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« L'instrument de la passion actuelle du monde moral, c'est la presse, c'est l'outil de la civilisation » Lamartine, 21 août 1835

THE EUROPEAN OFFICIAL FILES IN PROGRESS

ISEISC COVID-19 (The Economic and Industrial Crisis Exit Strategy COVID-19)

VSVD-COVID-19 (Preparedness for COVID-19: Vaccination Strategies and Vaccine Deployment)

SCG (Sustainable Corporate Governance) – Legislative initiative for Sustainable Corporate Governance

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EDITORIAL



Let's make change happen

*Ursula Von der LEYEN,
President of the European
Commission*

Throughout history, pandemics have changed the destiny of people. They make us see the world in a different light and remind us the value of many of the simplest things in life – from our daily routines to giving our families a hug to appreciating the nature all around us. They also make us question our way of doing things and ask whether there is a better way of doing things. And they offer us a chance to redesign our future.

This pandemic will be no different. It has of course been a painful and anxious period for millions – and we must continue to stay vigilant as numbers rise again in some parts of Europe. But the last six months have also shown us the value of things, such as being in a Union where you can rely on 27 nations to pull each other up. And it presents us with an opportunity to emerge stronger together.

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The historic agreement on NextGenerationEU – our 750bn euro plan for recovery and for the future – shows it can be done. Never before has Europe come together in this way. So now is the time to take that spirit and use it to move forward on other issues together.

Take migration. This has been an issue which has divided Europe for too long and that I am convinced can and must be managed together. But you only have to look at the news to see the urgency to find a sustainable solution for everyone. As I announced in my State of the Union speech earlier this week, the European Commission will come forward in the next days with a New European Pact on Migration. It will take a human and humane approach, and ensure that it is not only a European pact by name – but a common European solution by design. It will be based on solidarity, both between Europeans and with refugees and on collective responsibility of national governments. Migration will stay with us. We have to manage it well, with its challenges and opportunities.

This is the moment to get Europe back on its feet and design that better way of living. During the confinement, we longed for cleaner air and greener cities. Digital technologies allowed students to keep learning and businesses to keep running, but too many Europeans – in rural areas or disadvantaged families – have been left behind. The post-pandemic world must be better than this and we now have everything it takes to make it happen. With NextGenerationEU we have the financial resources we need to take urgent and strategic action, from improving internet speeds to supporting our industry. We have the opportunity to do more than simply repairing our economy: we can shape a better way of living for the world of tomorrow. Nowhere is that more important than in our relationship with our planet. With the European Green Deal we have set the goal to become climate neutral by 2050. To make sure we can get there, we will now propose to increase our 2030 target for emissions reduction to at least 55% – up from 40% as it currently is. This is a big ambitious jump, but it is both realistic and beneficial for our economy and industry. In the last weeks, I have received hundreds of letters from citizens to CEOs to NGOs, all asking for Europe to lead the way. And this is what we are ready to do. This is not just about cutting emissions – it is about building a better world to live in, from buildings to cleaner transport.

Changing our planet for the better also means changing our mentality for the better. The European Green Deal is not only an environmental and economic project: it needs to be a new cultural project for Europe. Culture is born when great minds come together. This is why I want the EU to set up a new European Bauhaus, inspired by the art school set up a century ago that mixed form and



function. It will be a co-creation space for architects and artists, engineers and designers to come together to match style with sustainability. This is only a small part of the work ahead. We will need to show determination whether on building a stronger European Health Union or ensuring that work pays for everyone. But I am convinced Europe has everything it needs to make it happen. We have the vision, the plan, the investment. And we also have a new-found unity. So let's get to work and ensure that this pandemic changes our destiny for the better. ★

About the EU Green Week 2020

This European week takes place as we are paving the way to Kunming. We need and we want a successful outcome of the global biodiversity negotiations. Biodiversity is at the heart of the future of our planet. The most active ones are mobilising and rallying the other generations.

Active are mayors and local politicians, because biodiversity concerns every village and every city. The most active ones are already hiring biodiversity officers. They want to make sure that we have green urban spaces, from parks and gardens to green roofs and urban farms. This provides benefits for people and a refuge for nature. Active are also Farmers and producers, because biodiversity affects every step, from

our fields to our food. And the most advanced ones have already embraced it. They deploy precision agriculture, organic farming, or low-intensive permanent grasslands. By doing so, they help us bring nature back and preserve biodiversity. Active are also Businesspeople and leaders, because biodiversity has a huge potential in terms of jobs and opportunities for our economy and the society as a whole. The most active ones have already invested time, energy and money in this promising field. They know, that restoration can lead to a significant creation of employment in sectors, such as construction and landscaping work. And natural capital investment, including restoration of carbon-rich habitats and climate-friendly agriculture, is

among the five most important fiscal recovery policies. They have understood that there is no choice between nature on the one hand and the economy on the other. What is good for nature is good for the economy. The need to act has never been clearer. This is what is driving me as President of the European Commission. That is why we presented the European Green Deal, last December, after just 11 days in office.

The European Green Deal is our vision and roadmap for making Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. In March, we proposed the first ever climate law. Then came the pandemic. Now, should we stop our course because of the pandemic? Of course not. To the

contrary. This is why we also presented our « EU biodiversity strategy for 2030» in May. It will scale up our work on this. When we give a chance to nature, see what positive return we get. Today, we are calling on all to join our action to halt biodiversity loss. You are numerous, coming from all parts of Europe, public and private sectors, small villages and big cities, start-ups, SMEs and multinationals. We are teaming up. We are providing leadership to help us agree on a new Global Biodiversity Framework in Kunming next year. Global rules that are clear, measurable that allow us, to hold each other accountable.

Let us act, each of us, with no delay. ★

State of the Energy Union report

Commissioner Kadri SIMSON

The 2020 report is the first one since we launched our new sustainability and growth strategy, the European Green Deal. A well-functioning Energy Union is the necessary basis to deliver our climate neutrality commitment by 2050. Together with this report I have presented three key initiatives: the renovation wave, the methane strategy and Commission recommendations on energy poverty.

The initiatives of the energy package are important stepping stones to reach our 2030 Climate Target Plan. They will make sure that we seize the significant decarbonisation potential of buildings and address energy poverty in order to leave nobody behind in the clean energy transition.

National Energy and Climate Plans will also remain an important tool in achieving the minimum 55% reduction in greenhouse gases. Together with the State of the Energy Union, we also published a detailed assessment of the plans of each Member State. The final NECPs are complete, robust and ambitious. Our analysis shows that each Member State has still some homework to do, especially

on energy efficiency. But overall, we are heading in the right direction. The plans demonstrate that Europe can meet ambitious climate targets.

The Commission will ensure clear and inclusive follow-up of those plans, including on the progress of implementation and on the need to revise the level of ambition of the NECPs to reflect a higher carbon emission reduction target for 2030. The State of the Energy Union report provides an overview of progress of the Energy Union across all its dimensions. I would like to focus on 3 areas:

First, we know that delivering the higher climate ambition in the energy sector is a genuine investment challenge. The State of the Energy Union report maps out the funding opportunities offered by the recovery and resilience facility and other EU instruments. In particular, the Annual Sustainable Growth Survey identified three energy-related flagships: clean energy technologies, renovation and sustainable transport – where Member States can focus their national renovation plans. This shows that the NextGenerationEU offers an

unprecedented opportunity to mobilise resources to promote the green and digital transformation of our economies and we should use it. The report, however, shows that national budgets devote a declining share to clean energy research and innovation. When we measure the volumes of research funding as a share of GDP, Europe has one of the lowest rates among major global economies. Private sector investment in Energy Union R&D priorities is also slowing down. I am very concerned by this trend.

Second, the report shows that the volume of energy subsidies, in particular for fossil fuels is still considerable. Fossil fuel subsidies amounted to 50 billion euros in the EU in 2018, one third of all our energy subsidies. The European Green Deal is clear: fossil fuel subsidies have to end. They remain a major impediment to a cost-efficient energy and climate transition, but also to a functioning internal market. Therefore, the Commission will reinforce its cooperation with Member States to phase out fossil fuel subsidies and reduce fossil fuel consumption. Energy subsidies should be targeted to boost the uptake of new energy technologies, to

promote sustainable patterns of energy consumption, and to lower energy bills.

Third, this year's State of the Energy Union included for the first time a report on the competitiveness of the clean energy industry in Europe. The findings are quite significant. The growth of the clean energy technologies sector has significantly outpaced that of the conventional energy sector. Clean energy technologies have created more jobs and added more to gross domestic product and labour productivity. This has been especially obvious in energy efficiency, where the number of jobs went up 17.4% between 2000 and 2017. The competitiveness report also shows that the EU industry holds a strong global position in some of the key technologies – namely offshore, solar energy, storage, batteries and hydrogen – technologies which have major scaling up potential over the coming years.

In the coming months, we will take these elements forward and we will focus our discussion with all relevant stakeholders on a «value chain-based» approach, to support the industries and innovators in the EU to maintain or achieve global success. ★



Meps call on the Commission to revised industrial strategy

Industry, Research and Energy MEPs advocated a shift in the EU approach to industrial policy, to help businesses cope with the crisis and face the digital and environmental transitions.

MEPs call on the Commission to come up with a revised industrial strategy, in a report adopted on Friday in the Industry, Research and Energy committee. The original strategy, from March 2020, was published in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic and before the Next Generation EU plan was set up. The new strategy should have two distinct phases, one focusing on recovery and the other on reconstruction and resilience, say MEPs. First, the industrial strategy should contribute to recovery from the current economic crisis, and first aim to consolidate jobs, reactivate production and adapt it to a post-COVID «new normal». The second phase should be aimed at reconstruction and transformation of the European industry.

