



Daily News 14 / 12 / 2021

Brussels, 14 December 2021

RÉUNION DU COLLÈGE : Points à l'ordre du jour

Le Collège des commissaires se réunit cet après-midi à Strasbourg. Au cours de la réunion, les membres du Collège discuteront d'un paquet de mesures liées à l'énergie et l'action pour le climat, y compris de propositions sur le marché du gaz, les émissions de méthane, les bâtiments, l'agriculture du carbone et la séquestration du carbone. Les commissaires aborderont également un nombre de propositions relatives à la mobilité efficace et verte, qui couvre le réseau transeuropéen de transport (TEN-T), les systèmes de transport intelligents, les services ferroviaires pour les voyageurs à longue distance et transfrontaliers, et la mobilité urbaine; ainsi qu'un projet de recommandation du Conseil sur les aspects sociaux de la transition verte et une proposition visant à améliorer la protection de l'environnement sur la base du droit pénal. En outre, le Collège adoptera une révision du Code frontières Schengen qui sera présentée lors d'une conférence de presse du vice-président Margaritis **Schinas** et de la commissaire Ylva **Johansson** à Strasbourg aujourd'hui à 15h30. À 16h30, aussi depuis Strasbourg, le vice-président exécutif Frans **Timmermans**, le commissaire Nicolas **Schmit** et la commissaire Adina **Vălean** présenteront le compte-rendu de la réunion du Collège et les propositions sur la mobilité et les aspects sociaux de la transition verte. Le commissaire Virginijus **Sinkevičius** détaillera la proposition sur la protection de l'environnement demain à 11h00, tandis que les propositions liées à l'énergie et l'action pour le climat seront présentées demain à 12h30 par le vice-président exécutif Frans **Timmermans** et la commissaire Kadri **Simson**. Suivez tous ces événements de presse en direct sur [EbS](#). (Pour plus d'informations : Eric Mamer – Tél.: +32 229 94073; Dana Spinant – Tél.: +32 229 90150)

NextGenerationEU: European Commission to issue €50 billion in long-term bonds by June 2022 to finance the recovery

Following the successful start of borrowing to finance the NextGenerationEU recovery in June 2021, and in line with its strategy for open and transparent communication to financial markets, the European Commission has today announced its issuance plans to cover the funding needs under NextGenerationEU for the first half of 2022. The plan foresees the issuance of €50 billion of long-term EU-Bonds between January and June 2022, to be complemented by short-term EU-Bills. On that basis, the Commission will continue to be able to cover all payments due under the Recovery and Resilience Facility and all other programmes under the NextGenerationEU recovery instrument over that period. The current funding plan is based on the latest forecasts for forthcoming NextGenerationEU payment needs. Given that the Recovery and Resilience Facility – which accounts for 90% of payments under NextGenerationEU – is a performance-based instrument and that payments in 2022 will be conditional on the completion of the milestones and targets in Member States' national Recovery and Resilience Plans, the precise funding needs and timings of payments may vary. Any changes will be communicated to the market in a timely and transparent way. Today also marks the Commission's adoption of the Annual Borrowing Decision for 2022. This decision includes the maximum amounts that the Commission is authorised to borrow by the end of the year. Commissioner in charge of Budget and Administration, Johannes **Hahn**, said: *"In 2022, the Commission will continue to raise funds to finance the recovery and build a better and more resilient future for all. With volumes of €50 billion in the first half of the year, we expect to retain a strong presence in the markets, helping Member States on their path to recovery as well as supporting capital market integration and the international role of the euro."* In 2022, the Commission intends to issue both conventional and NextGenerationEU green bonds, both via syndications and auctions. The Commission will announce its issuance plans for the second half of the year in June 2022. The press release is available [online](#) (For more information: Balazs Ujvari - Tel.: +32 229 54578; Claire Joawn - Tel.: +32 229 56859)

