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REUNION DU COLLÈGE: Propositions de la Commission pour améliorer les conditions de travail des personnes travaillant via une plateforme de travail numérique

La Commission européenne propose aujourd'hui un ensemble de mesures visant à améliorer les conditions de travail dans le cadre du travail via une plateforme et à soutenir une croissance durable des plateformes de travail numériques dans l'Union européenne (UE). Les nouvelles règles permettront de faire en sorte que les personnes qui travaillent par l'intermédiaire des plateformes numériques puissent jouir des droits du travail et des prestations sociales auxquels elles ont droit. Ces personnes bénéficieront également d'une protection supplémentaire en ce qui concerne le recours à une gestion algorithmique (c'est-à-dire des systèmes automatisés qui appuient ou remplacent des fonctions de direction au travail). Un ensemble commun de règles de l'UE offrira une plus grande sécurité juridique, permettant ainsi aux plateformes de travail numériques de tirer pleinement parti du potentiel économique du marché unique et de conditions de concurrence équitables. Dans le cadre du train de mesures présenté aujourd'hui, la Commission propose: I) une communication exposant l'approche de l'UE et ses mesures en matière de travail via une plateforme, ii) une proposition de directive relative à l'amélioration des conditions de travail dans le cadre du travail via une plateforme, et iii) un projet de lignes directrices précisant l'application du droit de la concurrence de l'UE aux conventions collectives des travailleurs indépendants visant à améliorer leurs conditions de travail, sur lesquelles la Commission a lancé une consultation publique (ouverte jusqu'au 24 février 2022) et visant à clarifier les circonstances dans lesquelles le droit de la concurrence ne fait pas obstacle aux conventions collectives visant à améliorer les conditions de travail. Les communiqués de presse sont disponibles [ici](#) et [ici](#), vous trouverez les questions-réponses [ici](#) et [ici](#), ainsi qu'une fiche d'information [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Daniel Ferrie – Tél.: +32 229 86500; Flora Matthaes – Tél.: +32 229 83951)

COLLEGE MEETING: Commission presents Action Plan to boost the social economy and create jobs plan

The European Commission has today presented an Action Plan to help the European social economy thrive, tapping into its economic and job-creation potential, as well as its contribution to a fair and inclusive recovery, and the green and digital transitions. Social economy organisations are entities which put social and environmental purposes first, reinvesting most of their profit back into the organisation. There are 2.8 million social economy entities in Europe that employ 13.6 million people and which offer solutions to key challenges in our societies. Today's Social Economy Action Plan smooths the way for social economy organisations to prosper and grow. The Commission proposes to act in three areas: (i) creating the right conditions for the social economy to thrive, (ii) opening opportunities for social economy organisations to start up and scale up, and (iii) making sure the social economy and its potential are recognised. A [press release](#), [Q&A](#) and [factsheet](#) are available online. In addition, the Commission is launching today a 'transition pathway' to help the green and digital transitions of the social economy in dialogue with public authorities and interested parties. The Commission seeks public views on the transition pathway through an [EU survey](#) until 28 February 2022. (For more information: Arianna Podesta - Tel.: +32 229 87024; Daniel Ferrie - Tel.: +32 229 86500; Flora Matthaes - Tel.: +32 229 83951)

COLLEGE MEETING: The Commission proposes to extend the list of 'EU Crimes' to hate speech and hate crime

Today, the European Commission is presenting an [initiative](#) to extend the list of 'EU crimes' to hate speech and hate crime, as announced by President **von der Leyen** in her [2020 State of the Union speech](#). Hate speech and hate crime have seen a sharp rise across Europe and have become a particularly serious and worrying phenomenon – offline and online. Common EU action is needed to tackle this EU-wide challenge. However, currently there is no legal basis to criminalise hate speech

and hate crime at EU level. Today's initiative sets out evidence for extending the list of EU crimes to hate speech and hate crime in the light of the criteria laid down in Article 83(1) TFEU. This initiative is part of a broader set of EU actions to counter illegal hate speech and violent extremist ideologies and terrorism online, such as the [EU Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online](#), the proposed [Digital Services Act](#), the [Regulation on addressing terrorist content online](#) and the EU Internet Forum. A [press release](#) and a [factsheet](#) are available online. (For more information: Christian Wigand - Tel.: +32 229 62253; Jördis Ferrolí - Tel.: +32 229 92729)