Twin transitions: environmental and digital

The new strategy should in particular help the EU achieve climate-neutrality, deliver on the European Green Deal, manage the twin green and digital transitions and create high-quality jobs, say MEPs. In particular, it should contain a strong social pillar and address the social consequences of structural change. The European Commission should put in place a policy facilitate economic and social revitalization of territories at risk, say MEPs, who highlight that the twin transition is an opportunity for fossil-dominated areas to move towards the frontline of innovation.

Research and innovation

MEPs also stress that industrial transformation requires a significant boost in



research and development efforts, and recall Parliament's position to increase the budget for Horizon Europe up to 120 billion euro and to ensure the program's consistency with the Union's climate neutrality targets.

MEPs highlight the importance of a research-based pharmaceutical industry, and reiterate the need to put in place a medicine shortage risk mitigation plan to manage any vulnerabilities and risks for the supply chain for critical medicines.

Small and Medium Businesses (SMEs)

MEPs call for particular attention to be given to the situation of SMEs, and consi-

der that measures set up by Members States to help them cope with the current cash crunch are useful, but might in some cases increase their debt levels. They call on the Commission to support EU and national programmes incentivising capital increase and to facilitate recovery. «I am very satisfied with the result of the vote on the Industrial Strategy's dossier in the ITRE Committee, of which I am responsible for the European Parliament» said lead MEP Carlo Calenda (S&D, IT). «It is a dossier that touches upon all aspects of the digital and green transition, competition and management of the social effects of transformation» he said. «The report contains strategic and, above all, pragmatic indications on the tools to be used in order

to accompany organisations and workers in the coming years and protect them from the economic consequences of COVID-19».

«It was a team effort, carried out together with all the political groups and it lasted more than a year. We now await the plenary vote, scheduled for November. It is essential that the EP gives a strong signal that directs the work of the European Commission» he added.

Next steps

The non-binding report was adopted with 52 votes to 7, with 12 abstentions. It will be put to a vote by the full House during the 23-26 November plenary session. ★

BACKGROUND

In March 2020, the Commission presented a strategy to help Europe's industry lead the twin transitions towards climate neutrality and digital leadership. The strategy aims to drive Europe's competitiveness and its strategic autonomy at a time of moving geopolitical plates and increasing global competition. However, the economic fallout from the coronavirus outbreak has dealt a symmetric shock to both supply and demand of a magnitude not seen since the Second World War. The financial health of European companies has taken a sharp turn for the worse, casting doubts on their capacity to invest

Increase the budget for the EU4Health programme to €9.4 billion

Cristian-Silviu BUȘOI, Parliament's rapporteur of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

To fill gaps exposed by COVID-19 and ensure that health systems can face future threats to public health, an ambitious EU health programme is needed, say MEPs.

On Wednesday, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted its report on the programme for the EU's action in the health sector, the so-called «EU4Health Programme» with 74 votes to 5 and 1 abstention. MEPs want to raise the budget for the programme to EUR 9.4 billion, as originally proposed by the Commission, to enhance health promotion and make health systems more resilient across the EU. COVID-19 has shown that the EU is in urgent need of an ambitious EU health programme to ensure that European health systems can face future health threats. This is not possible if the budget is reduced to EUR 1.7 billion as proposed by member states.

To reach the programme's objectives, the report proposes, inter alia, to:

Focus more on disease prevention, reduce health inequalities, digitalise healthcare through the creation and application of the European eHealth Record, address resistance to vaccination in the EU, strengthen the European Union's fight against cancer in synergy with the Europe's Beating

Cancer Plan, prevent and manage chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases and type 2 diabetes, take more specific actions to address medicine shortages and make better use of antimicrobials, such as antibiotics, promote health by addressing health risks, such as the harmful use of alcohol and tobacco.

To ensure it is implemented effectively, MEPs propose to set up a Steering Group consisting of independent experts in the field of public health.

MEPs also want to increase cooperation at EU level to improve readiness in case of a health crisis. They call for the mandates of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) to be strengthened.

Quote

After the vote, Parliament's rapporteur Cristian-Silviu Bușoi (EPP, Romania) said: «The COVID-19 crisis has exposed the need for well-defined and adequately-financed health instruments as well as for boosting innovation and investing more in



health in general. It will be crucial to increase funding for the EU4Health Programme to €9.4 billion, as proposed by the Commission in May, in order to have the capacity to deal with future pandemics and health threats, and to make our health systems more resilient.»

Next Steps

Parliament is expected to vote on this report at the latest during the 11-12 November plenary session, after which Parliament is ready to start negotiations with member

states so that the programme can be implemented from the beginning of 2021.★

BACKGROUND

On 28 May 2020, the Commission put forward a new stand-alone «EU4Health Programme» for 2021-2027 as part of the Recovery Plan to build resilient health systems in the EU by tackling cross-border health threats, making medicines available and affordable, and strengthening health systems. The Health Programme was previously under the initial EU long-term budget 2021-2027 as one element of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+).

*MEPs want to strengthen health systems to make them more resilient in case of health crises such as COVID-19.
©AFP/Lara Balais.*



39 billion euros more to increase the Green Deal

Johan van OVERTVELDT, Chairman of the Committee on Budgets

In a spirit of compromise, Parliament made a concrete and realistic proposal for an immediate increase of key programme envelopes in the long-term EU budget by €39bn.

Contradictory figures (up to an additional €90bn) have however been spread by the Council presidency in an attempt to undermine Parliament's offer. Johan van Overtveldt, Chairman of the Committee on Budgets reacts to the distorted information circulated by the Council presidency: « This Wednesday morning we read in the press a misrepresentation of yesterday's EP compromise offer. The EP has been fully transparent all along: in public resolutions, press statements and open letters. Our constructive inputs have either not been read, or are deliberately misrepresented.

39 billion euros for our flagship programmes

Let me set the record straight: Parliament's compromise offer is 39 billion euros. 39 billion more to increase our flagship programmes: for delivering the Green Deal, supporting the digital transition, building up our common health capacities and our networks, supporting our youth and researchers, tackling together migration, security and external challenges, and defending our cultural creation and our values. It would only mark a minimal (2%) change to the 1.8 trillion July package, but it makes a huge difference for the citizens who benefit from our common policies – severely cut by the Council.

An overall Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) ceiling equal to 2014-2020

We also proposed a financing architecture with two key elements at its core: 13 billion euros would come from the space released

by counting recovery debt and interest repayments over and above the ceilings (given that it is exceptional expenditure that should not compete with Union programmes); and a 9 billion net increase of the MFF ceilings. Let's put figures in perspective: in real terms, the overall MFF ceiling for 7 years would be equal to the 2014-2020 period (1 083 billion euros).

This is a huge step from our initial position, made in a spirit of compromise in view of reaching an agreement. From the Council side, however, there is still no such sign of willingness of «going the extra mile», as they proposed themselves in a recent letter. And just like a few weeks ago, an unnamed 'diplomat' inflates Parliament's offer to portray us as an unrealistic and unreliable partner. Parliament-bashing is always a very attractive story to tell, but clearly not helping our cooperation in this delicate negotiation.

Recovery instrument should be launched and fully implemented

Our compromise offer is 39 billion euros. The rest is made up of pure flexibility mechanisms to address future needs in the uncertain environment we live in. The bulk of it is not additional money, but merely about making sure that, out of the agreed spending, not a single euro can be lost due to underexecution.

We are very concerned about how some, in the Council, come to the additional figure released in the press today. Could it be that they factor in a severe underimplementation of the Recovery instrument, that should not be tackled? We trust that



Council will stay true to the Leaders' promise of a 390 billion stimulus in grants. Support to the citizens and businesses is urgently needed, and the Council needs to greenlight the launch of the ratification process to ensure relief

can quickly reach those most hit by the Covid-19 crisis. Parliament did its part on this short-term support, and will continue negotiating to improve the MFF to strengthen resilience on the longer-term.» ★

European Research Area

Margrethe VESTAGER, Executive Vice-President for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age and Competition

Mariya GABRIEL, Commissioner for Innovation & Research

Today, the European Commission adopted a Communication on a new European Research Area for Research and Innovation. Based on excellence, competitive, open and talent-driven, the new European Research Area will improve Europe's research and innovation landscape, accelerate the EU's transition

researchers' mobility, skills and career development opportunities within the EU, gender equality, as well as better access to publicly funded peer-reviewed science.

Executive Vice-President for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age, Margrethe Vestager, said: «The EU is already leading innovation

scientific activities require faster and effective collaborations. We need to strengthen the European Research Area. An area embracing all of Europe, because knowledge has no territorial boundaries, because scientific knowledge grows with collaborations, because knowledge is trusted if there is open scrutiny of its

are aggravated by the coronavirus crisis. Research and innovation is therefore crucial in addressing these challenges, delivering on Europe's recovery and speeding up the twin green and digital transitions.

Objectives of the new European Research Area

Building on Europe's innovation leadership and scientific excellence, the new European Research Area aims to incentivise better coordination and cooperation among the EU, its Member States and the private sector; lead to more investments in research and innovation; strengthen mobility of researchers, their expertise, and the flow of knowledge;

The Communication

defines four strategic objectives:

Prioritise investments and reforms in research and innovation towards the green and digital transition, to support Europe's recovery and increase competitiveness. EU support towards research and innovation is foreseen through various programmes, such as the Horizon Europe, the Cohesion policy, and the Next Generation EU. To bring about the required positive change and ensure quality of results, EU support must be complemented by investments from Member States and the private sector. The Communication reaffirms the target of 3% of GDP to be invested on EU research and innovation and prompts further cooperation among Member states, and alignment of national efforts, by setting a target of 5% of national public funding to joint research and development programmes and European partnerships, by 2030. The principle of excellence, which entails that the best researchers with the best ideas can obtain funding, remains the cornerstone for all investments under the European Research area.