L'Europe dans le monde : L'UE lance un programme mondial de 1,5 milliard d'euros afin de

soutenir les organisations de la société civile

La Commission a adopté aujourd'hui le programme international de l'UE pour les organisations de la société civile (Global Europe Civil Society Organisations), doté de 1,5 milliard d'euros pour la période 2021-2027. Le financement soutiendra spécifiquement les organisations de la société civile en dehors de l'UE, en tant qu'acteurs indépendants de la gouvernance et du développement, et leur contribution à des processus démocratiques inclusifs et participatifs. Les organisations de la société civile sont essentielles à la réalisation des droits de l'homme, de l'État de droit, de la démocratie et de la stabilité. Elles contribuent à la conception et à la mise en œuvre des politiques et des programmes extérieurs de l'UE afin qu'ils répondent aux besoins des citoyens, réduisent les inégalités et respectent les engagements de l'Agenda 2030. Le Haut représentant/Vice-président Josep **Borrell** a déclaré : *"Les organisations de la société civile jouent un rôle essentiel pour protéger les droits de l'homme, dénoncer leurs violations et exiger des gouvernements qu'ils agissent pour protéger leurs citoyens. Leur travail, et souvent elles-mêmes, sont cependant menacés dans de nombreuses régions du monde. Nous ne sommes pas seulement conscients des défis auxquels elles sont confrontées, nous les écoutons et nous agissons. Ce nouveau programme est la preuve que nous soutiendrons et accompagnerons leur courageux travail au quotidien"*. La commissaire chargée des partenariats internationaux, Jutta **Urpilainen**, a déclaré : *"Le programme Global Europe Civil Society Organisations, doté d'un budget de 1,5 milliard d'euros, renforcera la voix et le rôle de la société civile, et mettra en évidence les préoccupations des communautés locales, notamment des jeunes, des femmes et des personnes vulnérables. Les organisations de la société civile sont des partenaires uniques par leur capacité à atteindre, responsabiliser, représenter et défendre les populations locales - elles sont les moteurs du changement, celles qui sont en première ligne, luttant pour l'égalité et la justice."* Le communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). (Plus d'informations : Nabila Massrali - Tél : +32 229 88093 ; Ana Pisonero Hernández- Tél : +32 229 54320 ; Xavier Cifre Quatresols - Tél : +32 229 73582 ; Gesine Knolle - Tél : +32 229 54323)

Commission launches public consultation on modernising rules against trafficking in human beings

Today, the Commission is launching a public consultation on the future of combatting trafficking in human beings, including possible ways to reinforce, develop and modernise the existing framework. Providing an opportunity for members of the public to voice their opinions, the results of this public consultation will inform the evaluation and possible revision of the [EU Anti-Trafficking Directive](#). The Directive has been the backbone of the EU's efforts in combatting human trafficking since 2011. However, recent progress reports show that trafficking in human beings has evolved, which could call for changes to the existing Directive. As announced in the [EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings](#), this review will aim to modernise these rules and will specifically explore the possibility of making the use of the services of exploited victims of trafficking a mandatory criminal offence. For more details, please see Commissioner Johansson's [blogpost](#). The public consultation is available [here](#) and is open until 22 March 2021. (For more information: Adalbert Jahnz - Tel.: +32 229 53156; Laura Bérard - Tel.: +32 229 55721; Ciara Bottomley - Tel.: +32 229 69971).