La Commission se félicite de l'accord politique visant à garantir que les voyageurs dans l'UE puissent continuer à profiter de l'itinérance gratuite

La Commission européenne se félicite de l'accord politique intervenu entre le Parlement européen et les États membres de l'UE concernant le nouveau règlement sur l'itinérance. Le nouveau règlement prolongera jusqu'en 2032 le système existant grâce auquel il n'est pas permis de facturer des frais supplémentaires aux citoyens pour leurs appels ou pour leur utilisation de données lors de leurs déplacements au sein de l'UE, et il apportera également de nouveaux avantages. Lorsqu'ils voyageront à l'intérieur de l'UE, les citoyens pourront appeler, envoyer des SMS et utiliser des données mobiles sans frais supplémentaires et avec la même qualité que celle qu'ils connaissent dans leur pays d'origine. Ils auront également un meilleur accès aux communications d'urgence quel que soit l'endroit où ils se trouvent en Europe. De plus, ils auront le droit d'être clairement informés lorsqu'un service qu'ils utilisent pendant l'itinérance risque d'entraîner des frais supplémentaires involontaires. Le règlement entrera en vigueur le 1 juillet 2022. Margrethe **Vestager**, vice-présidente exécutive pour une Europe adaptée à l'ère du numérique, a déclaré à ce propos: « *Nous bénéficions depuis 2017 de la suppression des frais d'itinérance. Et aujourd'hui, nous avons garanti le maintien de ces avantages pendant dix années supplémentaires afin que nous puissions rester connectés et appeler, envoyer des textos et naviguer sur l'internet sans frais supplémentaires, lorsque nous voyageons dans l'UE. En même temps, grâce à ce nouveau règlement, nous améliorons également la qualité de l'expérience d'itinérance.* » Thierry **Breton**, commissaire au marché intérieur, s'est exprimé en ces termes: « *Passer des vacances en Grèce, en Autriche ou en Bulgarie. Visiter des clients ou des fournisseurs en Italie ou en Estonie... Voyager à l'étranger sans devoir s'inquiéter des factures de téléphone constitue un élément tangible de l'expérience du marché unique de l'UE pour tous les Européens. Aujourd'hui, non seulement nous veillons à ce que cette expérience se poursuive, mais nous l'améliorons: une meilleure qualité, de meilleurs services et encore plus de transparence.* » De plus amples informations sont disponibles dans ce [communiqué de presse](#) et ce document [questions-réponses](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke - Tél.: +32 229 58615; Marietta Grammenou - Tél.: +32 229 83583)

Biodiversity: Three billion additional trees by 2030 – launch of MapMyTree tool

Today, the Commission together with the European Environment Agency (EEA), are publishing a data tool – [MapMyTree](#) – for all organisations to join the pledge of planting three billion additional trees by 2030, register and map their planted trees to count the EU target. As part of the European Green Deal, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 commits to [planting at least 3 billion additional trees in the EU by 2030](#), in full respect of ecological principles. This would increase the EU forest area and resilience, enhance biodiversity, and help with climate change mitigation and adaptation. Launching the counting initiative, Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus **Sinkevičius**, said: “*Our promise to plant 3 billion additional trees is all about planting the right trees, in the right place, for the right purpose. It is one part of our efforts to fight climate change and stop biodiversity loss. We now have a map, and a new counter to check the progress. Associations, NGOs and cities can all report their trees. Three billion is a big number – but together we can make it a reality!*” Forests are a key part of the solution to combat climate change and biodiversity loss. The pledge of 3 billion trees will be carried out with a long-term planning and monitoring scheme ensuring that the trees are planted, and allowed to grow over time. Only trees that benefit biodiversity and the climate, and that are additional, can be registered on the platform. The Commission's role will be to facilitate, motivate, count and monitor the progress. In Spring 2022, the platform will open to everyone, so every new tree that fulfils the requirements can be counted. More information is in the [news item](#), [MapMyTree](#) counter and the [3 billion trees Roadmap](#). (For more information: Vivian Loonela - Tel.: +32 229 66712; Daniela Stoycheva - Tel.: +32 229 53664)