Improve access to excellent facilities and infrastructures for researchers across the EU. Member States' research and innovation investment remains uneven, which translates into gaps in scientific excellence and innovation output that need to be bridged. The EU already supports lagging countries, including with tailor-made support on the ground, and Horizon

(Continued on page 8)



Margrethe Vestager

towards climate neutrality and digital leadership, support its recovery from the societal and economic impact of the coronavirus crisis, and strengthen its resilience against future crises.

The Commission set out strategic objectives and actions to be implemented in close cooperation with the Member States, in order to prioritise investments and reforms in research and innovation, improve access to excellence for researchers across the EU and enable research results to reach the market and the real economy. Additionally, the Communication will further promote

through its research and scientific excellence. We want to build on that and step up our efforts towards achieving breakthrough market-driven innovations that will contribute to a green digital Europe and will boost growth, job creation and our competitiveness in the global scene. Today we are setting a new ambition for a European Research Area to facilitate cooperation and contribute to a more competitive European industry.»

Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, said: «We live in times when

quality. It has also more chances to achieve peaks of excellence and support an innovative and risk taking industry to shape a resilient, green and digital future.»

Launched in 2000, the European Research Area has made major achievements over the past years – yet, today's context prompts us to rethink how to strengthen its role, better define and implement its key objectives, as well as make it more attractive as a common space for creating valuable research and innovation. Moreover, Europe is currently facing significant societal, ecological and economic challenges that

(Continued from page 7)

Europe will further ensure so, through enhanced collaborations with more experienced counterparts, in order to improve access to excellence. The Commission proposes that Member States, lagging behind the EU average research and innovation investment over GDP, direct their efforts to increase their investments by 50% in the next 5 years. To this end, mobility opportunities for researchers to access excellence and expand their experience will be created through dedicated training and mobility schemes between industry and academia. In order to reflect the progress towards research based on excellence, Member States lagging behind the EU average on highly cited publications should reduce the gap to the EU average by at least one third in the next 5 years.

Transfer results to the economy to boost business investments and market uptake of research output, as well as foster EU competitiveness and leadership in the global technological setting.

In view of speeding up the transfer of research results into the real economy and supporting the implementation of the new Industrial Strategy, the Commission will encourage and guide the development of common technology plans with industry that will allow crowding in more private investments in key international projects. This will foster the development of competitive technologies in key strategic areas, while securing a stronger European presence in the global scene. In parallel, following a detailed monitoring exercise, the Commission will explore the possibility of developing a networking framework that will build on existing entities and capacities, such as centres of excellence or Digital Innovation Hubs, to facilitate collaboration and exchange of best practices by 2022. Still in this two-year framework, the Commission will update and develop guiding principles, which will ensure that innovation can be valorised and rewarded, as well as a code of practice for the smart use of intellectual property, to ensure access to effective and affordable intellectual property protection.

Strengthen mobility of researchers and free flow of knowledge and technology, through greater cooperation among Member States, to ensure that everyone benefits from research and its results.

The EU will aim to improve career development opportunities to attract and retain the best researchers in Europe as



Mariya Gabriel

well as incentivise researchers to pursue a career outside academia. To this end, it will also deliver, by the end of 2024, in partnership with Member States and research organisations, a toolbox of support for researchers' careers. The toolbox will consist of the following elements: a Researchers Competence Framework to identify key skills and mismatches; a mobility scheme to support exchange and mobility of researchers across industry and academia; targeted training and professional development opportunities under Horizon Europe; and, a one-stop shop portal for people to more easily find information and manage their learning and careers. The EU will work towards accomplishing the above strategic objectives, in close cooperation with the Member States, through 14 actions that are linked to each other and will be instrumental in realising the European Research Area. Furthermore, the Commission will drive a European Forum for Transition, a strategic discussion forum with Member States that will support them in the coherent implementation of these four objectives.

The Commission will also propose, by the first half of 2021, that Member States adopt a Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe, which will reinforce their commitment to shared policies and

principles and indicate the areas where they will jointly develop priority actions. As part of its initiatives to support the recovery and build a green and digital Europe, the Commission, in addition to the new European Research Area, adopted today a new Digital Education Action Plan, to adapt education and training systems to the digital age, as well as a Communication on the European Education Area as a driver for job creation and growth. ★



European
Research Area

BACKGROUND

The European Research Area was launched in 2000 with the aim of better organising and integrating Europe's research and innovation systems and enhancing cooperation between the EU, the Member States, their regions and their stakeholders. It also aimed for the free circulation of researchers, scientific knowledge and technology throughout the EU and focused on stimulating cross-border cooperation and on improving and coordinating the research and innovation policies and programmes of the Member States. In 2018, the Council of the European Union made a call to revamp the European Research Area in 2020 with a new Commission Communication. In December 2019, Member States advised on the future of the European Research Area through an opinion of the European Research and Innovation Committee. As part of the EU response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Commission introduced the ERA's Corona Action Plan in April of this year. Building on the overall objectives and the tools of the European Research Area, the action plan is a working document developed jointly by the Commission and national governments. It covers short-term actions based on close coordination, cooperation, data sharing and shared funding efforts.

DPD group aims at being the most sustainable delivery company in Europe

Boris WINKELMANN, Chairman & CEO of GeoPost / DPDgroup



The protection of the environment is more and more a major concern. What exactly is DPDgroup's ambition?

As delivery experts at DPDgroup we have acknowledged, quite some time ago, that sustainability is a major topic and a major concern. And the current pandemic has certainly accelerated the understanding and the awareness that this will be a key topic going forward. So back in 2012 already we launched a first bold initiative

of carbon compensation. The carbon footprint of every parcel delivered since 2012 in the DPDgroup network has been compensated and offset. This has been ground-breaking in our industry and many of our competitors have been inspired by our initiative and have followed the lead that we took. But today we have to recognize that compensation is not good enough. We need to reduce the CO2 emissions. And so, it's time to embark on the next bold programme. By 2025, we want to reduce our CO2 emissions of every parcel by 30%, and we will put the means and investments to achieve this goal and continue leading the path in our industry.

Actions are louder than words. What actions is DPDgroup taking to achieve its ambition?

We want to make the fastest and the most meaningful impact, and we will therefore concentrate on those areas where the pollution and the population density is the highest. Our target is therefore to become fully CO2 free in the 225 largest cities in Europe by 2025. In fact, we've already started. In five cities in Europe; Warsaw, Dublin, Hamburg, parts of London, and all the city



centre of Paris we are ensuring full CO2 free deliveries since last year. We will supplement this deployment of electric vehicles in those 225 cities with urban depots. Smaller infrastructures, closer to our customers, which will help us to reduce our transportation footprint. And finally, we will equip our fleet and our infrastructure with air quality monitoring devices. They will tell us how the pollution is evolving, they will help us, and they will help the municipalities with which we will feed this information to become more effective because information inspires action.

As Chairman & CEO of DPDgroup, what is your long-term objective for the business?

Our long-term objective is two-fold. First, we want to build on this first ambitious plan of deploying CO2 free delivery methods in the 225 largest cities in Europe to become fully CO2 free within the next 20 years. The second objective is to become an active player; a partner of cities or municipalities of our customers. To help them in their sustainable development programmes. To jointly make our planet a better place, because we all share the same address.

How does an international operator such as DPDgroup manage to take European challenges into consideration?

DPDgroup is the largest parcel delivery network in Europe. Our strength relies on our decentralized management model where the business units are the local experts of their market. That's why DPDgroup is attentive to the needs of each country and city and, thanks to our experience, gear our offering of innovative solutions, urban depots and alternative delivery fleet accordingly for example. We engage with local authorities to anticipate and react quickly to new requirements and legislation. At DPDgroup we know one size fits all solution doesn't exist. The global health crisis and the Brexit are also two concrete examples of how DPDgroup manages to tackle European challenges. While the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted how essential delivery services are, DPDgroup has supported healthcare professionals and local businesses. We are also fully prepared for the hard Brexit on January 1st 2021 thanks to our expertise in the management of new customs procedures and regulations. ★



ABOUT DPDGROUP

DPDgroup is the largest parcel delivery network in Europe. DPDgroup combines innovative technology and local knowledge to provide a flexible and user-friendly service for both shippers and shoppers. With its industry-leading Predict service, DPDgroup is setting a new standard for convenience by keeping customers closely in touch with their delivery. With 77,000 delivery experts and a network of more than 46,000 Pickup points, DPDgroup delivers 5.3 million parcels each day – 1.3 billion parcels per year – through the brands DPD, Chronopost, SEUR and BRT. DPDgroup is the parcel delivery network of GeoPost, which posted sales of €7.8 billion in 2019. GeoPost is a holding company owned by Le Groupe La Poste.

To stay up-to-date with DPDgroup's latest news, follow DPDgroup on www.dpdgroup.com, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram

The only way for Europe to recover

Mariya GABRIEL, European Commissioner for Innovation & Research

The only way for Europe to recover from the coronavirus crisis and build a better future is to work together and the pandemic has made that clearer than ever, according to EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel. She told Horizon about the biggest impacts of the pandemic on research and innovation and her vision for where EU-funded research is headed.

When you started this role in December, I bet you didn't think your first year as research commissioner would unfold like this. What have you learned?

This has been indeed an extraordinary year by anyone's standards. For me, it was particularly interesting to see research and innovation receive an increase in public attention. We have all clearly seen the crucial role it plays in our lives – be it in

protecting people's lives from coronavirus or in Europe's green and digital transitions. I was proud to see the determination of scientists and innovators in Europe to find solutions, and how they came together, proving the importance of working together to tackle the biggest problems. I was also heartened by how flexible we can be in adapting quickly to new realities. As early as January, we mobilised Horizon 2020 (the EU's current research funding programme) into urgently needed coronavirus research and innovation. All this gives

us hope, as we continue to combat the virus and work hard to make Europe more resilient and sustainable. Researchers are the main drivers of knowledge, attuned to the most pressing concerns of our contemporary societies. A well-performing education and research landscape will become even more necessary in order to face key challenges in the future.

