



Daily News 09 / 11 / 2021

Brussels, 9 November 2021

Statement by President von der Leyen on the situation at the border between Poland and Belarus

Yesterday evening, Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** made the following statement on the situation at the border between Poland and Belarus: *"Belarus must stop putting people's lives at risk. The instrumentalisation of migrants for political purposes by Belarus is unacceptable. The Belarusian authorities must understand that pressuring the European Union in this way through a cynical instrumentalisation of migrants will not help them succeed in their purposes. I have spoken to Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, Lithuanian Prime Minister Ingrida Šimonytė and Latvian Prime Minister Arturs Krišjānis Kariņš to express the EU's solidarity and discuss with them the measures the EU can take to support them in their efforts to deal with this crisis. I am calling on Member States to finally approve the extended sanctions regime on the Belarusian authorities responsible for this hybrid attack. Vice-President Schinas, in coordination with High Representative/Vice-President Borrell, will travel in the coming days to the main countries of origin and of transit to ensure that they act to prevent their own nationals from falling into the trap set by the Belarusian authorities. The EU will in particular explore how to sanction, including through blacklisting, third country airlines that are active in human trafficking. Finally, the Commission will explore with the UN and its specialised agencies how to prevent a humanitarian crisis from unfolding and to ensure that migrants can be safely returned to their country of origin, with the support of their national authorities."* The full [statement](#) is available online. (For more information: Dana Spinant – Tel.: +32 229 90150; Adalbert Jahnz - Tel.: +32 229 53156)

Transport: Commission seeks views on the Renewable and Low-Carbon Fuels Value Chain Industrial Alliance

The European Commission invites industry, public authorities, civil society and any other actors involved to submit their views on the establishment of a new industrial alliance focused on boosting the supply and affordability of renewable and low-carbon gaseous and liquid fuels, via a consultation launched yesterday. All modes of transport need to have easier access to renewable and low-carbon fuels, with a focus on the aviation and waterborne transport sectors, by complementing the legislative proposals [ReFuelEU Aviation](#) and [FuelEU Maritime](#) presented as part of the [Fit-for-55 package](#) earlier this year. Commissioner Adina **Vălean**, responsible for mobility and transport, said: *"Today, we start building a new industrial alliance that will help the transport sector transition to a new power base. We want to align the full industrial value chain to boost the production, distribution and use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in transport. The accelerated uptake of such fuels is fundamental in our push to decarbonize transport, in particular the aviation and waterborne sectors. I invite all those interested to join our efforts. With this initiative we continue to deliver on our commitments under the Commission's Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy and the European Green Deal."* The EU's industrial base must develop new sourcing capabilities, production capacity, storage and distribution networks – all in a very short period. Drawing on the experiences of other industrial alliances at EU level, this new alliance will allow all key actors – from sourcing to end-users and technology providers – build new business relationships, launch joint projects, de-risk investments and, together, address market deficiencies. All business and other parties interested in the alliance, including those of the EU's global trading partners, are welcome to contribute to the co-creation process through the consultation available [here](#) until 30 November. Based on the results of this survey, the Commission will continue preparing the launch of the alliance. (For more information: Stefan De Keersmaecker – Tel.: +32 229 84680; Anna Wartberger – Tel.: +32 229 82054)

Eurobarometer: Despite the pandemic, Europeans consider the quality of life and situation of the economy in European regions have slightly improved

The first results of a newly published [Flash Eurobarometer](#) on public opinion in EU regions show that over eight in ten Europeans (83%) say that the quality of life in their region is good (representing an increase of three percentage points since 2018), while 68% say that the situation of the economy of their region is good (up two percentage points since 2018). Over seven in ten respondents (71%) say they are optimistic regarding the future of their region (up three percentage points since 2018). For respondents, the most important issue facing their region at the moment is the economic situation and unemployment (33%). This is followed closely by health (24%), the cost of living (23%), and the environment and climate change (22%). 57% of respondents are satisfied with the measures taken by the European Union to fight the coronavirus pandemic, while 55% of respondents think that NextGenerationEU will be effective in helping to tackle the challenges facing the EU. A relative majority of 47% of respondents think that the European Green Deal will be effective in helping to tackle the challenges facing the EU. Finally, 61% tend to trust the European Union (stable compared with 2018). 62,636 respondents were interviewed by phone in 194 regions in the 27 EU Member States for this Flash Eurobarometer survey. The full results are available [here](#). (For more information: Dana Spinant – Tel.: +32 229 90150; Vivian Loonela – Tel.: +32 229 66712)