Brexit Adjustment Reserve: Commission approves €116 million pre-financing for Italy

The European Commission has adopted the decision to allocate funding from the [Brexit Adjustment](#)

[Reserve](#) to Italy, for a total of €116 million. Italy is the second country after [Ireland](#) to obtain funding to compensate the consequences of Brexit and will receive €45.55 million in 2021, €34.85 million in 2022 and €35.55 million in 2023. Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa **Ferreira**, said: *"Brexit has had a negative consequences for many people in the EU. The Brexit Adjustment Reserve stands for solidarity with those most affected. With this, EU offers a helping hand to all the Member States, as we do not want to leave anyone behind. With this pre-financing, over the next years Italy can use the funding to mitigate the negative impact and better the lives of people and support local communities."* Italy can use the funding to cover expenses since 1 January 2020 to mitigate the related negative impact of Brexit to support its regions and economic sectors, including on job creation and protection, such as short-time work schemes, re-skilling, and training. The Brexit Adjustment Reserve of €5.4 billion has been put in place to support all Member States, while ensuring a strong concentration on those most affected. (For more information: Vivian Loonela - Tel.: +32 229 66712; Veronica Favalli - Tel.: +32 229 87269)

Commission recalls the importance of fighting corruption both inside and outside the EU on International Anti-Corruption Day

On the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day, the Commission recalls the importance of fighting corruption both inside and outside the EU. Corruption erodes public trust and institutions, can lead to human rights abuses and threatens sustainable development. It remains a major security threat and a driving force behind organised crime. The fight against corruption is key to safeguarding the rule of law across the EU and a top priority for the Commission, as outlined in the [EU Security Union Strategy](#) (2020-2025) and the [EU Strategy to tackle Organised Crime](#) (2021-2025). The [annual Rule of Law Report](#) allows the Commission to promote the rule of law and to address concerns before problems arise or deepen, and from next year, the reports will come with specific recommendations to Member States. The European [Public Prosecutor's Office](#) (EPPO) and the [European Anti-Fraud Office](#) (OLAF) work together against corruption and fraud involving EU money. Through international partnerships the EU supports anti-corruption programmes globally. The EU is also undertaking a [review](#) of the implementation of its international obligations under the [United Nations Convention Against Corruption](#) - fulfilling our commitments and strengthening the EU's role in the global fight against corruption. (For more information: Adalbert Jahnz - Tel.: +32 229 53156; Laura Bérard - Tel.: + 32 229 55721; Ciara Bottomley - Tel.: +32 229 69971)

Investment Plan for Europe supports new lending to small and medium-sized businesses in Germany

The European Investment Bank (EIB) Group has provided a guarantee of €75 million to Deutsche Bank. This will enable Germany's biggest commercial bank to provide new lending of €300 million to small and medium-sized businesses and mid-caps. This transaction, expected to support smaller businesses in their recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, benefits from the support of the [European Fund for Strategic Investments \(EFSI\)](#), the central pillar of the [Investment Plan for Europe](#). Paolo **Gentiloni**, Commissioner for Economy, said: *"The European Union is continuously working to support SMEs and mid-caps across Europe that play such a central role in our economy. Thanks to this guarantee provided by the Investment Plan for Europe and the EIB Group, Deutsche Bank will be able to provide new loans for businesses in Germany, helping them to invest, create jobs and drive forward the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis."* [The Investment Plan for Europe](#) has so far mobilised €546.5 billion in investments, benefitting more than 1.4 million SMEs across all EU Member States. A press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Daniel Ferrie - Tel.: +32 229 86500; Flora Matthaes - Tel.: +32 229 83951)

