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RÉUNION DU COLLÈGE : Pacte vert : construire un avenir résilient face au changement climatique — Une nouvelle stratégie de l'UE relative à l'adaptation au changement climatique

La Commission européenne a adopté aujourd'hui une nouvelle stratégie de l'UE relative à l'adaptation au changement climatique, qui définit la voie à suivre pour se préparer aux conséquences inévitables du changement climatique. Si l'UE fait tout ce qui est en son pouvoir pour atténuer le changement climatique, tant au niveau national qu'international, nous devons également nous préparer à faire face à ses inévitables conséquences. Qu'il s'agisse de canicules meurtrières ou de sécheresses dévastatrices, de forêts décimées ou de côtes érodées par l'élévation du niveau de la mer, le changement climatique a déjà de lourdes conséquences en Europe et dans le monde. S'appuyant sur la stratégie d'adaptation au changement climatique de 2013, l'objectif des propositions présentées aujourd'hui est de se concentrer davantage sur l'élaboration de solutions plutôt que sur la compréhension du problème, et de passer de la planification à la mise en œuvre. Le vice-président exécutif chargé du pacte vert pour l'Europe, Frans **Timmermans**, a déclaré à ce propos: « *La pandémie de la COVID-19 nous a brutalement rappelé qu'une préparation insuffisante peut avoir des conséquences désastreuses. Il n'existe pas de vaccin contre la crise climatique, mais nous pouvons toujours la combattre et nous préparer pour faire face à ses effets inéluctables. Les effets du changement climatique se font déjà sentir tant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur de l'Union européenne. La nouvelle stratégie d'adaptation au changement climatique nous permet d'accélérer et d'approfondir le travail préparatoire. Si nous sommes prêts aujourd'hui, nous pouvons encore construire un avenir résilient au changement climatique.* » Vous pouvez suivre la conférence de presse du vice-président exécutif en direct sur EbS. Le communiqué de presse, nos questions et réponses et une vidéo sont disponibles en ligne. *(Pour plus d'informations: Tim McPhie – Tél: +32 229 58602; Lynn Rietdorf – Tél: +32 229 74959)*

COLLEGE MEETING: Commission proposes new Regulation to ensure EU travellers continue to benefit from free roaming

To ensure that citizens can continue to enjoy roaming without additional charges when travelling in the EU, the Commission proposed today a new Roaming Regulation. At a time when non-essential travel is discouraged, this is an important action in preparing a brighter future. The new regulation will prolong the current rules that are due to expire in 2022, for another 10 years. It will also ensure better roaming services for travellers. For example, consumers will be entitled to have the same quality and speed of their mobile network connection abroad as at home, where equivalent networks are available. The new rules will also secure efficient access to emergency services, including improving awareness about alternative means for people with disabilities, as well as increase consumer awareness on possible fees from using value-added services while roaming.
Margrethe **Vestager**, Executive Vice-President for a Europe Fit for the Digital Age, said: "*Wherever we are in Europe, we can check in with our loved ones, talk business and share stories while on the road without worrying about costly bills. The end of roaming charges is a prime example of how the EU keeps millions of citizens connected and improves their lives. The new rules will keep roaming at no extra charges and make it even better.*" Thierry **Breton**, Commissioner for the Internal Market, said: "*Millions of Europeans have been enjoying the benefits of roaming throughout the EU at no extra charges. It is an established and successful cornerstone of the single market. In Europe's Digital Decade everyone must be able to have excellent connectivity everywhere they are in Europe, just like at home. Today we confirm the commitment towards our citizens. In parallel we work to support investment in adequate infrastructure.*" More information is available in this press release and in these Questions & Answers. *(For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Marietta Grammenou – Tel.: +32 229 83583)*

Commission publishes enhanced surveillance report for Greece

The Commission has adopted the ninth enhanced surveillance report for Greece. The report is prepared in the context of the enhanced surveillance framework which serves to ensure continued support for the delivery of Greece's reform commitments following the successful completion of the stability support programme in 2018. It finds that Greece has progressed well with the implementation of a number of reform commitments, while noting that, overall, reform momentum has slowed down against the background of challenging circumstances caused by the coronavirus pandemic. A number of detailed roadmaps in specific key reform areas have been agreed with Greece to foster decisive reform progress ahead of the tenth report in May, which will serve as a basis for the Eurogroup to decide on the release of the next set of policy-contingent debt measures. The Commission is in continuous and constructive dialogue with the Greek authorities on the preparation of their recovery and resilience plan, which sets out reforms and public investment projects that will be supported by the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). Enhanced surveillance for Greece will continue in parallel with the RRF, drawing on the positive experience with the interplay between enhanced surveillance and the European Semester so far. The full report is available here. *(For more information: Marta Wieczorek – Tel.: +32 229 58197; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)*