At the end of September, I presented my key initiatives for a European research area, a European education area and a digital

education action plan, which contribute to a more inclusive, greener and digital Europe when it comes to research and education.

Over the course of the pandemic, as the scientific advice and information has emerged, everyone has had to adapt. How did you choose the EU's research priorities for coronavirus?

The European Commission started addressing the virus at the very beginning



of the outbreak. Overall, we are investing more than €1 billion as part of the Coronavirus Global Response. And we coordinated European and global research efforts. Of course, it all had to start with trying to understand the virus better. In January, we launched our first Covid-19 emergency call to advance our knowledge on the novel virus. Since then, we have continued with additional research and support actions, capitalising on Europe's scientific capacity and the latest developments in the field. This includes support for infrastructures and data resources that enable decisive research.

We also launched short- and long-term activities. For example, nearly 30,000 people from 114 countries participated in the EU Virus hackathon to generate 2,150 innovative solutions by the end of April. A total of 2,235 partnerships which span different forms of funding and benefits, such as mentoring, were brokered by the European Innovation Council (EIC). The EIC also awarded €166m for the development of solutions to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

Thanks to the Horizon 2020 funding programme we are able to act on multiple fronts, from frontier research and cooperation with Member States, to start-ups and involving citizens.

How has the pandemic reshaped European research priorities and what impact will it have on these long-term?

To be ready for a next crisis, we must support researchers and innovators to work together, share results and data openly and acquire the skills they need to provide us with solutions for our societal challenges. With the plans for a new European research area unveiled on 30 September, we propose to join forces with all EU countries to prioritise investment and reforms in research and innovation, improve access to excellence for researchers across Europe and ensure results efficiently find their way to the market.

In April, we initiated an action plan, which was adopted by Member States and helped to coordinate all the research and innovation efforts with national administrations, focusing on coordination of funding, research data and information exchange. In less than two weeks (on 20 April) we launched the European Covid-

19 data portal to enable the rapid collection and sharing of available research data to support researchers in Europe and around the world. But it is not only about supporting the communities. It is essential to deliver concrete results, like Re-open EU, a platform that contains essential information allowing a safe relaunch of free movement across Europe. It provides real-time information on borders, travel restrictions, and public health and safety measures.

In Horizon Europe, the next EU research and innovation funding programme that runs from 2021-27, health projects will cover virology, vaccines, treatments and diagnostics, and the translation of research findings into public health policy measures. The climate, energy and mobility, digital industry, and space clusters will aid the scale-up of research resources in climate-related domains and ensure that European enterprises have access to the technologies and data they need.

Research and innovation are vital for fighting the pandemic, as well as for sustainable and inclusive recovery.

How exactly do you see the role of R&I in the recovery from the effects of the pandemic, including social, educational and economic?

I want Europe to emerge stronger and more resilient from this crisis. For that to happen, research, innovation and

circularity. The new EU missions will tackle some of our most pressing societal challenges, such as adaptation to climate change, saving more lives from cancer, restoring our ocean and waters, greener cities and healthy soils. We also should not underestimate the impact this crisis has on people's mental health, such as the psychological impact of quarantines. We will continue to support research in social sciences and humanities, as well as in behaviour and mental health. For example, we supported four new research projects with €28 million to investigate behavioural, social and economic impacts of the outbreak responses.

The proposed Horizon Europe budget has been cut at a time when arguably research has never been more visible and important. What's your take on this?

Indeed. Research and innovation have never been so high on the political agenda. Only science and technology will help us to tackle concretely the ongoing global threats and challenges. And Covid-19 has served as a timely reminder to all of us of the necessity to invest in research and innovation as well as to cooperate with our partners despite tensions at a geopolitical level.

Like President von der Leyen, I have expressed that the budget reduction is a regrettable decision. We believe that the original Commission proposal was ambi-

synergies with other EU programmes. The Commission will act as an honest broker in the forthcoming trilogues (negotiations between the Council, Parliament and Commission) on the new budget. A timely agreement on Horizon Europe is in the best interest of our researchers, innovators, companies but most importantly citizens.

One thing is certain, we will not be successful in our ambitions without collaboration from regions, cities and villages. We are working on a joint action plan with the Committee of the Regions to build an inclusive research and innovation landscape in Europe.

We need strong links with our neighbours in this area. The innovation agenda for the Western Balkans will contribute to this aim.

We need to be concrete about what we want to achieve in the short term: to bridge the innovation divide (the difference in innovation capacity between different parts of Europe), to foster a fair and just transition, to develop innovation ecosystems in every region in Europe, and to provide the necessary resources for all our talent.

Excellence and inclusiveness are the two sides of the same coin. The EU can only succeed if everyone progresses. ★

Research and innovation play an essential role in shaping Europe's future.

education are indispensable, and investments are key. The current crisis is also a unique opportunity for the EU and its Member States to strengthen their policy coherence and joint efforts towards achieving resilience and sustainability.

Horizon Europe will be crucial to this. It will support crucial health and climate-related research and innovation activities. Its new wave of European Partnerships will ensure long-term strategic cooperation between public and private actors covering critical areas such as energy, transport, biodiversity, health, food and

tion, but also realistic. Nevertheless, after the July European Council, Horizon Europe still keeps a robust budget envelope to prepare the competitiveness of the European economy for the widest social benefit of the citizens. And we need to recognise that additional funds will also be allocated from Next Generation EU, the €750bn recovery instrument for Member States, to Horizon Europe.

On 29 September, Member States came to agreement on the last remaining open issues of Horizon Europe concerning budget, international cooperation and

Commission extends State aid

Margrethe VESTAGER, Executive Vice-President for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age and Competition

The European Commission has decided to prolong and extend the scope of the State aid Temporary Framework adopted on 19 March 2020 to support the economy in the context of the coronavirus outbreak. All sections of the Temporary Framework are prolonged for six months until 30 June 2021, and the section to enable recapitalisation support is prolonged for three months until 30 September 2021.

Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager, in charge of competition policy, said « The Temporary Framework has supported Member States in their efforts to deal with the effects of the crisis. Today, we prolong the Temporary Framework to cater for the continued needs of businesses, while protecting the EU's Single Market. We also introduce a new measure to enable Member States to support companies facing significant turnover losses by contributing to part of their uncovered fixed costs. Finally, we introduce new possibilities for the State to exit from recapitalised companies while maintaining its previous stake in those companies and limiting distortions to competition.»

Prolongation of the Temporary Framework

The Temporary Framework was initially set to expire on 31 December 2020, except for recapitalisation measures that could be granted until 30 June 2021. Today's amendment prolongs at current thresholds the provisions of the Temporary Framework for an additional six months until 30 June 2021, except the recapitalisation measures which are prolonged for three months until 30 September 2021. The objective is to enable Member States to support businesses in the context of the coronavirus crisis, especially where the need or ability to use the Temporary Framework has not fully materialised so far, while protecting the level playing field. Before 30 June 2021, the Commission will review and examine the need to further prolong or adapt the Temporary Framework.

Support for uncovered fixed costs of companies

Today's amendment also introduces a new measure to enable Member States to support companies facing a decline in turnover during the eligible period of at



least 30% compared to the same period of 2019 due to the coronavirus outbreak. The support will contribute to a part of the beneficiaries' fixed costs that are not covered by their revenues, up to a maximum amount of €3 million per undertaking. Supporting these companies by contributing to part of their costs on a temporary basis aims at preventing the deterioration of their capital, maintaining their business activity and providing them with a strong platform to recover. This allows more targeted aid to companies that demonstrably need it.

Exit of the State from previously State-owned companies

The Commission has also adapted the conditions for recapitalisation measures under the Temporary Framework, in particular for the State's exit from the recapitalisation of enterprises where the State was an existing shareholder prior to the recapitalisation. The amendment allows the State to exit from the equity of such enterprises through an independent valuation, whilst restoring its previous shareholding and maintaining the safeguards to preserve effective competition in the Single Market.

Extension of the temporary removal of all countries from the list of «marketable risk» countries under the Short-term export-credit insurance Communication

Finally, taking into account the continued general lack of sufficient private capacity to cover all economically justifiable risks for exports to countries from the list of marketable risk countries, the amendment provides for an extension until 30 June 2021 of the temporary removal of all countries from the list of «marketable risk» countries under the Short-term export-credit insurance Communication.

Background on Temporary Framework and ongoing work to support the Recovery and Resilience Facility

On 19 March 2020, the Commission adopted a new State aid Temporary Framework to support the economy in the context of the coronavirus outbreak, based on Article 107(3)(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The Temporary framework was first amended on 3 April 2020 to increase possibilities for

public support to research, testing and production of products relevant to fight the coronavirus outbreak, to protect jobs and to further support the economy. It was further amended on 8 May to enable recapitalisation and subordinated debt measures, and on 29 June 2020 to further support micro, small and start-up companies and to incentivise private investments. The Temporary Framework recognises that the entire EU economy is experiencing a serious disturbance. It enables Member States to use the full flexibility foreseen under State aid rules to support the economy, while limiting negative consequences to the level playing field in the Single Market. Moreover, as Europe moves from crisis management to economic recovery, State aid control will also accompany and facilitate the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility. In this context, the Commission will:

- Engage with Member States to ensure investment projects supported by the Recovery and Resilience Facility are compatible with State aid rules. Indeed, certain infrastructure investments and direct support to citizens, fall outside State aid rules altogether and many measures do not need to be notified since they fall under block exemptions;
- Provide guidance to Member States as regards the flagship investment projects, including by providing templates;
- Push ahead with revising key State aid rules by the end of 2021 to accommodate the green and digital transitions.