Education and Training: well-being is key to success

Today, the Commission presented the [2021 Education and Training Monitor](#) at the [4th European Education Summit](#). The 2021 edition puts 'well-being in education' in the spotlight, monitors recent policy developments and provides an overview of how Member States will make use of the [Recovery and Resilience Facility](#) to adapt and strengthen education and training systems. Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya **Gabriel**, said: *"During the pandemic lockdowns, distance learning, and limited social contacts have put a heavy burden on students and teachers. Education should come out of the crisis stronger. Well-being must be put at the centre of educational policies. Caring about the well-being of all learners and their teachers is a pre-condition for education and lifelong learning success."* The COVID-19 pandemic put the well-being and mental health of many children and young people under stress. Evidence also shows that well-being affects education outcomes and success in lifelong learning. In recent years, Member States focused more

on well-being in education and additional measures have been taken during the pandemic. The Monitor shares good practices of Member States, presenting more comprehensive approaches that increase the well-being in education. It also generally helps identify where gaps are and where policy action is needed. For instance, low underachievement in basic skills is leading the Commission to work on [Pathways to School Success](#). The Education and Training Monitor is the annual Commission flagship publication on the state of play in education in the EU, reporting on the EU-level targets that are part of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021 – 2030). For more information, please consult [the 2021 Education and Training Monitor](#), our [factsheet](#) and our [news item](#). *(For more information: Sonya Gospodinova – Tel.: +32 229 66953; Célia Dejond – Tel.: +32 229 88199)*

Commission announces winners of the 2021 European Social Innovation Competition

The Commission has announced the winners of the 2021 [European Social Innovation Competition](#), calling on innovative solutions to problems affecting our society. The topic of this year was 'Skills for Tomorrow – Shaping a green and digital future'. The three winners of this edition are the following: [SkillLab](#), a project from the Netherlands that develops mobile solutions to help people identify and express their skills; [Snowball Effect](#), an Austrian school supporting social entrepreneurs to replicate successful social enterprises; and [Zekki - What's up?](#), a Finnish digital platform that matches young people with various support and personal development services. The winning projects received a prize of €50,000 each. In addition, every year, an Impact Prize is awarded to one of the participants who reached the semi-finals in the previous year's competition, based on results achieved over the past twelve months. The 2021 winner is [MycoTEX®](#), a project that uses an innovative technology to create clothing out of sustainable, vegan textiles. This is the 9th edition of European Social Innovation Competition which is run across all EU countries and [Horizon Europe associated countries](#). More information on the competition [here](#). *(For more information: Sonya Gospodinova – Tel.: +32 229 66953; Federica Miccoli – Tel.: +32 229 58300)*

RÉUNION DU COLLÈGE: Code de coopération policière - renforcer la coopération policière transfrontière pour accroître la sécurité

La Commission a proposé hier un [code de coopération policière](#) de l'UE afin de renforcer la coopération entre les services répressifs des États membres et de fournir aux policiers de l'UE des outils plus modernes pour l'échange d'informations. Étant donné qu'une grande partie des activités criminelles revêt un caractère transfrontière, les policiers de l'UE doivent être en mesure de travailler ensemble rapidement et efficacement. Le code de coopération policière, qui comprend une recommandation relative à la coopération policière opérationnelle et de nouvelles règles en matière de partage d'informations, contribuera à améliorer les opérations transfrontières, établira des canaux et des délais clairs pour l'échange d'informations et accordera un rôle renforcé à Europol. En outre, des règles révisées sur l'échange automatisé de certaines catégories de données permettront d'établir le lien beaucoup plus efficacement entre les actes criminels commis dans l'UE. Pour de plus amples informations, un [communiqué de presse](#), un [document questions-réponses](#) et une [fiche d'information](#) sont disponibles en ligne. *(Pour plus d'informations: Adalbert Jahnz — Tél.: +32 229 53156; Laura Bérard — Tél.: +32 229 55721; Ciara Bottomley — Tél.: +32 229 69971)*

State aid: Commission approves €3 billion scheme under the Spanish Recovery and Resilience Plan to support research, development, innovation, environmental protection and energy efficiency in automotive value chain