Farm to Fork Strategy and Europe's Beating Cancer Plan: Commission launches public consultation to revise Food Information to Consumers

Today, as part of its [Farm to Fork Strategy](#) and [Europe's Beating Cancer Plan](#), the Commission is launching a public consultation on the revision of the Food Information to Consumers (FIC) legislation. The aim is to overhaul the EU's legislation and to submit, by the end of 2022, a legislative proposal to the European Parliament and the Member States. The four areas concerned by the revision are Front of Pack nutrition labelling/Nutrient profiling, Origin labelling, Date marking and Alcoholic beverage labelling. Stella **Kyriakides**, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said: *"The role of consumers and the choices they make are crucial in catalysing the shift to healthier and more sustainable food products. The clearer the labelling is, the easier it is to empower consumers to make informed, healthy, and sustainable food choices, an objective at the core of our Farm to Fork Strategy and Europe's Beating Cancer Plan. Clearer labelling is also what will help us reduce food waste and strengthen the sustainability of the food chain. Consumers have been requesting for many years to have clear and complete information on the food they are buying, including when it comes to its origin. I call for a wide participation in this consultation to support us to present a proposal that is as ambitious as possible and shape a sustainable food system that works for producers and consumers. Our aim is to ensure that citizens always come first."* The [public consultation](#) which will run for 12 weeks, until 7 March 2022, is expected to gather the views from both the general public and professional and non-professional stakeholders. It will contribute to the evidence that will support the impact assessment for the revision of the FIC Regulation. Additional consultation

activities are already foreseen, including targeted surveys and interviews with stakeholders' organisations and Member States' authorities, to gather more detailed and technical information. (For more information: Stefan de Keersmaecker – Tel.: +32 229 62253; Anna Wartberger – Tel.: +32 229 82054)

Pêche : accord sur les possibilités de pêche pour 2022 dans l'Atlantique du Nord-Est, la Méditerranée et la mer Noire

Aujourd'hui, les ministres responsables de la pêche au sein du Conseil se sont mis d'accord sur les possibilités halieutiques pour l'année 2022 dans l'Atlantique Nord-Est, la Méditerranée et la mer Noire, sur proposition de la Commission. Le commissaire chargé de l'environnement, des océans et de la pêche, Virginijus **Sinkevičius**, a déclaré : « *Les décisions prises aujourd'hui pour l'Atlantique du Nord-Est garantissent que tous les stocks de poissons gérés exclusivement par l'UE restent à des niveaux durables. Je suis très satisfait que les États membres aient suivi la proposition de la Commission et de notre accord de 10 TAC conformes aux niveaux conseillés par les scientifiques. Nous avons également franchi une étape importante dans le respect des engagements politiques pris dans le cadre de la nouvelle stratégie 2030 de la Commission générale des pêches pour la Méditerranée (CGPM), qui vise à renverser le mauvais état des stocks en Méditerranée et en mer Noire. Ces choix nécessaires nous conduiront vers le rétablissement des stocks à des niveaux durables et assureront la viabilité sociale et économique à long terme de nos pêcheurs et femmes travaillant dans ces régions.* » En ce qui concerne les stocks de poissons gérés exclusivement par l'UE en Atlantique, le Kattegat et le Skagerrak, ainsi que pour les stocks partagés avec la Norvège de manière bilatérale et avec la Norvège et le Royaume-Uni de manière trilatérale, le Conseil a fixé 10 totaux admissibles des captures (TAC) conformément aux avis sur le rendement maximal durable (RMD), dont deux stocks qui se situent dans la fourchette inférieure du RMD pour la plie et la langoustine dans le Skagerrak et le Kattegat. Pour le cabillaud du Kattegat, le Conseil a approuvé un ensemble de mesures comprenant, entre autres, une limite à 97 tonnes pour les captures inévitables effectuées dans d'autres pêcheries. Dans le Golfe de Gascogne, le Conseil a accepté la réouverture de la pêche à la langoustine et une réduction de -36 % pour la sole. Dans les eaux ibériques, certains quotas ont été augmentés, soulignant l'efficacité des efforts de conservation. En ce qui concerne les stocks partagés entre l'UE, la Norvège et le Royaume-Uni, 15 des 18 TAC ont été fixés conformément au RMD. Les négociations concernant les stocks partagés bilatéralement avec le Royaume-Uni étant toujours en cours, le Conseil a adopté des TAC temporaires d'urgence pour ces stocks pour les trois premiers mois de 2022. Ce plan d'urgence garantit que la pêche pourra se poursuivre facilement l'an prochain, si un accord avec le Royaume-Uni n'est pas conclu avant la fin du mois de décembre. Pour la Méditerranée, le règlement poursuit la mise en œuvre du plan de gestion pluriannuel de l'UE pour les stocks démersaux en Méditerranée occidentale, adopté en juin 2019. Il utilise tous les outils disponibles dans le cadre de ce plan afin de permettre aux pêcheries de l'UE d'atteindre le RMD d'ici le 1er janvier 2025. Cette approche poursuit la réduction de l'effort de pêche au chalut de 6 %. Les mesures adoptées pour la Méditerranée garantiront la diminution de la mortalité par pêche, tout en minimisant l'impact socio-économique sur les flottes. Le règlement introduit également de nouvelles mesures pour la gestion des petits pélagiques et des stocks démersaux dans l'Adriatique, conformément au nouveau plan de gestion pluriannuel. Ces mesures permettront de poursuivre l'amélioration du stock. Pour la mer Noire, les quotas de turbot et de sprat restent au niveau de l'année 2021. Vous trouverez plus d'informations dans les actualités [ici](#) et [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Vivian Loonela - Tél.: +32 229 66712; Daniela Stoycheva – Tél.: +32 229 53664)