State aid: Commission approves €51 million Bulgarian wage compensation scheme to support companies and self-employed persons affected by the coronavirus outbreak

The European Commission has approved a €51 million (BGN 100 million) Bulgarian wage compensation scheme to support companies and self-employed persons active in sectors particularly affected by the coronavirus outbreak and the restrictive measures that the Bulgarian government had to implement to limit the spread of the virus. The scheme was approved under the State aid [Temporary Framework](#). Under the scheme, the aid will take the form of a compensation partially covering the loss of income suffered by the employees and self-employed persons at a rate of 75% of their social insurance income. The public support aims at avoiding lay-offs and at helping the beneficiaries resume their activities. The Commission found that the Bulgarian scheme is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, (i) the public support will assist businesses that are particularly affected by the coronavirus outbreak and is aimed at avoiding layoffs; (ii) the monthly wage compensation will not exceed 80% of the monthly gross salary of the benefitting personnel or the income of self-employed persons; and (iii) the aid will be granted before 31 December 2021. The Commission concluded that the measure is necessary, appropriate and proportionate to remedy a serious disturbance in the economy of a Member State, in line with Article 107(3)(b) TFEU and the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. On this basis, the Commission approved the measure under EU State aid rules. More information on the Temporary Framework and other 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.100320 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)

State aid: Commission approves amendment to Dutch scheme to support companies offering special transport services in the context of coronavirus outbreak

The European Commission has found an amendment to an existing Dutch scheme to support companies offering special transport services to be in line with the State aid [Temporary Framework](#). The Commission approved the original scheme in [February 2021](#) ([SA.61360](#)). The existing scheme, covering the period from 1 July to 13 October 2020, consists of two direct grants measures: (i) to cover fixed costs such as depreciation; and (ii) to support the uncovered fixed costs linked to employees. Eligible beneficiaries are companies offering special transport services for specific groups such as children and elderly persons who are not able to take regular public transport to go to school or to certain social activities. The Netherlands notified the following modifications to the existing scheme: (i) an extension of the eligible period, to cover the period from 14 October 2020 to 30 September 2021; and (ii) an overall budget increase by €402.5 million. The transport companies will remain entitled to an overall compensation for a maximum of 70% of the revenues lost due to cancelled rides during the eligible period. The Commission found that the Dutch scheme as amended remains in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, the support will not exceed (i) €1.8 million per company under the first measure; (ii) €10 million per company under the second measure; and (iii) the aid will be granted before 31 December 2021. The Commission concluded that the scheme, as amended, remains necessary, appropriate and proportionate to remedy a serious disturbance in the economy of a Member State, in line with Article 107(3)(b) TFEU and the conditions of the Temporary Framework. On this basis, the Commission

approved the measures under EU State aid rules. More information on the Temporary Framework and other 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.100306 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 Infrareal by Gelsenwasser and Swiss Life

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of Infrareal GmbH by Gelsenwasser AG, both of Germany, and Swiss Life Holding AG ('Swiss Life') of Switzerland. Infrareal consists of two operational subsidiaries, Pharmaserv GmbH and Pharmapark Jena GmbH, which operate business parks in Germany with a focus on the life science sector and provide, inter alia, site management services, integrated infrastructure and technical and logistics services. Gelsenwasser is a utilities company that supplies natural gas and fresh water to residents in Germany. It is mainly active in water, wastewater, energy networks, energy sales and investments. Swiss Life is a provider of comprehensive life, pensions and financial solutions. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given its limited impact 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.10446](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control of a newly created joint venture by PSPIB and ADIC

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of a newly created joint venture B2R Local No. 1 Pty Ltd ('Local') of Australia by Public Sector Pension Investment Board ('PSPIB') of Canada and Abu Dhabi Investment Council Company P.J.S.C ('ADIC') of the United Arab Emirates. Local will operate a specialist build-to-rent property development and management business that will include acquiring, developing, managing and operating residential properties in key Australian cities. PSPIB manages a global portfolio of stocks, bonds and other fixed-income securities, as well as investments in private equity, real estate, infrastructure and other sectors. ADIC operates investment strategies targeting positive capital returns through an expansive portfolio of highly diversified asset classes. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given that Local 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.10500](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of ITP by Bain Capital