In addition, the Commission will assess in which areas State aid rules could be further streamlined in view of achieving the recovery objectives. The Commission will assess all State aid notifications received from Member States in the context of the Recovery and Resilience Facility as a matter of priority. ★

Hydrogen has the potential to be a game changer

Kadri SIMSON, European Commissioner for Energy

We have set our sights on a climate neutral Europe by 2050. That gives us just thirty years to transform our energy system from the current model to a greener, more efficient system. Recently we proposed a landmark rise of ambition for the next stage in the journey, our targets for 2030. We are committing to a reduction of at least 55% of greenhouse gas emissions. This means that we must accelerate the pace of the transition and explore new solutions. Hydrogen has the potential to be a game changer in this context and in Europe, we want to be the ones leading the way. The moment is right:

1 - Never before has our ambition and our determination for the clean energy transition been so high. This will provide the certainty for our industry and investors to put their human and financial resources into breakthrough solutions.

2 - Never before have renewable energies been so cheap: solar power and on-shore wind are in many places fully competitive or even cheaper than conventional electricity and off-shore wind prices have fallen spectacularly over the past decade. This trend is set to continue.

3 - The Hydrogen Strategy is the first time that we have looked at hydrogen from a holistic perspective, considering in particular renewable hydrogen's potential to

decarbonise difficult sectors like industry and transport, but at the same time helping to manage our electricity system and providing storage. Today, hydrogen is mainly a feedstock in industry and is produced from natural gas. In the future, hydrogen will become a new clean energy carrier, along with electricity. With this in mind we have mapped out three clear steps in our Hydrogen Strategy we presented in July:

First, we need to scale-up supply and demand in parallel. On the supply side, we have set ourselves ambitious targets aiming at 6GW electrolyser capacity by 2024 and 40 GW by 2030. Electrolyser production must become more industrialised to reach this capacity and this will further reduce the costs. In fact, renewable hydrogen, produced from water and green electricity should outbid conventional hydrogen as of 2030. To kickstart this process, we have launched first calls to fund such projects from the EU budget, under the Horizon 2020 research programme and the Innovation Fund. Today, we consume around 10 million tonnes of conventional hydrogen in Europe, which still creates emissions. Carbon capture technologies can help to rapidly decarbonise this existing production, while the volumes of renewable hydrogen scale up. On the demand side, we expect in the near future local demand to develop as a first step. Later

on, as of the mid-2020ies, new sectors like steel-making or certain areas of transport will likely turn to clean hydrogen to replace their current coal and oil demand. To do this, we will certainly invest in more research, but will also work on common standards, certifications and terminology. This will be important in order to drive demand for renewable and low-carbon hydrogen and to promote transparency and trade. To ensure that these forms of hydrogen can compete in the market, we will pilot a Carbon Contracts for Difference programme to bridge the current cost gap between conventional and cleaner forms of hydrogen.

After improving the supply and demand sides of things, the second step will be creating competitive markets and infrastructure for cross border trade of hydrogen. Several national hydrogen strategies have identified a clear scope for EU and international cooperation and trade: these plans imply that hydrogen will at some point travel across borders. Cost-efficiency matters, so we will look at using existing assets, like our natural gas pipeline network – they can be made fit for hydrogen at relatively low cost, especially when compared to new infrastructures. To trade renewable and low-carbon hydrogen reliably across borders, we will need proper rules. When

I say trade, I do not mean only within the EU, but also with our international partners, starting with our close neighbourhood, in particular Morocco and Ukraine. We have an interest in placing hydrogen high on the agenda of the structured energy dialogue with countries including the US, Japan, South Korea, while strengthening our engagement in the major multilateral initiatives, such as the International Partnership for Hydrogen in the Economy, the Clean Energy Ministerial and Mission Innovation. We should use these discussions to create a global rules-based market for hydrogen solutions, including harmonised safety and environmental standards. If we do it right and take the lead we can establish benchmarks, giving our currency, the euro, a stronger role.

The third step in our strategy is our ongoing work to keep industry in Europe. We are establishing the European Hydrogen Alliance in a strategic full-value-chain approach that should build up a robust project pipeline for clean hydrogen in Europe. This will be underpinned by the EU budget. The proposed recovery package, Next Generation EU, like the general budget, will have earmarked funds for delivering the climate goals of the European Green Deal. The Commission will closely work with Member States to ensure that there is a strong emphasis on hydrogen related projects in the national measures. The Strategic Investment Facility that the Commission proposed will be able to unlock 150 billion euros to invest in key technologies and value chains, like hydrogen technologies. With this ecosystem approach we should be able to better exploit EU industrial leadership.

For all this, we have started to review current EU legislation. We are looking at renewable energy, energy efficiency, trans-European networks and the internal gas market legislation to see how we can introduce a robust regulatory framework for the new developments we are expecting and encouraging. This brings me to another important point: hydrogen is a universal opportunity. Every Member State can benefit from developing hydrogen in its economy. ★



Kadri Simson, Commissioner for Energy, fills up a Hydrogen car

Cohesion Policy – coronavirus crisis

Elisa FERREIRA, Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms

Apostolos TZITZIKOSTAS, President of the European Committee of the Region

Today, the Commission announces the first provisional results of the implementation of the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative (CRII) and Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus (CRII+).



Apostolos Tzitzikostas and Elisa Ferreira

From the beginning of the crisis, and thanks to the flexibility introduced in the Cohesion Policy, the EU mobilised over €13 billion in investments to tackle the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF). The EU funds helped national, regional and local communities in countering the negative socio-economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

In total, €4.1 billion have been reallocated towards healthcare to purchase vital machinery and personal protective equipment to save lives. €8.4 billion have been mobilised through issuing grants, loans and a series of personalised financial instruments to support the economy and, in particular, Small and Medium enterprises (SMEs) to adapt to the crisis. Finally, around

€1.4 billion have been channelled through the ESF to help people and save jobs.

To ensure maximum transparency and accountability, the Commission launches today a dedicated webpage on the Cohesion Open Data Platform to show how the EU Cohesion policy is supporting Member States to overcome the coronavirus crisis. With daily updates, the platform will show all information regarding programme amendments, where the resources are going and how these are invested. With a constant update, the overview of the platform will become everyday more complete. Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa Ferreira, said: «Cohesion policy is at the heart of fighting the coronavirus pandemic and ensuring a rapid recovery. The results of our stocktaking show that all Member States are taking advantage of the Coronavirus

Response Investment Initiative for the benefit of citizens, businesses and the health sector. As from today, such successful results are clearly visible to everyone on our interactive Coronavirus Dashboard, at just a click away.»

President of the European Committee of the Regions, Apostolos Tzitzikostas, added: «Thanks to simplified rules, cohesion policy has shown its added value bringing together EU's Member States,

regions and cities, to protect our people, save jobs and preserve local economies during the pandemic. We need to treasure this lesson making easier the access to EU funds and involving all levels of government to shape and deliver recovery plans. To get the utmost out of every invested euro and ensure that money goes where it is needed the most, we need cohesion to be the guiding compass for all EU investments.» ★

BACKGROUND

The Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative (CRII) and Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus (CRII+) allow Member States to benefit from a temporary increase of the EU co-financing up to 100% and to use Cohesion policy funding to support the most exposed sectors because of the pandemic, such as healthcare, SMEs and labour markets.

The COVAX Facility

*Ursula Von der LEYEN, President of the European Commission
Stella KYRIAKIDES, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety
Jutta URPIILAINEN, Commissioner for International partnerships*

Today, the European Commission confirmed its participation in the COVAX Facility for equitable access to affordable COVID-19 vaccines, following its expression of interest on 31 August and its announcement of a contribution of €400 million.



Ursula Von der Leyen



Stella Kyriakides



Jutta Urpilainen

In a joint effort between the European Commission and the 27 EU Member States, Team Europe will contribute with an initial €230 million in cash through a loan from the European Investment Bank, backed by the same amount in guarantees provided by the EU budget. A contribution of €230 million is equivalent to reserves or options to buy 88 million doses and the EU would transfer these to eligible Advanced Market Commitment (AMC) countries. This contribution is complemented with €170 million in financial guarantees from the EU budget.

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, said: «It is not enough to find a vaccine. We must make sure that citizens around the world have access to it. Our strong commitment to the COVAX Facility is another sign to all citizens who need the vaccine that we stand with them, wherever they are. No one is safe until everyone is safe».

Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said: «Being part of the COVAX Facility means ensuring its success and providing access to vaccines for low and middle income countries. It means ensuring access not only for those who can afford it – but to all citizens globally. And it means showing solidarity and global leadership. It

is only together that we will be able to overcome COVID-19».

Jutta Urpilainen, Commissioner for International partnerships, said: «With this contribution to COVAX, the EU is demonstrating that we are serious about leaving no one behind. The future vaccines for COVID-19 should not be a luxury for the rich but a global public good. We need to guarantee that those that most need it have access to it irrespective of where they live».

The COVAX Facility, co-led by Gavi (the Vaccine Alliance), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and WHO, aims to accelerate the development and manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines and to guarantee fair and equitable access for every country in the world.

The Commission, Member States and European financial institutions, notably EIB, jointly committed to mobilise resources for the Coronavirus Global Response. The Commission participates with €400 million in cash and guarantees to support COVAX and its underlying objectives as part of a Team Europe effort. The detailed terms and conditions for the EU's participation and contribution are currently being worked out between all parties concerned. Team Europe

is ready to offer expertise and resources to the COVAX Facility to accelerate and scale-up the development and manufacturing of vaccines for citizens across the world, in poor and rich countries. The EU's participation in COVAX will be complementary with the ongoing EU negotiations with vaccine companies launched under the EU Vaccines Strategy. The EU's efforts to develop and produce an effective vaccine will benefit all in the global community. The EU investment in scaling up manufacturing capacity will be

to the service of all countries in need. Through its Advanced Purchase Agreements, it requires manufacturers to make their production capacity available to supply all countries and calls for the free flow of vaccines and materials with no export restrictions. For instance, the pharmaceutical company Sanofi-GSK with whom the Commission concluded an Advanced Purchase Agreements today will endeavour to provide a significant portion of their vaccine supply through the COVAX facility. ★

BACKGROUND

COVAX is the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, a global collaboration to accelerate the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines. The COVAX Facility aims to purchase 2bn doses by the end of 2021. It will help to develop a diversified portfolio of vaccines, negotiated with different suppliers, and covering different scientific technologies, delivery times and prices. The COVAX Facility is a risk-sharing mechanism: it reduces the risk for manufacturers who invest without being sure about future demand, and it reduces the risk that countries would fail to secure access to a viable vaccine. The European Commission is committed to ensuring that everyone who needs a vaccine gets it, anywhere in the world and not only at home. No one will be safe until everyone is safe. This is why it has raised almost €16 billion since 4 May 2020 under the Coronavirus Global Response, the global action for universal access to tests, treatments and vaccines against coronavirus and for the global recovery. Team Europe's contribution was: EU Member States (€3.1 billion), European Commission (over €1.4 billion) and EIB (almost €2 billion pledged in May and 4.9 billion pledged in June).