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, a €3 billion Spanish scheme to support research, development and innovation (RD&I), as well as environmental protection and energy efficiency measures of companies in the value chain for electric and connected vehicles. The measure will help Spain to accelerate the transition towards a more sustainable and connected mobility, without unduly distorting competition. The scheme will be partly funded by the Recovery and Resilience Facility ('RRF'), following the Commission's positive assessment of the Spanish Recovery and Resilience Plan and its adoption by the Council. The Spanish scheme enables (i) aid for RD&I investments, and (ii) aid for investments into environmental protection, including energy efficiency, for the implementation of several integrated projects across the entire value chain for electric and connected vehicles, within the framework of the Strategic Project for the Economy Recovery and Transformation on electric and connected vehicles ('ECV PERTE'). It will run until the end of 2023 and is open to consortia of interested companies, established both in and outside of Spain. The aid will be awarded through a competitive selection process and will take the form of direct grants and soft senior loans. The Commission assessed the measure under EU State aid rules,

in particular the [2014 Guidelines on State aid for environmental protection and energy](#) ('EEAG') and the 2014 [Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation](#) ('RDIF'). The Commission concluded that the Spanish scheme is in line with the EU State aid rules and is in line with EU policy objectives, including those set out in the [European Green Deal](#), without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market. Executive Vice-President Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *"This €3 billion Spanish scheme will help enable an innovative and sustainable value chain for electric vehicles, in line with State aid rules and the objectives of the European Green Deal. It will play an important part in the green and digital recovery of the Spanish economy, while ensuring that possible distortions of competition are minimised."* A press release is available [online](#). (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 €783 million Croatian scheme to support production of electricity from renewable energy sources

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, a Croatian aid scheme to support electricity production from renewable sources. The measure will help Croatia reach its renewable energy targets, including those set in its Recovery and Resilience plan, and contribute to the European objective of achieving climate neutrality by 2050, without unduly distorting competition in the Single market. Under the scheme, the aid will take the form of a premium on top of the electricity market price. The premium will be set through a competitive bidding process and will not be higher than the difference between the average production cost for each renewable technology and the electricity market price. The Commission assessed the scheme under EU State aid rules, in particular the [2014 Guidelines on State aid for environmental protection and energy](#) ('EEAG'). The Commission found that the aid is necessary to further develop energy generation from renewable sources and help Croatia meet the European and national environmental targets. It also has an incentive effect, as electricity prices do not fully cover the costs of generating electricity from renewable energy sources. Furthermore, the aid is proportionate and limited to the minimum necessary, as the level of aid will be set through competitive tenders and cannot exceed the difference between the market price of electricity and the production costs. Finally, the Commission found that the positive effects of the measure, in particular the positive environmental effects, outweigh any possible negative effects in terms of possible distortions to competition. On this basis, the Commission concluded that the Croatian scheme is in line with EU State aid rules, as it will facilitate the development of renewable electricity production from various technologies in Croatia and reduce greenhouse gas and CO₂ emissions, in line with the European Green Deal, without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market. Executive Vice-President Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *"This €783 million scheme will enable Croatia to support renewable electricity production from a wide range of technologies. The measure will contribute to the reduction of CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions, in line with the EU Green Deal objectives and the environmental targets set in Croatia's Recovery and Resilience plan, without unduly distorting competition in the Single Market."* A press release is available [online](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

State aid: Commission approves amendments to German scheme to support electricity production from renewable energy sources and aid for small biomass installations

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, certain amendments to the German scheme to support the production of electricity from renewable energy sources that the Commission approved in [April 2021](#). The scheme is part of the German Renewable Energy Act ("Erneuerbare Energien Gesetz" – "EEG 2021"). The amendments will, among other things, contribute to the expansion of solar photovoltaic (PV) and onshore wind energy, by increasing the volumes tendered, and, hence, the support for these technologies. At the same time, the Commission approved State aid to small manure installations, as provided in the EEG 2021 and related legislation. The eligible installations are biomass installations using agricultural manure for the production of electricity with an installed capacity not exceeding 150 kW. Both the amendments to the original scheme and the support to small manure installations aim at further helping Germany reach its ambitious renewable energy targets. The Commission assessed the amendments and the support to small manure installations under EU State aid rules, in particular the [2014 Guidelines on State aid for environmental protection and energy](#) ("EEAG"). The Commission found that, with respect to all the notified measures, the aid is proportionate and limited to the minimum necessary. The Commission concluded that the measures will support projects promoting the use of renewable energy sources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, in particular related to solar PV, onshore wind, biogas, biomass and biomethane, in line with the European Green Deal, without unduly

distorting competition. On this basis, the Commission approved the measures under EU State aid rules. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case numbers SA.64376 and SA.63414 once confidentiality issues have been resolved. *(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