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control of Industria de Turbo Propulsores, S.A.U. ('ITP') of Spain by Bain Capital Investors L.L.C. ('Bain Capital') of the US. ITP manufactures aircraft engine components and provides maintenance, repair and overhaul services. Bain Capital is a private equity investment firm that invests in companies across a number of industries. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because, apart from one limited vertical link between the companies' activities, there are no other overlaps. 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.10516](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EU at COP26: Executive Vice-President Timmermans in Glasgow

Today, Executive Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** speaks at the opening plenary of the high-level negotiations at COP26. His speech will be available via [EBS](#) this afternoon around 16:30 CET. He will also participate in a number of high-level events at the COP26. This morning, he participated in the launch of 'Adaptation without Borders', a global partnership to strengthen international cooperation on adaptation. This high-level event launched a collaboration between the European Commission and 'Adaptation without Borders'. Executive Vice-President **Timmermans**'s speech is available [here](#) and you can watch back the video [here](#). He will also participate in the award ceremony of the Gulbenkian price for humanity which was awarded to the [Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy](#) and later participate in the Climate and Clean Air Ministerial, that will be streamed from 19:15 CET [here](#). Finally, he will take part in the launch of the EIB Adaptation Plan 'Smarter, Faster and Systemic: Accelerating adaptation for a climate-resilient tomorrow'. A press release will be available [here](#) and you can watch the event [live](#) from 20:00 CET. During the day, Frans **Timmermans** will also have bilateral meetings with lead negotiators from Brazil and Russia. He will debrief Members of the European Parliament and the representatives of the Committee of the Regions on the progress in the negotiations and meet with youth representatives. Keep up with all EU side events and register [here](#). (For more information: Tim McPhie – Tel.: +32 229 58602; Lynn Rietdorf – Tel.: +32 229 74959)

La commissaire Mariya Gabriel ouvre le hackathon de l'éducation numérique 2021

Mariya **Gabriel**, commissaire chargée de l'innovation, de la recherche, de la culture, de l'éducation et de la jeunesse, inaugure aujourd'hui le « [Digital Education Hackathon 2021](#) » lors d'un événement organisé par la [présidence slovène du Conseil de l'UE](#) et le [Centre international de recherche sur l'intelligence artificielle \(IRCAI\)](#) à Ljubljana, en Slovénie. La commissaire Mariya **Gabriel** a déclaré: « *Je suis très heureuse du niveau d'inclusivité du DigiEduHack. Année après année, de plus en plus de femmes, de filles et de membres de communautés sous-représentées ont participé à la fois en tant qu'hôtes et en tant que participants. Cet événement nous aide à concrétiser la vision du plan d'action européen en matière d'éducation numérique: Une éducation numérique de qualité, inclusive et innovante. C'est ainsi que nous contribuons à l'avenir inclusif de l'éducation numérique en Europe.* » Pendant deux jours, ce hackathon rassemble des équipes et des hôtes d'Europe et d'ailleurs dans le but de résoudre les problèmes liés à l'avenir de l'éducation à l'ère numérique. Le thème de cette année est « L'éducation numérique pour un monde durable », qui relie directement les deux objectifs de l'UE, à savoir le pacte vert et l'Europe numérique. Cette année, plus de 71 événements locaux – en ligne, hors ligne et hybrides – auront lieu dans 38 pays à travers le monde. À la fin des deux journées du hackathon, un vote public sélectionnera les lauréats parmi les finalistes. Les trois équipes lauréates du prix mondial DigiEduHack 2021 recevront chacune 5 000 euros et leurs membres seront nommés ambassadeurs mondiaux DigiEduHack pour un an. Ces équipes seront également invitées à présenter leur solution à la commissaire **Gabriel** lors d'une cérémonie de remise des prix en 2022. Le hackathon de l'éducation numérique est une initiative de [l'Institut européen d'innovation et de technologie](#), dirigée par la [Climate-KIC](#) et coordonnée par [l'université d'Aalto](#). Il s'inscrit dans le cadre du [plan d'action de la Commission en matière d'éducation numérique](#), qui vise à aider les États membres et la communauté de l'éducation et de la formation à créer une éducation numérique hautement performante et à développer les aptitudes et compétences numériques de tous les Européens. (Pour plus d'informations: Sonya Gospodinova – Tél.: +32 229 66953; Célia Dejond – Tél.: +32 229 88199)

European Union Prize for Literature: Commissioner Gabriel awards 13 emerging authors

