de réimportation ou de transit dans l'UE. Un autre exemple est celui des travaux menés dans le cadre de [l'Agence européenne de défense](#) pour améliorer la mobilité militaire en mettant en œuvre deux arrangements techniques relatifs aux permis de circulation transfrontières. Lancé en 2018, le [plan d'action](#) vise à faciliter les mouvements militaires à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de l'UE. Il contribue à la politique de sécurité et de défense commune en permettant aux États membres de l'UE d'agir plus rapidement et plus efficacement, tout en respectant leur souveraineté et leur prise de décision. Les actions sont mises en œuvre de manière coordonnée par les institutions et organes de l'UE, en étroite concertation avec les États membres, dans le cadre d'une approche pangouvernementale. La mobilité militaire est également soutenue par d'autres initiatives en matière de défense, notamment la coopération structurée permanente (CSP), et demeure un projet phare dans le cadre de la coopération UE-OTAN. (Pour plus d'informations: Sonya Gospodinova – Tél.: +32 229 66953; Célia Dejond – Tél.: +32 229 88199)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over CHARGE NOW by BMW, Daimler, and BP

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the indirect acquisition of joint control over CHARGE NOW by Bayerische Motoren Werke Aktiengesellschaft ('BMW') and Daimler AG, all of Germany, and BP p.l.c. of the UK. CHARGE NOW is a joint venture operated by

Digital Charging Solutions GmbH active in the development, marketing and distribution of products and services in the field of mobility, offering information services and access technology to charging infrastructure for battery-electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles, primarily in the European Economic Area. It is also active in the operation of charging stations for battery-electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. BMW is active in the development, manufacturing and distribution of passenger cars and motorcycles, as well as a provider of mobility services. Daimler is active in the development, manufacturing and distribution of automotive products and a provider of mobility solutions. BP is an integrated energy company. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because of the limited impact it would have on the market. 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.10334](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears the acquisition of joint control over NMI by Insight and Francisco Partners

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over NMI Topco LLC ('NMI') by Insight Holdings Group, LLC ('Insight') and Francisco Partners Management, L.P. ('Francisco Partners'), all three of the US. NMI is a software platform for payments enablement and is currently solely controlled by Francisco Partners. Insight and Francisco Partners are private equity firms. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns given that NMI has no, or negligible, actual or foreseen activities 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.10467](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President von der Leyen visits the Western Balkans

Ahead of the EU-Western Balkans Summit on 6 October, President of the European Commission, Ursula **von der Leyen**, will be in the Western Balkans between Tuesday and Thursday, to visit Albania, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The President will start her trip in Tirana, on Tuesday morning, where she will be received by Prime Minister Edi Rama, and President Ilir Meta. Together with the Prime Minister, she will attend the inauguration of the 'Korb Muça School and Europa Kindergarten', which was rebuilt with EU funds under the [EU4Schools](#) programme after the devastating 2019 earthquake. On Tuesday afternoon, she will travel to Skopje, where she will meet Prime Minister Zoran Zaev, as well as President Stevo Pendarovski, followed by a visit to a youth cultural centre, together with Prime Minister Zaev. On Wednesday morning, President **von der Leyen** will be in Pristina, where she will meet with President Vjosa Osmani and Prime Minister Albin Kurti. She will also visit the Cicërimat Kindergarten, which was built with EU funds, together with the Prime Minister. The President will then travel to Podgorica, where she will be received by President Milo Đukanović and Prime Minister Zdravko Krivokapić. During her stay, she will visit the Institute of Public Health which received EU support in the fight against the pandemic, accompanied by the Prime Minister. Then, the President will arrive in Belgrade, Serbia, where she will meet President Aleksandar Vučić on Wednesday and Prime Minister Ana Brnabić on Thursday. On Thursday morning, together with President Vučić, President **von der Leyen** will take part in the launch event of a project on railway Corridor X. The President will also witness the signing of a contract for the rehabilitation of a section on the Peace Highway which the EU is supporting. Her last stop will be Bosnia and Herzegovina, later on Thursday. The Commission President will attend the opening ceremony of the Svilaj Bridge connecting Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with Prime Minister of Croatia, Andrej Plenković and the Chair of Council of Ministers, Zoran Tegeltija. The same day, in Sarajevo, she will also have meetings with the Presidency members of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Over the course of her visit, President **von der Leyen** will give press conferences with the different Western Balkan leaders, which you can follow live on [EBS](#). (For more information: Eric Mamer – Tel.: +32 229 94073; Dana Spinant – Tel.: +32 229 90150; Ana Pisonero - Tel.: +32 229 54320)

Executive Vice-Presidents Vestager and Dombrovskis in the United States to discuss tech, trade, competition and the transatlantic agenda