State aid: Commission approves modification of German support scheme for maritime transport, including budget increase

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, the modification of an existing aid scheme to support the maritime transport sector in Germany. Under the existing scheme, which was last approved by the Commission under EU State aid rules in [June 2020](#), shipping companies employing seafarers on board eligible vessels could benefit from a reduction of social contributions for their seafarers. Germany notified to the Commission the following modifications to the scheme: (i) the prolongation of the scheme until 31 December 2027; (ii) the extension of the scheme from vessels registered in the German shipping register to all eligible vessels registered in any European Economic Area (EEA) country shipping register; (iii) an increase of the budget of the existing scheme by €2.5 million per year (from €44 million to €46.5 million per year). The Commission found that the scheme, as modified, is in line with the Commission's interpretation of [the Guidelines on State aid to maritime transport](#), as it will contribute to the competitiveness of the EU maritime transport sector, while boosting employment and ensuring a level playing field in the EU. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the [public case register](#) under the case number SA.64783. *(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

State aid: Commission approves €52.7 million Dutch scheme to support zoos in the context of the coronavirus pandemic

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, a €52.7 million Dutch scheme to support zoos in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. It follows another similar Dutch scheme that the Commission approved on [12 February 2021 \(SA.59706\)](#). The scheme covers the periods from 7 November until 18 November 2020 and from 15 December 2020 until 18 May 2021 (4 June 2021 for indoor zoos), when zoos were closed due to the restrictive measures imposed by the Dutch authorities to limit the spread of the virus. Under the scheme, the Dutch authorities will compensate zoos for the fixed costs linked to animal care. The Commission assessed the measure under Article [107\(2\)\(b\)](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and found that it will provide compensation for damage that is directly linked to the coronavirus pandemic. 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 approved the scheme under EU State aid rules. More information on actions taken by the Commission to address the economic impact of the coronavirus outbreak can be found [here](#). The non-confidential version of the decision will be made available under the case number SA.100258 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 €155.6 million Italian scheme to support companies in the context of the coronavirus pandemic

The European Commission has approved a €155.6 million Italian scheme to support companies in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. The scheme was approved under the State aid [Temporary Framework](#). Under the scheme, the aid will take the form of an exemption from the payment of compulsory social security contributions (with the exception of those referred to insurance for accident at work) for a maximum period of eight weeks, until 31 March 2021. The scheme aims to reduce labour costs borne by private employers, which are experiencing business disruption due to the coronavirus pandemic, with a view to preserve employment levels. The scheme will be open to all private employers irrespective of their size, with the exception of those active in the primary production of agricultural products and in the financial sector. Eligible companies are those that received support in May and June 2020 under the Italian wage subsidy measure "*cassa integrazione ordinaria e in deroga*", but that did not apply to the latest wage subsidy measures. The Commission found that the scheme is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, the aid (i) will not exceed €345,000 per company active in the fishery and aquaculture sector and €2.3 million per company active in all other sectors; and (ii) will be granted no later than

30 June 2022. 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.100542 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)

Concentrations: La Commission autorise l'acquisition du contrôle conjoint de RLDatix par Nordic Capital, Rothschild et TA Associates

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition du contrôle conjoint de Datix (Holdings) Limited ('RLDatix'), basée au Royaume-Uni, par Nordic Capital X Limited ('Nordic Capital'), basée à Jersey, Rothschild & Co S.C.A. ('Rothschild'), basée en France, et TA Associates Management, L.P. ('TA Associates'), basée aux États-Unis. RLDatix, actuellement contrôlée par Rothschild et TA Associates, fournit une suite de logiciels dans le domaine de la sécurité des patients. Nordic Capital est un fond de capital-investissement spécialisé dans les secteurs de la santé et des technologies ainsi que dans les services financiers et de paiements, les services aux entreprises et les produits de consommation. Rothschild est un groupe de conseil financier fournissant des conseils en fusions et acquisitions, stratégie et financement, ainsi que des solutions d'investissement et de gestion de patrimoine aux grandes institutions, familles, particuliers et gouvernements, à l'échelle mondiale. TA Associates investit principalement dans les services aux entreprises, les produits de consommation, les services financiers et dans les secteurs de la santé et des technologies. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, compte tenu des activités limitées de RLDatix dans l'Espace économique européen. L'opération a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée de contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.10523](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Arianna Podesta – Tél.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tél.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control of Zooplus by EQT and H&F

