



## Daily News 04 / 01 / 2022

Brussels, 4 January 2022

### **UE-Moldavie: La Commission propose une assistance macrofinancière de 150 millions d'euros**

À la demande de la République de Moldavie, la Commission européenne a adopté aujourd'hui une proposition relative à une nouvelle opération d'assistance macrofinancière (AMF) d'un montant maximal de 150 millions d'euros, dont 30 millions d'euros sous forme de subventions et 120 millions d'euros sous forme de prêts à moyen terme à des conditions de financement favorables. Cette nouvelle assistance s'inscrirait dans la continuité des deux précédentes opérations d'AMF, dans le cadre desquelles l'UE a versé un montant total de 160 millions d'euros à la Moldavie depuis 2017. L'assistance macrofinancière de l'UE proposée aujourd'hui, qui doit encore être adoptée par le Parlement européen et le Conseil avant de pouvoir entrer en vigueur et que des versements puissent être effectués, accompagnerait le nouveau programme du FMI pour le pays, approuvé le 20 décembre 2021. Plus précisément, elle aiderait la Moldavie à couvrir une partie de ses besoins de financement externe au cours des deux années à venir. Elle permettrait ainsi au pays de réduire ses problèmes de balance des paiements et ses problèmes budgétaires à court terme. Un [communiqué de presse](#) est disponible en ligne. (Pour plus d'informations: Daniel Ferrie – Tél.: +32 229 86500; Andrea Masini – Tél.: +32 229 91519)

### **Agriculture: notable growth in EU agri-food trade continues**

The latest EU agri-food trade figures [published today](#) show that the total value of EU agri-food trade (exports plus imports) for January-September 2021 amounts to €239.5 billion, a 6.1% increase compared to the corresponding period last year. Exports were 8% higher at €145.2 billion, with imports increasing by 3.5% to reach €94.2 billion. This reflects an overall agri-food trade surplus of €51 billion for the first nine months of the year, an increase of 17% compared to the same period in 2020. The largest increase in exports were those to the United States, with an increase of 15%. This was primarily driven by wine, spirits and liqueurs, and chocolate and confectionary. Exports to South Korea also surged, due to strong performances from wine, pig meat, wheat and meslin, as well as exports to Switzerland. For the first time in 2021, agri-food exports to the United Kingdom have surpassed their value for the corresponding period in 2020 and grew by €166 million. In contrast, significant decreases were reported in the value of exports to Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong and Kuwait. When it comes to agri-food imports, the largest increase was seen in products from Brazil, which grew by €1.4 billion or 16% compared to the same period in 2020. Imports from Indonesia, Argentina, Australia and India also increased. Sizeable decreases were reported in imports from several countries, the most notable of which was a €2.9 billion or 27% fall in the value of those from the United Kingdom, followed by the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Moldova. In terms of product categories, the January-September period saw large growth in the export values of wine, spirits and liqueurs. Other significant export value increases were seen in rapeseed and sunflower oils, and chocolate and confectionary. There were, however, substantial falls in exports of infant food and wheat. More information on the latest EU agri-food trade figures is available [here](#) and on EU agri-food trade in general [here](#). (For more information: Balazs Ujvari – Tel : +32 229 54578; Sophie Dirven – Tel.: +32 229 67228)

### **Chemicals: new EU rules for safer ink tattoos across the EU**

As of today, a restriction on hazardous chemicals contained in mixtures for tattoo inks and permanent make-up becomes applicable in the EU. The restriction covers carcinogenic, mutagenic and reprotoxic substances, chemicals prohibited in cosmetics, skin sensitisers, skin and eye irritants, metal impurities, aromatic amines and some pigments. While some Member States already had national legislation in place to restrict hazardous chemicals in tattoo inks, the new rules at EU level were adopted to equally protect people across the EU, irrespective of the country where they get tattooed and whether the ink is manufactured in the EU or not. For the substances which are

prohibited as of today, there are safe alternatives on the market. Statistics show that 12% of Europeans are estimated to be tattooed, including teenagers. The Commission adopted the restriction in December 2020 following studies showing evidence of allergies and skin problems due to tattoos, responding to a request from Member States and based on scientific and socio-economic impact assessments done by European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). While the restriction becomes effective today, the ban on Pigment Blue 15 and Pigment Green 7 will only become applicable as of 4 January 2023. An additional one-year derogation was granted to allow businesses more time to find safe alternatives for these two pigments. (*For more information: Sonya Gospodinova – Tel.: +32 229 66953; Federica Miccoli – Tel.: +32 229 58300*)

## **State aid: Commission approves €125,000 Lithuanian tax deferral scheme to support businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic**

The European Commission has approved a €125,000 Lithuanian tax deferral scheme to support businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The scheme was approved under the State aid [Temporary Framework](#). Under the scheme, the aid will take the form of interest-free deferrals or staggering of payment of excise duties and VAT on imported goods. The public support will be combined with the suspension of tax debt recovery. The aid will be granted under a simplified procedure to businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic and the restrictive measures put in place to limit the spread of the virus. The aim of the scheme is to enhance the liquidity of the beneficiaries and to help them continue their activities during and after the pandemic. The Commission found that the Lithuanian scheme is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Framework as amended on 18 November 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.100014 in the [State aid register](#) on the Commission's [competition](#) website once any confidentiality issues have been resolved. (*For more information: Daniel Ferrie – Tel.: +32 229 86500; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344*)

## **Concentrations: La Commission autorise l'acquisition du contrôle conjoint de certaines activités de Suez par Meridiam et Global Infrastructure Management**

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition du contrôle conjoint de certaines activités de Suez S.A. (le « Nouveau Suez ») par Meridiam SAS, toutes deux basées en France, et Global Infrastructure Management LLC, basée aux États-Unis. Le Nouveau Suez gère certaines activités de Suez dans les secteurs de l'eau municipale, des déchets non dangereux et du nettoyage urbain en Afrique, Asie, Australie France, Italie, Pologne et République Tchèque. Meridiam et Global Infrastructure Management sont tous deux des fonds d'investissements qui investissent dans les infrastructures dans les secteurs de l'énergie et de l'environnement. La Commission a conclu que l'acquisition envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, compte tenu de son impact très limité sur la structure du marché. La transaction 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.10396](#). (*Pour plus d'informations: Daniel Ferrie – Tél.: +32 229 86500; Giulia Astuti – Tél.: +32 229 55344*)

## **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Interplex by Blackstone**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control of Interplex Holdings Pte. Ltd. ('Interplex') of Singapore by Blackstone Inc. of the US. Interplex is globally active in the design and manufacture of customised interconnect, high-precision and mechanical solutions. Blackstone is a global asset management company. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns as Blackstone and Interplex are not active on the same or closely related markets. 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.10519](#). (*For more information: Daniel Ferrie – Tel.: +32 229 86500; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344*)

[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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