From 26 September to 1 October, Executive Vice-Presidents Margrethe **Vestager** and Valdis **Dombrovskis** will be in the United States, where they will meet senior US officials and participate in the first-ever meeting of the EU-U.S. Trade and Technology Council (TTC). Executive Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will first travel to Washington, DC, where he will speak today at an event on transatlantic cooperation organised by the [Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies](#). Executive Vice-President **Vestager** will first be in Los Angeles on Tuesday for a keynote at the [Code Conference 2021](#). While in Washington, Executive Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will also meet with International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva; Janet Yellen, Secretary of the Treasury; Jerome Powell, Chair of the Federal Reserve; Katherine Tai, United States Trade Representative; and Gina Raimondo, Secretary of Commerce. He will hold meetings with Ron Wyden, Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and Richard Neal, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. The Executive Vice-Presidents will then travel to Pittsburgh, where they will participate in the inaugural meeting of the EU-U.S. Trade and Technology Council, which was [launched](#) earlier this year by President of the European Commission, Ursula **von der Leyen**, and US President Joe Biden. Executive Vice-President **Vestager** will then head to New York where she will meet with UN Secretary General António Guterres before giving a keynote speech at the [Fordham's 48th Annual Conference](#) on International Antitrust Law and Policy. She will then meet with the acting assistant attorney general of the US Department of Justice, Richard Powers. Executive Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will finish his visit in New York as well, where he will participate in a Ministerial Meeting of the Global Forum on Steel Excess Capacity, as well as hold meetings with Special Envoy on Climate Michael Bloomberg and senior business leaders. *(For more information: Miriam Garcia Ferrer – Tel.: + 32 229 99075; Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615)*

Tackling global tax avoidance and evasion: World experts to meet at a high-level conference

The European Commission, in cooperation with the [EU Tax Observatory](#), is hosting a three-day high-level conference on the consequences of global tax avoidance and evasion. This online event, starting today, will bring together academics, policy-makers and stakeholders, to both assess the magnitude of global tax avoidance and tax evasion, and find ways to address it. This topic is particularly important as the EU recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. As President Ursula **von der Leyen** said in the [2021 State of the Union](#): “*Asking big companies to pay the right amount of tax is not only a question of public finances, but above all a question of basic fairness.*” Experts will discuss how to shed further light on unfair global tax practices and to inform policy makers with science-based evidence. Paolo **Gentiloni**, Commissioner for Economy, who will attend the conference on Wednesday, said: “*To fight tax avoidance and evasion we need relevant and usable data, maximum transparency and top-level expertise to inform our policy-making. This conference will contribute to that by bringing together some of the brightest minds in Europe and beyond.*” In May 2021, the Commission published the [Communication on Business Taxation for the 21st Century](#). This sets out a long-term vision to provide a fair and sustainable business tax environment in a single corporate tax rulebook for Europe - the 'Business in Europe: Framework for Income Taxation' (BEFIT), as well as an ambitious tax agenda for the next two years. Further information on the [conference](#) is available online. *(For more information: Daniel Ferrie - Tel: +32 229 86500; Francesca Dalboni – Tel: +32 229 88170)*

Commissioner Breton in Asia to discuss digital and tech matters

This week, Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry **Breton**, will travel to Japan and South Korea to engage with officials and industry leaders on digital and tech matters. This will be an opportunity to discuss with Asian partners the upcoming [European Chips Act](#) and develop contacts on the broader digital partnership agreements with Japan and Korea, which were announced in the [EU Indo-Pacific Strategy](#). On 28 September, Commissioner **Breton** will meet the Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications, Ryota Takeda; Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry, Hiroshi Kajiyama; the Minister for Digital Transformation, Takuya Hirai; the Chairman of the Board of NEC, Nobuhiro Endo and the CEO of Fujitsu, Mr Takahito Tokita. The following day, on 29 September, Commissioner **Breton** will meet with Mr Toshiki Kawai, the CEO of Tokyo Electron (TEL), one of the major Japanese semiconductor companies, and attend a round table discussion with business representatives. On 30 September and 1 October, Commissioner **Breton** will be in South Korea to meet with officials and industry leaders. *(For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Charles Manoury –*

Tel.: +32 229 13391)

Commissioner Sinkevičius on an official visit to Ireland

Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus **Sinkevičius**, is travelling to Ireland today and tomorrow on his first official visit to Ireland with the aim to discuss both environmental and fisheries topics. He will start with a visit to the 'Wild Atlantic Nature' – a project area funded by the EU programme LIFE, followed by a meeting with the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue and a meeting with representatives of fishers' organisations. At the end of the first day, Commissioner **Sinkevičius** will do a viewing of a landing by a pelagic vessel or other activity in a harbour near Killybegs. On Tuesday, he will start with a Blue economy project visit. He will then have exchanges with Minister of State for Agriculture with responsibility for land use and biodiversity, Pippa Hackett, Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan, Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform, Malcolm Noonan, and Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue. Finally, Commissioner **Sinkevičius** will meet scientists and NGOs and have a courtesy meeting with the Taoiseach Micheál Martin. A press point with the Commissioner and Minister McConalogue will take place today at 18:00 CET. *(For more information: Tim McPhie – Tel.: +32 229 58602; Daniela Stoycheva – Tél.: +32 229 53664)*

La commissaire Johansson à Chypre*

Demain, la commissaire chargée des affaires intérieures, Ylva **Johansson**, sera à Chypre pour discuter de la gestion des migrations, de la sécurité intérieure, et du soutien financier et opérationnel de l'UE à Chypre. La commissaire rencontrera Nikos Nouris, ministre de l'intérieur, Stephie Dracos, ministre de la justice et de l'ordre public, ainsi qu'Annita Demetriou, présidente de la Chambre des représentants de Chypre. La commissaire se rendra également au centre de premier accueil de Pournara avec le ministre de l'intérieur et rencontrera Europol, Frontex et EASO. Une conférence de presse sera retransmise en direct sur [EbS+](#) à 10h30 CET. *(Pour plus d'informations: Adalbert Jahnz – Tél. +32 229 53156; Ciara Bottomley – Tél.: +32 229 69971; Laura Bérard – Tél.: +32 229 55721)*

[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](#).

*Updated on 27-09-2021, at 13:37

MEX/21/4903