Health Technology Assessment: Commission welcomes the adoption of new rules to improve access to innovative technologies

Yesterday evening, the Regulation on Health Technology Assessment (HTA), a deliverable of the EU Pharmaceutical Strategy, was adopted. The new rules will allow vital and innovative health technologies – such as innovative medicines, certain medical devices, medical equipment and prevention and treatment methods – to be more widely available. The Regulation will also ensure the efficient use of resources, strengthen the quality of HTA across the EU, and save national HTA bodies and industry from duplicating their efforts, reassure business and ensure the long-term sustainability of EU HTA cooperation. Welcoming the adoption, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Stella **Kyriakides**, made the following statement: "I am very pleased that today, after years of hard work, new rules to ensure that patients have better access to innovative medicines and medical devices will soon be a reality in the EU. The Regulation on Health Technology Assessment is a key deliverable of the European Pharmaceutical Strategy and an important building block for a European Health Union and our work to deliver concrete benefits to citizens in the area of health." A [press release](#) with the full statement and [Q&A](#) are available online. (For more information: Stefan de Keersmaecker -

Tel.: +32 229 62253; Anna Wartberger – Tel.: +32 229 82054)

State aid: Commission approves €7.5 million Greek scheme to support companies in Mantoudi-Limni-St.Anna and Istiaia-Aidipsos in the context of the coronavirus pandemic

The European Commission has approved a €7.5 million Greek scheme to support companies active in the municipalities of Mantoudi-Limni-St.Anna and Istiaia-Aidipsos 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 direct grants. The purpose of the scheme is to provide liquidity support to companies active in the two municipalities affected by the coronavirus pandemic and the restrictions in place to limit the spread of the virus. In addition, the recovery for these companies has been jeopardized by destructive wildfires that broke out in August 2021. The measure will be open to private companies with less than 1,000 employees, active in all sectors and established in the two municipalities (in the region of Northern Evia). The aid amount per beneficiary will be fixed within 30% and 60% of its decline in turnover, from a minimum of €1,000 and up to a maximum of €200,000. The Commission found that the Greek scheme is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, the aid (i) will not exceed €290,000 per company active in the primary production of agriculture products, €345,000 per company active in the fishery and aquaculture sector, and €2.3 million per company active in 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 scheme 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.100951 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 €9 million Latvian rent compensation scheme to support companies affected by the coronavirus pandemic