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of Zooplus AG of Germany by EQT Fund Management S.à.r.l ('EQT') of Luxembourg and Hellman & Friedman LLC ('H&F') of the US. Zooplus is active in the online retail of pet supplies for dogs, cats and other animals. EQT and H&F are investment management firms with investments in a variety of industries and sectors such as healthcare, services and consumer goods. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given the limited overlaps between the activities of the companies 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.10504](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President von der Leyen co-chairs one of the two Leaders' Plenary Sessions in the Summit for Democracy alongside US President Joe Biden

This afternoon, Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** will chair the second Leaders' Plenary Session of the [Summit for Democracy](#), following the first session chaired by US President Joe Biden. The Summit will bring together governments, civil society organisations and multilateral organisations to discuss how to strengthen and improve the way democracies work, counter the rise of authoritarianism, fight corruption and promote human rights. You can also watch a [video statement](#) by President **von der Leyen** ahead of the Summit. (For more information: Eric Mamer –

Tel.: +32 229 94073; Dana Spinant – Tel.: +32 229 90150)

Commissioner Breton in Ireland to discuss European digital agenda and Vaccines Strategy

Today, Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry **Breton** is visiting Ireland to discuss topics pertaining to cybersecurity, regulation of digital platforms, European strategy on semiconductors as well as vaccine successes and challenges ahead to fight COVID-19. Commissioner **Breton** will first visit Ireland's National Cybersecurity Centre before meeting with Taoiseach Micheál Martin. He will then hold a series of meetings with Leo Varadkar, deputy head of the government of Ireland and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Robert Troy, Minister of State for Trade Promotion, Digital and Company Regulation. The Commissioner will also participate in a virtual roundtable on 'Digital Future' and will do an on-site visit to the local branch of the semiconductor manufacturer Intel as part of his broader 'Tech & Chips' Tour. (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Charles Manoury – Tel.: +32 229 13391)

Commissioner Vălean at meeting of Transport Ministers

Commissioner Adina **Vălean** will represent the Commission at the meeting of Transport Ministers which takes place today in Brussels. Ministers will hold [policy debates](#) on the proposals to promote sustainable fuels in air transport, on the use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport, and on deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure. The Slovenian Presidency will also present a [progress report](#) on the Fit for 55 package. The Commission will notably inform Ministers about the ongoing work on passenger locator forms and stress the essential role of transport works for securing Europe's supply chains and the integrity of the single market. It will also be an opportunity for French Minister Jean-Baptiste Djebbari, to present the work programme of the incoming French Presidency of the Council. Commissioner **Vălean** will attend the [press conference](#) taking place shortly after the meeting at around 17:30. (For more information: Stefan De Keersmaecker – Tel.: +32 229 84680; Anna Wartberger – Tel.: +32 229 82054)

Vice-President Schinas hosts high-level meeting with European religious leaders

Tomorrow, at the request of President **von der Leyen**, Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, Margaritis **Schinas**, will hold an extraordinary high-level meeting with leaders of major European religions and organisations. The aim of the meeting is to reaffirm the Commission's commitment to the dialogue with churches and religious organisations and their *important role in the European project*. Vice-President **Schinas** said: "Respect for all religions and beliefs is a core value of the European Union. Our common values and identity should be based on the recognition of different identities and diversity, including religious ones, which constitute our Union. Religious traditions can and must be seen as part of our cultural life. Religious festivals are moments of sharing and opening to others and must be seen as a moment where different people of faith - as well as people without affiliation - can be brought together." Representatives from seven major European communities will participate in the meeting: Catholics, Protestant, Orthodox, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu and Buddhist. The meeting takes place online and in the framework of the [Article 17 dialogue](#), which serves as a platform for dialogue with churches, religious associations or communities, philosophical and non-confessional organisations on the EU policies. (For more information: Christian Wigand - Tel.: +32 229 62253; Jördis Ferroli – Tel.: +32 229 92729)