Green Deal and competition policy

Margrethe VESTAGER Executive Vice-President for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age and Competition

When we look around us, at the state of our environment and our climate in 2020, things can seem pretty bleak. We all see the results of climate change in the terrifying orange skies in California, and temperatures of 38 degrees in Siberia. We feel the dirty air in our lungs that drives 400,000 early deaths in Europe every year.

But very often, the darkest hour is before the dawn. Things are changing. Our world is coming to grips with the choices we need to make, to protect our environment, and keep climate change from running out of control. The European Green Deal aims to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050 – and last week, in her State of the Union Address, President Von der Leyen set out our proposal to increase our 2030 target for emissions reductions from 40% to at least 55%.

The Commission also committed to put new proposals on the table by mid-next year on key energy and climate legislation, including to adapt the EU Emissions Trading System, and to tighten energy efficiency rules and CO2 standards for cars, trucks and buses.

And we will show solidarity with the most affected regions in Europe to make sure our transition is socially fair. So we're heading in the right direction. But the task ahead won't be easy. To succeed, everyone in Europe will have to play their part – every individual, every business, every public authority. And that includes competition enforcers.

How EU competition policy can best support the Green Deal ?

So the time has come to launch a European debate on how EU competition policy can best support the Green Deal. In the next few weeks, we'll publish a call for contributions on some fundamental questions about how competition rules and sustainability policies work together – and whether they could do that even better. We'll be looking for ideas, not just from competition experts, but from everyone with a stake in this issue – from industry, from environmental groups and consumer organisations. We need to work – and listen – fast. So, we'll ask for contributions to be sent to us by mid-

November. That will allow us to plan a conference for early next year that will bring those different perspectives together. We're open to all ideas, no matter where they come from. But we have to be realistic. Competition policy is not, and it cannot be, in the lead when it comes to making Europe green. There are dozens of much better, much more effective ways of driving the fundamental changes that we need – such as binding targets for cutting carbon emissions, and more than a trillion euros of public investment to help reach those targets. Competition policy has to do its bit, of course. But it cannot replace the essential role of regulation.

And in any case, as competition enforcers, we also have our own task to carry out – to protect consumers, by defending competition. It's a task that's been given to us by the Treaties – and one that's essential to keep our economy working fairly for everyone, in the green future. So competition policy is not going to take the place of environmental laws or green investment. The question is rather if we can do more, to apply our rules in ways that better support the Green Deal.

Why competition policy is already a green policy ?

The competition rules already play a vital supporting role, in helping us achieve our green goals. Competition drives the innovation that develops new technologies which can help us do more, with less harm to the environment. Competition also helps to keep prices down, so we can more easily afford to invest in going green – whether that means paying a few thousand euros less to buy an electric car, or a few hundred thousand less for a giant wind turbine.

And competition gives industry a powerful incentive to use our planet's scarce resources efficiently. In a market that's competitive, companies have no choice but to keep down the costs of doing business – which includes using less resources, like raw materials and energy. But of course, they'll only do that if those resources are costly. If industry can just emit as much pollution as it likes, while leaving the rest of us to pick up the bill, then no amount of competition will fix that market failure. So competition enforcement works best, as a green policy, when it works

hand in hand with regulations that make companies bear the cost of the harm that they do. And when we enforce our rules on antitrust and mergers, we defend the competition that helps those green regulations to achieve their goals. With the right incentives from competition and public

a third – at least 37% – of the more than 670 billion euros from Europe's new Recovery and Resilience Facility will have to go to projects that pursue Europe's green goals. It's also why our state aid rules encourage green investment – with conditions that help to make sure that investment is



policies, European businesses will be well-placed to become world-leading climate efficient businesses, able to thrive in tomorrow's green economy. That's even more true of our state aid rules. To achieve our green goals, Europe will need a huge amount of sustainable investment. And though a lot of that money will have to come from private business, we'll need the catalyst of public spending to make it happen fast enough. That's why more than

done in the most effective and affordable way. Last year, we approved a plan for seven EU countries to jointly invest more than three billion euros in an «IPCEI» – an important project of common European interest that aims to develop innovative, greener batteries. Those new batteries will help us shift away from fossil fuels – they'll also be made and recycled sustainably, so a healthier climate doesn't come at the cost of more pollution. That project is clearly

good news – but we had to make sure it didn't undermine competition. Otherwise, we'd have ended up with higher prices, and less innovation, for batteries in the future. So we made sure the money went to many different companies, not just a few; and that key results will be shared widely, with scientists and the whole of European industry. The state aid rules also play a vital part in helping to make sure the green transition is affordable. They make sure aid doesn't go beyond the amount that's really needed, and that taxpayers' money isn't wasted on

make sure that those rules are ready for the vast increase in green investment that's coming, with the Green Deal. So in the next few weeks, we'll launch a public consultation on those state aid rules. We want to make sure they give Europe's governments all the scope they need to make those green investments, without wasting taxpayers' money, by «greenwashing» what is really an unsustainable race between EU countries to prop up their national industries. We also want to look at whether too much state aid is being used to protect

EU's emissions trading system. In those rules, we've made sure that only industries that face a genuine risk of carbon leakage because of those costs can get help. We've also required them to improve their energy efficiency in return for aid. And we'll have to examine whether our rules on state aid for environmental protection and energy should also contribute to redressing this balance.

State aid rules could help for a greener competition policy ?

In the green transition, competition rules are not the engine of change – that's the job of regulation and investment. But they are a vital part of the transmission, which links that engine to the wheels, and produces results on the ground.

And the question we're asking, in this new public debate, is whether we could do more to keep that transmission working smoothly, and helping to reach the goals of the Green Deal. A large part of the state aid that governments give today already supports the environment and cleaner energy. But we still want to see if there are ways to make the rest of Europe's state aid spending greener. One possibility might be to give an incentive to governments that think green – that require the building projects they fund to use recycled materials, to take just one example. Our rules set limits on how much of a project can be financed with public money, to make sure the private sector also contributes. And we could think of giving a sort of «green bonus», which allows governments to use more state aid for projects that make a genuine contribution to our green goals. We could also look at how to build on the success of competitive tenders in keeping renewable energy costs down, by seeing if we could extend that approach to other areas.

At the other end of the scale from this kind of encouragement, we could look at the possibility of firm rules, requiring that aid mustn't undermine the Green Deal. We might refuse to approve aid that would harm the environment, or would keep polluting factories or power plants operating. Obviously, that would have to happen within the limits of the Treaty, and in line with the rights of Member States'.

And antitrust rules too ?

We also want to see if the way we apply our antitrust rules could do more to support industry's efforts to become greener. We'll only reach our green goals if everyone –

including business – takes on their share of responsibility. So several of Europe's national competition authorities are looking at how the antitrust rules could help support industry's green projects.

In July this year, the Dutch competition authority proposed new draft guidelines, which aim to make it easier for companies to agree to produce greener products, without breaking the competition rules. And in just the last few days, the Greek competition authority published a very interesting paper, which looks at how competition policy could contribute more to support the green transition. These are vital questions, for our green future. And the public debate that we're launching will give us the chance to look at these issues with a European perspective.

We welcome it when companies decide to work together, to help them move even faster to go green. And our rules make sure those sustainability agreements are done in a way that doesn't undermine competition, and harm Europe's consumers.

But we know that in practice, it's not always easy for companies to be sure that their agreements fall on the right side of the line. So we're looking at how we could give more clarity in our guidance on horizontal agreements between competitors. We're also ready to give comfort, in the right cases, that particular agreements are in line with the rules – which will give companies real-world examples they can rely on. And I want to encourage businesses to get in touch with us, if they think they have a good candidate for that guidance.

Your conclusion ?

Because the green transition is bigger than any one of us. And we need an effort from our whole society will make sure we get on the right track.

That's a big challenge for competition enforcers. But it's also a reminder that we can't do it all. This is a team effort – and none of us has to be, or can be, the saviour of Europe's environment on our own.

So as our debate on greening competition policy takes shape, we won't be competing to win applause, by single-handedly making Europe green. Instead, we want to find the right place in the team that will make sure we leave a healthier world to our children.★



investments that the private sector would have made anyway. For instance, since our rules started to require competitive tenders for aid to big renewable plants, the cost of that aid has come down incredibly fast. In Germany, the cost of supporting solar power has been cut in half. Some offshore wind projects in Europe now happen with no public subsidy at all. Our rules on state aid for energy and the environment help to make all this possible. And we need to

some energy-intensive industries from having to bear the environmental costs of the energy they use. That aid can stop emissions from moving outside Europe. But it doesn't help us decarbonise our economy, and it leaves other industries with even more to do, to reach our green goals.

This is why we've just updated our rules on state aid to help energy-intensive industries deal with higher electricity prices from the

COVID-19 vaccines

Pascal CANFIN, Chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (Renew Europe, FR)

Cristian BUȘOI, Industry, Research and Energy Committee Chair (EPP, RO)

MEPs debated ways to secure a quick and safe supply of COVID-19 vaccines on Tuesday, with representatives of pharmaceutical companies, research, and civil society.