The European Commission has found a €9 million Latvian rent compensation scheme to support companies affected by the coronavirus pandemic to be in line with the State aid [Temporary Framework](#). The scheme is a re-introduction of a measure already approved by the Commission in [July 2020 \(SA.57740\)](#) and subsequently amended in January 2021 ([SA.60412](#)). The original scheme as amended expired on 30 June 2021. The support, which will take the form of direct grants, is intended to reduce lessees' lease payments for publicly owned property. Additionally, lessees are released from the imposition of late interest and contractual penalties in the case of a late payment, except for the payment for services consumed. Latvia notified the re-introduction of the original scheme to cover the period from 11 October to 31 December 2021. The notified scheme has an estimated budget of €9 million. The Commission found that this Latvian aid measure is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, the aid (i) will not exceed €290,000 per company active in the primary production of agriculture products, €345,000 per company active in the fishery and aquaculture sector, and €2.3 million per company active in 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 scheme 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.100605 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 €6 million Italian aid measure to compensate Calabrian airports for the damage suffered due to the coronavirus pandemic

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, a €6 million Italian aid measure to compensate Calabrian airports for the damage suffered during the period between 1 March and 15 June 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic and the travel restrictions imposed by Italy and other

countries to limit the spread of the virus. As a result, the airports experienced a steep decline in traffic and profitability over this period. The aid will take the form of a direct grant. The Commission assessed the measure under [Article 107\(2\)\(b\)](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which enables the Commission to approve State aid measures granted by Member States to compensate specific companies or sectors for the damage directly caused by exceptional occurrences, such as the coronavirus outbreak. The Commission found that the Italian measure will compensate damage that is directly linked to the coronavirus outbreak. It also found that the measure is proportionate, as the compensation does not exceed what is necessary to make good the damage. The non-confidential version of the decision will be made available under the cases number SA.62539 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 up to €4 million Slovenian scheme to support micro-enterprises affected by the coronavirus pandemic

The European Commission has approved an up to €4 million Slovenian scheme to support self-employed, farmers and managers affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The measure was approved under the State aid [Temporary Framework](#). The measure will be open to self-employed, farmers and managers that have suffered a decline in turnover due to the restrictions in place to limit the spread of the virus, in particular compulsory quarantine measures and childcare obligations. Under the scheme, the aid will take the form of direct grants. Eligible beneficiaries will be entitled to receive €250 for each mandatory quarantine period. The aid amount per beneficiary will not exceed: (i) €250 for a 10-day period; (ii) €500 for a 20-day period; and (iii) €750 for a one-month period. The measure will cover the period from 1 July until 31 December 2021, with the possibility of extension until 30 June 2022. The Commission found that the Slovenian scheme is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, the aid (i) will not exceed €290,000 per company active in the primary production of agriculture products, €345,000 per company active in the fishery and aquaculture sector, and €2.3 million per company active in 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.100855 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 Latvian scheme to support companies affected by the coronavirus pandemic

The European Commission has found an amendment to an existing Latvian scheme to support companies affected by the coronavirus pandemic to be in line with the [Temporary Framework](#). The [original scheme](#), which goes under the name 'Grants to companies affected by the COVID-19 crisis to ensure the flow of working capital', was approved by the Commission in December 2020 ([SA.59592](#)). The purpose of the scheme is to support companies that suffered a decline in turnover due to the coronavirus outbreak and the restrictive measures put in place to limit the spread of the virus. Under the scheme, the support takes the form of direct grants. Latvia notified the following modifications to the existing scheme: (i) an overall budget increase by €285 million; (ii) an extension of the eligible period, to cover the months from 1 October 2021 to 31 January 2022; and (iii) a modification of the eligibility criteria, with the exclusion of certain sectors for the extended eligible period. The Commission found that the Latvian scheme, as amended, continues to be in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, the aid (i) will not exceed €290,000 per company active in the primary production of agriculture products, €345,000 per company active in the fishery and aquaculture sector, and €2.3 million per company active in other sectors; and (ii) will be granted no later than 30 June 2022. The Commission therefore concluded that the Latvian scheme, as modified, remains necessary, appropriate and proportionate to remedy a serious disturbance in the economy of a Member State pursuant to Article 107(3)(b) TFEU and the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. On this basis, the Commission approved the amended scheme 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.100596 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 AKKA by Adecco