Mariya **Gabriel**, Commission for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, will welcome tonight the [13 laureates of the 2021 edition](#) announced in May, in the presence of Sabine Verheyen, Chairwoman of the Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament, and Dr Vasko Simoniti, Minister for Culture of the Republic of Slovenia, representing the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU. The Commissioner will highlight the main achievements of EU cultural policy and the [Creative Europe](#) programme including its support for literary translation. In anticipation of the event, Commissioner **Gabriel** said: *"The European Prize for Literature celebrates the cultural diversity that our continent has to offer. It promotes the access of EU citizens to contemporary European literature and enhances the visibility of European writers. The Prize showcases the creativity and diversity of the European literature, recognising the importance of the book sector."* The Prize is awarded annually to new and emerging authors, recognising literary talent from all corners of Europe. It highlights the wealth of contemporary European literature as well as Europe's rich cultural and linguistic heritage. National juries comprised of publishers, booksellers, authors and critics select the winners from each of the participating countries. Each winner will also receive a prize of €5,000. The competition is open to the 40 countries participating in Creative Europe. More

information on the Prize as well as on the 2021 winning authors and their books can be found [here](#). (For more information: Sonya Gospodinova – Tél.: +32 229 66953; Célia Dejond – Tél.: +32 229 88199)

La commissaire Johansson participe au lancement d'un programme de parrainage d'entreprises pour plus de 900 femmes réfugiées

Cet après-midi, Ylva **Johansson**, commissaire chargée des affaires intérieures, participera au « sommet européen des entreprises sur les femmes réfugiées », organisé par le partenariat Tent pour les réfugiés, une organisation à but non lucratif travaillant sur l'intégration des réfugiés dans le monde des affaires. Cet événement abordera le rôle des entreprises dans le soutien aux femmes réfugiées en Europe et lancera un nouvel engagement collectif de la part de plus de 20 entreprises internationales à fournir un parrainage à plus de 900 femmes réfugiées au cours des 3 prochaines années. Le programme sera mis en œuvre dans 8 États membres de l'UE (Allemagne, Belgique, Danemark, Espagne, France, Italie, Pays-Bas, Suède), ainsi qu'en Suisse et au Royaume-Uni. Il soutient les objectifs du [plan d'action de l'UE pour l'intégration et l'inclusion 2021-2027](#) visant à mieux associer les entreprises et les employeurs aux efforts d'intégration. De plus amples informations sur l'événement sont disponibles [ici](#). Les journalistes peuvent s'inscrire [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Adalbert Jahnz — Tél.: +32 229 53156; Laura Bérard — Tél.: +32 229 55721; Ciara Bottomley — Tél.: +32 229 69971)

EU hosts Arctic Forum and Indigenous Peoples' Dialogue

On 10 and 11 November, the European Commission together with the European External Action Service will host the [EU Arctic Forum and the Arctic Indigenous Peoples' Dialogue](#). The event aims to bring together key Arctic players from policy-making, academia, business and science, to assess recent developments in the region and discuss challenges ahead. It will feature a number of high-level speakers including High Representative/Vice-President Josep **Borrell**, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya **Gabriel**, and Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus **Sinkevičius**. The EU Arctic Forum and the Indigenous Peoples' Dialogue follows up on the new [Joint Communication](#) for a stronger EU engagement for a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous Arctic, adopted earlier in October. High Representative **Borrell** said: "Feedback from the people who live and work in Arctic regions is absolutely vital as the EU seeks to strengthen further its Arctic engagement. I look forward to a frank exchange on our updated policy." Commissioner **Sinkevičius** added: "The EU Arctic Forum and the Arctic Indigenous Peoples dialogue are an essential part of the EU's engagement in the Arctic. This year's iteration will be particularly important as we will be able to discuss with Arctic stakeholders the implementation of the new Arctic Joint Communication." Panel discussions in the EU Arctic Forum will focus on key topics such as international cooperation, climate change, environmental challenges and sustainable and inclusive economic development. The Forum will also explore new avenues for fostering inclusiveness and youth involvement for a peaceful, sustainable and prosperous Arctic. The event can be followed via [webstream](#). (For more information: Peter Stano – Tél.: +32 229 54553; Vivian Loonela – Tél.: +32 229 66712; Paloma Hall Caballero – Tél.: +32 229 68560; Daniela Stoycheva – Tél.: +32 229 53664)

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

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

[Prochains événements](#) de la Commission européenne

[Eurostat](#): communiqués de presse

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