Pascal Canfin

During the public hearing, MEPs from the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety as well as the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy heard from key players including researchers, representatives from pharmaceutical companies and civil society organisations, and the European Medicines Agency (EMA). MEPs highlighted the challenge of ensuring that vaccines are available as soon as possible, while at the same time building public trust in vaccination.

A recording is available through the following links:

- Presentations by the speakers
- Q&A with ENVI and ITRE members 1/2
- Q&A with ENVI and ITRE members 2/2

«Today, we have very little information on the content of the contracts that have been signed by the European Commission and some laboratories», said the Chairman of the Committee on the

Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Pascal Canfin (Renew Europe, FR). «We wanted to have more information on the state of research, the commitments made by laboratories, and whether they will be able to meet them. We do not even know how many of these contracts there are! The lack of transparency surrounding these contracts was very clearly highlighted during this hearing where Parliament played a role in ensuring democratic accountability», he added.

«A good vaccine must be efficient, safe, affordable, developed quickly and able to achieve EU market authorisation. We all know that developing a vaccine is a very complex process and that it takes time. But with the European Union and the world in the midst of a COVID-19 pandemic, time is one thing that we simply do not have», said Industry, Research and Energy Committee Chair Cristian Bușoi (EPP, RO). «The EU, however, has put a lot of effort and funding into accelerating the development, as well as making the vaccine available and securing sufficient supplies for its member

states», he added. During the debate, industry representatives from Sanofi and Curevac reiterated their commitments to produce one billion doses in 2021, and the importance of keeping safety first. The EMA pointed out that no vaccine is 100% efficient and without risk, but vaccines will only be approved when the benefits outweigh the risks. Curevac and NGO Vaccines Europe advocated for the liability for hidden effects to be made public, as it is in the United States – a view opposed by some MEPs.

A representative from Vaccines Europe also stressed that eight billion doses were needed to vaccinate 50% of the world population, whilst the annual global production is five billion doses. Members also questioned the rationale behind the

confidentiality of the contracts signed between the European Commission and pharmaceutical companies, and warned against possible bottlenecks in the production of future vaccines. Some MEPs also questioned whether national legal frameworks are sufficient to ensure this production, and how to reconcile intellectual property with the need to make future vaccines widely available. ★

BACKGROUND

Developing and deploying an effective and safe vaccine against the virus is the most likely permanent solution to stop the pandemic. To this end, the Commission has proposed an EU vaccines strategy against COVID-19.



Cristian Bușoi

Tourism Committee MEPs: EU must act, 22 million jobs are at stake

Members of Parliament's Tourism Task Force reiterate that the tourism sector needs EU-level coordination and substantial support to give SMEs a chance of survival.



MEMBERS OF THE TOURISM TASK FORCE

The Transport and Tourism Committee met on Wednesday with travel and tourism stakeholders to take stock of the dire situation facing the sector and to discuss ways to overcome this unprecedented crisis. (Catch up with the debate here.) The Tourism Task Force MEPs issued a joint statement after the meeting, acknowledging the tourism sector's disappointment that the EU has done little to help: more than six months have passed in this emergency situation, yet there are still no common criteria in the EU on how to handle and live with this pandemic: no universal hygiene and health protocols, no common rules for testing or on how to assess the risks, no adhering to the free movement principle. Even when travelling is partially possible, the wide array of rules make it extremely difficult. People are confused and have no guarantees that their planned trips

can and will go ahead. The tourism sector, that employs 22 million people in Europe, is on the verge of collapse.

This is no small threat: depending on the country, tourism accounts from 4.3% to 25% of the GDP. As things stand, hundreds of thousands of SMEs will not survive until the end of this year. It is still not clear which crisis management tool can be used by the tourism sector, besides the «European instrument for temporary Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency (SURE)». We insist on urgent concrete action from the European Commission and the member states. A well-defined crisis management mechanism is needed; the sector is fighting to survive.

The tourism sector therefore requires urgently: direct and dedicated financial support; consistent and transparent cri-

teria to assess the risks across the EU; EU-level coordination of travel restrictions, hygiene and health protocols; a clear path towards a genuine EU policy on sustainable tourism.

It is high time for the EU to come forward with a strategy on sustainable tourism and a dedicated budget line in the next long-term EU budget. A €300 million budget line to implement a common vision for sustainable tourism over the next seven years is not too much to ask. It is essential, to make sure that this economic sector will have a chance to get back on its feet after months of stagnation and so that we can shape it to become more sustainable.

We need EU leadership. It is a matter of political will and it is time to take bold decisions. ★

- Karima Delli (Greens/EFA, FR) (Chair of the Committee on Transport and Tourism)
- Benoît Lutgen (EPP, BE)
- Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (EPP, PL)
- Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar (EPP, PT) (Member of the Steering Group)
- Barbara Thaler (EPP, AT)
- Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi (EPP, EL) Giuseppe Ferrandino (S&D, IT)
- István Ujhelyi (S&D, HU) (Member of the Steering Group)
- Josianne Cutajar (S&D, MT)
- Isabel García Muñoz (S&D, ES)
- José Ramón Bauzá Díaz (Renew, ES) (Member of the Steering Group)
- Søren Gade (Renew, DK)
- Roman Haider (ID, AT)
- Massimo Casanova (ID, IT)
- Tilly Metz (Greens/EFA, LU)
- Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg (Greens/EFA, DE)
- Carlo Fidanza (ECR, IT)
- Elena Kountoura (GUE/NGL, EL)
- Mario Furore (NA, IT)

REACT-EU

Supporting EU regions and people hit hardest by crisis, covering expenses as of 1st February 2020

Allocation of EUR 55 billion, despite European Council proposed cuts

Safeguarding democratic accountability principles

The Regional Development Committee beefed up the deployment of exceptional additional EU resources and measures, known as REACT-EU, for fostering crisis repair.



border projects, to the most deprived people and to the youth. Therefore, we introduce minimum shares for the support of Interreg, the European Social Fund (ESF), the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD), as well as to the Youth Employment Initiative. No region and no people should be left behind.»

Co-rapporteur Andrey Novakov (EPP, BG) said: «The role of the EP is to turn REact-EU into PROact-EU. We want to allow the funds to cover COVID-19 expenses since 1 February 2020. This will ease the burden on central and regional budgets to support sectors like SMEs, healthcare, tourism and the creative industry. We ask that the Commission greenlights investment in 10 days – the shortest in the history of Cohesion policy. The most important lesson after COVID-19: It is time for policies, not for politics.»

Next steps

Parliament plenary is expected to give the mandate for inter-institutional negotiations during its September sitting. MEPs wish a timely adoption of the measures, to allow Member States to use the additional funds as soon as possible. ★

The report was adopted on Monday with 37 votes in favour, none against and 4 abstentions. The REACT-EU instrument proposed by the Commission before the summer mobilises additional investment and offers great flexibility for Member States to address the immediate effects of the crisis.

Focus on quality projects and reaching most affected regions and people

To encourage national authorities to finance good quality projects, MEPs voted to allow EU countries use the additional resources also in 2023 and 2024, beyond the Commission 2022 deadline. MEPs insist on ensuring that the resources reach the most affected regions and people and want investments to focus on: health and social infrastructure, health systems and services for all, including cross-border areas, outermost regions, areas affected by industrial

transition and depopulation, tourism and culture sectors, youth employment, disadvantaged groups.

Allocation of financial resources
MEPs underline the need to maintain the level of REACT-EU financial resources tabled by the Commission, i.e. EUR 55 billion, despite the European Council proposed budget cuts. MEPs also agreed



that expenditure for operations covered should be eligible as of 1 February 2020.

Ensuring respect of cohesion policy and democratic principles

As REACT-EU provides considerable new funding whilst reducing administrative burdens as well as controls on spending, MEPs stress that the various derogations must remain temporary. Parliament requests the Commission to provide an evaluation of the exceptional measures' impact and efficiency. Moreover, MEPs reintroduced the eight-week period for national parliaments consultation.

Quotes

Co-rapporteur Constanze Krehl (S&D, DE) said: «It is important to support regions and people who have been hit hardest by the crisis. Funding from REACT-EU should also go to cross-

BACKGROUND

REACT-EU is a proposal made by the Commission to address the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, in the form of an amendment to the Common Provisions Regulation governing the current cohesion policy programming period. It follows two earlier proposals relating to cohesion policy, the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative (CRII) and the Coronavirus Response Initiative Plus (CRII+), which both modified the rules for regional spending in order to facilitate recovery.

€1 billion investment for the green and digital transition



The European Commission has decided today to launch a €1 billion call for research and innovation projects that respond to the climate crisis and help protect Europe's unique ecosystems and biodiversity. The Horizon 2020-funded European Green Deal Call, which will open tomorrow for registration, will spur Europe's recovery from the coronavirus crisis by turning green challenges into innovation opportunities.

Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth said: «The €1 billion European Green Deal call is the last and biggest call under Horizon 2020. With innovation at its heart, this investment will accelerate a just and sustainable transition to a climate-neutral Europe by 2050. As we do not want anyone left behind in this systemic transformation, we call for specific actions to engage with citizens in novel ways and improve societal relevance and impact.»

This Green Deal Call differs in important aspects from previous Horizon 2020 calls. Given the urgency of the challenges it addresses, it aims for clear, discernible results in the short to medium-term, but with a perspective of long-term change. There are fewer, but more targeted, larger and visible actions, with a focus on rapid

scalability, dissemination and uptake. The projects funded under this call are expected to deliver results with tangible benefits in ten areas:

Eight thematic areas reflecting the key work streams of the European Green Deal: increasing climate ambition; clean, affordable and secure energy; industry for a clean and circular economy; energy and resource efficient buildings; sustainable and smart mobility; farm to fork; biodiversity and ecosystems; zero-pollution, toxic-free environments.