Le commissaire Reynders au Conseil « Justice et affaires intérieures »

Didier **Reynders**, commissaire chargé de la justice, participera demain à la réunion des ministres de la Justice et des Affaires intérieures. La réunion coïncide avec la Journée des droits de l'homme. Il sera donc l'occasion pour le commissaire de mettre à jour les ministres sur les négociations en vue de l'adhésion de l'UE à [la Convention européenne des droits de l'homme](#), une obligation légale en vertu du Traité de Lisbonne, ainsi que de présenter le rapport annuel 2021 de la Commission sur l'application de la Charte des droits fondamentaux de l'UE, qui sera adopté le même jour. Le commissaire présentera également les initiatives de la Commission visant à [numériser les systèmes judiciaires de l'UE](#), telles qu'elles ont été adoptées le 1 décembre, et informera les ministres des travaux en cours du [Parquet européen](#) et des travaux de la Commission visant à aider les États membres à lutter contre les discours et les crimes haineux. En outre, le commissaire **Reynders** participera aux discussions sur les progrès accomplis dans la mise en place de nouvelles règles visant à faciliter les échanges transfrontaliers de preuves électroniques, à la suite de la [proposition de la Commission de 2018](#), et sur les enseignements tirés de la pandémie pour les systèmes

judiciaires, ainsi qu'à présenter les prochaines propositions de la Commission dans le domaine de la justice, comme indiqué dans le [programme de travail de la Commission pour 2021](#). Le commissaire saisira également l'occasion de cette réunion pour présenter aux ministres l'initiative récemment adoptée par la Commission d'étendre la liste des crimes de l'UE aux discours et aux crimes haineux. Une conférence de presse avec le commissaire **Reynders** aura lieu vers 15h00 CET et sera disponible en direct sur [EbS+](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Christian Wigand — Tél.: +32 229 62253; Jördis Ferrolli — Tél.: +32 229 92729)

Conference on the Future of Europe: Citizens finalise their deliberations on democracy, values and rights, rule of law and security

On 10-12 December, some 200 European citizens from all Member States, different ages and backgrounds will meet to finalise their recommendations for the future of Europe in the European Citizens' Panel on [European democracy/Values and rights, rule of law, security](#). The third session of the Panel will take place in Florence, Italy at the premises of the European University Institute (EUI), in full respect of applicable health measures, with the possibility for participants who are not able to travel to connect remotely. The decision to proceed with this Panel in hybrid format was taken on 4 December, by the Executive Board – made up of representatives of the three EU institutions leading the Conference on the Future of Europe – following consultations with the EUI and Italian authorities. Panelists will build on the work of their previous sessions – [in Strasbourg on 24-26 September](#) and [online on 12-14 November](#), which focused on the following streams: ensuring rights and non-discrimination; protecting democracy and the rule of law; reforming the EU; building European identity; and strengthening citizen participation. Now, they will finalise their recommendations for EU institutions to follow up on. The [Conference on the Future of Europe](#) has four [European Citizens' Panels](#), which have each held two sessions so far. From these, 80 representatives – of which at least one third is aged between 16 and 25 years – participate in [Conference Plenaries](#), to present the outcomes of their respective Panel discussions. In light of the evolving COVID-19 situation across Europe and following the postponement of the European Citizens Panel in Dublin due to health regulations, the Executive Board also decided that the Conference Plenary meeting scheduled for 17-18 December will not take place until conditions allow. The sessions of the European Citizens' Panel of Friday morning and Sunday morning will be livestreamed [here](#). A technical briefing for journalists will be held on the premises of the EUI in Florence at 14:45 on Friday 10 December with the possibility of remote connection. Interested journalists can register [here](#). All Europeans can continue to share their ideas on how to shape our shared future on the [Platform](#). The latest statistics and data on contributions is also being published today in the [third interim report](#). (For more information: Daniel Ferrie – Tel.: +32 229 86500; Sinéad Meehan-van Druten – Tel.: +32 229 84094)

[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.

[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](#).

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