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control of AKKA Technologies SE ('AKKA') of Belgium by Adecco Group AG ('Adecco') of Switzerland. AKKA provides engineering, research, and development consulting services mainly in the European Economic Area and North America. Adecco is active in the provision of human capital solutions including flexible placement, permanent placement, career transition, Human Resources ('HR') outsourcing, consulting, training, and other HR services on a global basis. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given the companies' moderate combined market positions. 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.10465](#). (For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Industrial alliances: Commissioner Breton chairs first meeting of European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud

This afternoon, the 39 confirmed first members of the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud will convene for the first time at a kick-off event hosted by the Commission. This meeting will formally launch the start of the operational work of the Alliance. Commissioner for Internal Market Thierry **Breton** said ahead of the meeting: *"Data will transform the way we produce, consume and live. And Europe has all it takes to lead the 'big data' economy. With the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud, companies will define an ambitious investment roadmap to develop and deploy next generation computing technologies. With energy-efficient, highly secure and interoperable solutions, we will enable the uptake of new digital technologies, provide businesses and public administrations with a trusted framework to process data, and strengthen the position of EU industry."* The main task of the Alliance will be to bring together a wide range of industrial players that are prepared to work together to strengthen the EU's position on the next generation of cloud and edge technologies. The Alliance will serve the specific needs of EU citizens, businesses, and the public sector to securely process highly sensitive data. It will define plans to develop the technologies needed for Europe's digital sovereignty. It will also provide a strategic platform to foster the competitiveness of the EU industry on cloud and edge technologies. The Commission launched in July 2021 a call for Applications to join the Alliance. All interested and eligible organisations are still invited to apply [here](#). The Alliance stems from the [European Data Strategy](#) and the Strategy, and it was supported by all 27 EU Member States in the Declaration on European Cloud from October 2020. You will find more information after the meeting [here](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Charles Manoury – Tel.: +32 229 13391)

Kick-off of the 2021 EUSALP Macroregional Strategy Annual Forum

Today, the 5th Forum of the [EU Strategy for the Alpine Region \(EUSALP\)](#) kicks off in Nice under the French Presidency of the EUSALP. During the next two days, participants will discuss how to make the Alpine region more sustainable and resilient. Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa **Ferreira**, said: *"Over the past two years the French Presidency has made an important contribution to a more sustainable and stronger Alpine region. However, some challenges remain. The region needs to become more resilient to the hazards of climate change and continue promoting its innovation potential. I am happy that this year's EUSALP Forum will discuss how to tackle these challenges in a spirit of cooperation between regions and countries sharing the Alpine area"*. The Forum will also review the achievements of the French EUSALP Presidency and discuss the upcoming priorities for the macroregion under the Italian Presidency in 2022. Key participants include several Presidents of Regions and mayors of cities from the Alpine area as well as representatives from the Commission. Moreover, young people from the Alpine region will also have the opportunity to pitch

their project ideas in the '[Pitch Your Project competition](#)'. EUSALP was formally created in July 2015 to increase cooperation among decision-makers of the Alpine area where 80 million people live, from over seven countries and 48 regions: five EU Member States (Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia) and two non-EU countries (Liechtenstein and Switzerland). It is the largest economic and productive macroregion in Europe with a rich biodiversity and **cultural heritage**. More details in the [Annual Forum 2021 programme](#). (For more information: Vivian Loonela - Tel.: +32 229 66712; Daniela Stoycheva - Tel.: +32 229 53664)

[Tentative agendas](#) for forthcoming Commission meetings

Note that these items can be subject to changes.

[Upcoming events](#) of the European Commission

[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](#).

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