President von der Leyen speaks in support of the Global Citizen campaign 'A Recovery Plan for the World'

Yesterday, President Ursula **von der Leyen** participated in the launch event of the Global Citizen campaign 'A Recovery Plan for the World'. During her speech, the President highlighted the work that has been done over the last year together with international partners, while at the same time stressing that there is still a long road ahead: "*Together, we achieved a lot. We created the ACT-Accelerator, and COVAX – the global facility to deliver affordable and equitable vaccines to the world. But let us be frank, much more is needed. More funding is needed. That is why as Team Europe we increased our contribution to COVAX last week bringing it to around €2.2 billion. And vaccine doses are needed now.*" The President also expressed support for President Macron's proposal "*to donate vaccine doses that are necessary to vaccinate healthcare workers in Africa. Vaccines must reach all corners of the planet, as soon as possible.*" And finally, President **von der Leyen** underlined the importance of the Global Health Summit that she will co-host in May with the Prime Minister of Italy, Mario Draghi: "*It will be a moment to reflect on the lessons learned, but also to agree on a common preparedness blueprint, so that the world is never again caught off-guard. All must weigh in: governments and international organisations, scientists, businesses and civil society, philanthropic foundations and private citizens. Everyone needs to contribute.*" The full speech of President **von der Leyen** is available here and the video can be watched again here. *(For more information: Eric Mamer – Tel.: +32 229 94073; Dana Spinant – Tel.: +32 229 90150)*

State aid: Commission approves €115 million Czech rent compensation scheme to support businesses affected by the coronavirus outbreak

The European Commission approved an approximately €115 million (CZK 3 billion) Czech scheme to support retail businesses and service companies which are using rented premises and whose activities were limited or not allowed to be carried out in the context of the coronavirus outbreak. The scheme was approved under the State aid Temporary Framework. The public support, which will take the form of direct grants, will cover 50% of the original rent due for the months of October, November and December 2020. The purpose of the scheme is to mitigate the sudden liquidity shortages that companies are facing due to the measures introduced by the Czech government to limit the spread of the coronavirus. The Commission found that the Czech scheme is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, (i) the support will not exceed €1.8 million per company; and (ii) the scheme will run until 31 December 2021. The Commission concluded that the scheme 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 of 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.61361 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 €61.4 million Italian scheme to support private employers

in context of coronavirus outbreak

The European Commission has approved a €61.4 million Italian scheme to support private employers in the context of the coronavirus outbreak. The measure was approved under the State aid Temporary Framework. The objective of the measure is to reduce the labour costs borne by private employers, which are experiencing socio-economic disturbances because of the coronavirus outbreak, with a view to preserve employment levels. The public support will take the form of an exemption from the payment of employers' compulsory social security contributions (except for contributions to insurance for accidents at work), for a period of four weeks, until 31 January 2021. The scheme will be open to employers registered in Italy and active in all sectors, with the exclusion of the financial and agriculture sectors. The beneficiaries are companies that had benefitted from the Italian wage subsidy general measure ('cassa integrazione ordinaria e in deroga') in June 2020, but have not applied for more recent wage subsidy measures. This scheme complements a scheme approved by the Commission on 10 November 2020 (SA.59255), which provided for a similar measure for a maximum period of four months, until 31 December 2020. The Commission found that the Italian measure is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework. In particular, (i) the support will not exceed €270 000 per company active in the fishery and aquaculture sector, and €1.8 million per company active in all other sectors; and (ii) 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.61939 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 €26 million Irish aid scheme to compensate airport operators in context of coronavirus outbreak

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, a €26 million Irish aid scheme to compensate airport operators for the losses caused by the coronavirus outbreak and the travel restrictions imposed by Ireland to limit the spread of the coronavirus. The aid consists of three measures: (i) a damage compensation measure; (ii) an aid measure to support the airport operators up to a maximum of €1.8 million per beneficiary; and (iii) an aid measure to support the uncovered fixed costs of these companies. The aid will take the form of direct grants. In case of support for the uncovered fixed costs, aid can also be granted in the form of guarantees and loans. The damage compensation measure will be open to operators of Irish airports that handled more than 1 million passengers in 2019. Under this measure, these operators can be compensated for the net losses suffered during the period between 1 April and 30 June 2020 as a result of the restrictive measures implemented by the Irish authorities in order to contain the spread of coronavirus. The Commission assessed the first 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 outbreak. It also found that the measure is proportionate, as the compensation does not exceed what is necessary to make good the damage. With regard to the other two measures, the Commission found that they are in line with the conditions set out in the State aid Temporary Framework. In particular, the aid (i) will be granted no later than 31 December 2021 and (ii) will not exceed €1.8 million per beneficiary under the second measure and will not exceed €10 million per beneficiary under the third measure. The Commission concluded that both measures are 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 three 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.59709 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 Confirmit, Dapresy and FocusVision by EQT Fund Management and Verdane Fund Manager Future AB

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

AS of Norway, Dapresy AB of Sweden and FocusVision Worldwide, Inc. ('FocusVision') of the U.S. by EQT Fund Management S.à r.l. ('EFMS') of Luxembourg and Verdane Fund Manager Future AB ('VFMF') of Sweden. Confirmit and Dapresy are currently controlled by VFMF. Confirmit is a global vendor for multi-channel customer experience, employee engagement, and market research solutions, and a developer of software tools for market research agencies and corporate clients. Dapresy is a provider of enterprise application software, more specifically survey software, with an expertise in market research. FocusVision is currently controlled by EFMS. It is a provider of technology solutions to the market research industry. EFMS is an investment fund manager solely owned by EQT AB. EFMS controls EQT Mid Market US, that seeks to make investments focusing on middle market companies in North America. VFMF, ultimately owned by Verdane Advisors Holding AS, is an investment fund manager of certain Verdane funds which invest in companies active in the consumer internet, software, energy and advanced industrial sectors, with a focus on the Nordic countries. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given that, the companies' combined market shares in the European Economic Area remain limited. The operation was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information will be available on the Commission's competition website, in the public case register under the case number M.10140. *(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel. +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control of Societa Gasdotti Italia by the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board and SL GIO II

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control of Societa Gasdotti Italia S.p.A. ('SGI') of Italy by Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board ('OTPP') of Canada and SL GIO II of Luxembourg. SGI is an independent transmission system operator (TSO) which owns part of the Italian high pressure gas network. It is currently jointly controlled by MEIF 4, an entity controlled by the Macquarie Group, and SL GIO II. OTPP is active in the administration of pension benefits and the investment of pension plan assets of teachers in the Canadian province of Ontario. SL GIO II is a fund owned by Swiss Life, a provider of life insurances, pensions, health insurance and asset management. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, because it would not result in any overlaps between the activities of the companies. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's competition website, in the public case register under the case number M.10155. *(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel. +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of TricorBraun by Ares and OTPP

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over TCB Holdings I Corp ('TricorBraun') by Ares Management Corporation ('Ares') both of the US and Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board ('OTPP') of Canada. TricorBraun designs and distributes packaging, including plastic containers, sprayers, dispensers and closures, glass containers and flexible packaging in the US and internationally. Ares provides alternative asset management services in North America, Europe and Asia. OTPP administers pension benefits and provides investments in pension plan assets on behalf of active and retired teachers in the Province of Ontario. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns because of its limited impact on the market and the limited overlap between the companies' activities. 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.10150. *(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel. +32 229 87024; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of CSM Ingredients by Investindustrial Group

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of CSM Ingredients, the ingredients business outside of North America of CSM Bakery Solutions Limited of the UK, a company ultimately controlled by Rhône Capital L.L.C. of the U.S., by Global Food Solutions S.àr.l., a company ultimately controlled by Investindustrial S.A. ('Investindustrial'), both of Luxembourg. CSM Ingredients manufactures and distributes semi-finished bakery, dairy and ice-cream ingredients, mainly to the artisanal traditional trade (pastry and bakery shops) and industrial channels. Investindustrial invests in medium-sized companies based in Europe, focusing on the investment areas of consumer and leisure, healthcare and services, and industrial manufacturing. Investindustrial's subsidiaries include Natra S.A. and Italcanditi S.p.A. The Commission concluded

that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the moderate market position of the combined entity in the countries in which CSM Ingredients is active. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information will be available on the Commission's competition website, in the public case register under the case number M.10010.
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Eurostat: communiqués de presse

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