And two horizontal areas – strengthening knowledge and empowering citizens, which offer a longer-term perspective in achieving the transformations set out in the European Green Deal. The €1 billion investment will continue building Europe's knowledge systems and

infrastructures. The call includes opportunities for international cooperation in addressing the needs of less-developed nations, particularly in Africa, in the context of the Paris Agreement as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The deadline for submissions is

26 January 2021, with selected projects expected to start in autumn 2021. A Horizon 2020 Green Deal Call Info Day & Brokerage event will take place as part of the virtual European Research and Innovation Days that will take place from 22-24 September 2020. ★

BACKGROUND

The European Green Deal is the European Commission's blueprint and roadmap to make Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050, with a sustainable economy that leaves no one behind. To reach this 2050 goal, action will be required by all sectors of our economy, including:

- Investing in environmentally-friendly technologies;
- Supporting industry to innovate;
- Rolling out cleaner, cheaper and healthier forms of private and public transport;
- Decarbonising the energy sector;
- Ensuring buildings are more energy efficient;
- Working with international partners to improve global environmental standards.

NextGenerationEU

The European Commission has set out strategic guidance for the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility in its 2021 Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy (ASGS). The Facility is the key recovery instrument at the heart of Next-GenerationEU which will help the EU emerge stronger and more resilient from the current crisis. The Facility will provide an unprecedented €672.5 billion of loans and grants in frontloaded financial support for the crucial first years of the recovery.

The publication of the ASGS launches this year's European Semester cycle. In last year's ASGS the Commission launched a new growth strategy based on the European Green Deal and the concept of competitive sustainability. This year's ASGS is in full continuity with the previous one. The four dimensions of environmental sustainability, productivity, fairness and macroeconomic stability identified in last year's ASGS remain the guiding principles underpinning Member States' recovery and resilience plans and their national reforms and investments. These dimensions lie at the heart of the European Semester and ensure that the new growth agenda helps to build foundations for a green, digital and sustainable recovery.

In order to benefit from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, Member States should submit their draft recovery and resilience plans outlining national investment and reform agendas in line with the aforementioned EU policy criteria. Member States' recovery and resilience plans should address the economic policy challenges set out in the country-specific recommendations of recent years and in particular in the 2019 and 2020 cycles. The plans should also enable Member States to enhance their economic growth potential, job creation and economic and social resilience, and to meet the green and digital transitions.

The Commission also presents today additional guidance to Member States on how best to present their recovery and resilience plans together with a standard template for their plans.

Flagship projects

Based on their relevance across Member States, the very large investments required, and their potential to create jobs and growth and reap the benefits from the green and digital transitions, the Commission strongly

encourages Member States to include in their plans investment and reforms in the following flagship areas:

- 1 - Power up – The frontloading of future-proof clean technologies and acceleration of the development and use of renewables.
- 2 - Renovate – The improvement of energy efficiency of public and private buildings.
- 3 - Recharge and Refuel – The promotion of future-proof clean technologies to accelerate the use of sustainable, accessible and smart transport, charging and refuelling stations and extension of public transport.
- 4 - Connect – The fast rollout of rapid broadband services to all regions and households, including fiber and 5G networks.
- 5 - Modernise – The digitalisation of public administration and services, including judicial and healthcare systems.
- 6 - Scale-up – The increase in European industrial data cloud capacities and the development of the most powerful, cutting edge, and sustainable processors..
- 7 - Reskill and upskill – The adaptation of education systems to support digital skills and educational and vocational training for all ages. The implementation of the Facility will be coordinated by the Commission's Recovery and Resilience Task Force in close cooperation with the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs. A Steering Board chaired by President Ursula von der Leyen will provide a political steer to the Task Force to help ensure the Facility is implemented in a coherent and effective manner.

Members of the College said:

President Ursula von der Leyen said: «The Recovery and Resilience Facility is at the very heart of NextGenerationEU. It is our key tool to turn the immediate challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic into a long-term opportunity. Member States need clear guidance to ensure the Facility's €672 billion is invested both for Europe's immediate economic recovery, but also for long-term sustainable and inclusive growth. Today, we are presenting this guidance and stand ready to support Member States in developing their national strategies.»

Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President for an Economy that Works for People, said: «Today we are publishing our strategy of economic and social policies for the year-ahead, kick-starting the European Semester process. We should continue to support workers and companies during this crisis, while being mindful of preserving fiscal sustainability in the medium-term. Today we are also providing additional guidance to Member States prepare their Recovery and Resilience Plans, and we are proposing seven flagship initiatives to take the green and digital recovery forward and invest in human capital. We now call on the European Parliament and the Council to quickly reach the final agreement on the Recovery and Resilience Facility, so money can start flowing early next year. In a crisis, time is of the essence.»

Paolo Gentiloni Commissioner for Economy, said: «From the tragedy of the coronavirus pandemic, Europe has chosen to seize a unique opportunity: to restart our economies on a new, more sustainable basis. And the recovery and resilience facility will be the primary tool to make that happen. The guidance we are providing today aims to help Member States to prepare high quality national plans in line with our commonly agreed objectives. Not only so that funding can start flowing as swiftly as possible to support the recovery, but so that it can be a driver of truly transformational change.»

Next steps

The Commission calls on the European Parliament and the Council to agree as quickly as possible on the legislative proposal so that the Facility becomes operational as of 1 January 2021.

The deadline for submission of the Recovery and Resilience plans is 30 April 2021. However, Member States are encouraged to submit their preliminary draft plans from 15 October 2020. Member States should engage as soon as possible in a broad policy dialogue including all relevant stakeholders to prepare their recovery and resilience plans and are encouraged to interact with the Recovery Task Force and DG ECFIN to discuss their draft plans. ★



Destination Earth (DestinE) will contribute to the Green Deal and Digital Strategy

Roberto VIOLA, DG of The Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT)

The objective of the Destination Earth initiative is to develop a very high precision digital model of the Earth to monitor and simulate natural and human activity, and to develop and test scenarios that would enable more sustainable development and support European environmental policies.



Destination Earth (DestinE) will contribute to the European Commission's Green Deal and Digital Strategy. It will unlock the potential of digital modelling of the Earth's physical resources and related phenomena such as climate change, water/marine environments, polar areas and the cryosphere, etc. on a global scale to speed up the green transition and help plan for major environmental degradation and disasters. By opening up access to public datasets across Europe, it will also represent a key component of the European Strategy for Data.

Users of DestinE will be able to access vast amounts of natural and socio-economic information in order to:

continuously monitor the health of the planet (e.g. to study the effects of climate change, the state of the oceans, the cryosphere, biodiversity, land use, and natural resources) perform high precision, dynamic simulations of the Earth's natural systems (focusing on thematic domains, e.g. marine, land, coasts, atmosphere)

improve modelling and predictive capacities (e.g. to help anticipate and plan measures in case of hurricanes and other extreme weather events and natural disasters, and contribute to analysing events with a major socio-economic impact) support EU policy-making and implementation (e.g. to assess the impact and efficiency of environmental policy and relevant legislative measures) reinforce Europe's industrial and technological capabilities in simulation, modelling, predictive data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI), as well as high performance computing.

At the heart of Destination Earth will be a federated cloud-based modelling and simulation platform, providing access to data, advanced computing infrastructure (including high performance computing), software, AI applications and analytics. It will integrate digital twins – digital replicas of various aspects of the Earth system, such as weather forecasting and climate change, food and water security, global ocean circulation and the biogeochemistry of the oceans, and more – giving users

access to thematic information, services, models, scenarios, simulations, forecasts, and visualisations. The platform will enable application development and the integration of users' own data.

Initially DestinE will serve public authorities. It will gradually be opened up to scientific and industrial users, in order to spur innovation and enable the benchmarking of models and data.

Implementation

DestinE will be implemented gradually over the next 7-10 years, starting in 2021. The operational core platform, the digital twins and services are scheduled to be developed as part of the Commission's Digital Europe programme, whilst Horizon Europe will provide research and innovation opportunities that will support the further development of DestinE. Synergies with other EU programmes, such as the Space Programme, and related national initiatives will also be explored.

Digital twins

A digital twin is a digital replica of a living or non-living physical entity. The digital twins created in DestinE will give users access to high-quality information, services, models, scenarios, forecasts and visualisations (e.g. in climate modelling and weather forecasting, hurricane evolution and more). Digital twins are based on the integration of continuous observation, modelling and high performance simulation, resulting in highly accurate predictions of future developments.

Preparing for DestinE

The first stakeholder workshop on DestinE was organised in November 2019, bringing together a large number of potentially interested parties from public

authorities and the industrial and scientific communities. The Joint Research Centre is currently conducting a study «Destination Earth – Use Cases Analysis», expected by October 2020. It will provide a state-of-the-art analysis of requirements for the development of digital twins at the performance levels needed for DestinE, through the integration of user-driven use cases, as well as the technical architecture and an initial mapping of existing developments in Europe in the area of digital twins.

Institutions such as the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) and the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT), as well as the Commission's services and agencies, are being consulted for this study. A further series of stakeholder workshops on the development of the digital twins are planned for the final quarter of 2020.

DestinE will be developed gradually through the following key milestones:

- In 2023: Launch of an operational cloud-based enabling platform and the first two digital twins.
- By 2025: Platform integrates 4-5 operational digital twins and offers services to public sector users for developing, monitoring and assessing the impact of proposed policy and legislative measures concerning the environment and climate.
- By 2025-30: Development towards a full digital twin of the Earth through a convergence of the digital twins already offered through the platform. ★

Single European Sky

Adina VALEAN, Commissioner for Transport



Today, the European Commission is proposing an upgrade of the Single European Sky regulatory framework which comes on the heels of the European Green Deal. The objective is to modernise the management of European airspace and to establish more sustainable and efficient flightpaths. This can reduce up to 10% of air transport emissions. The proposal comes as the sharp drop in air traffic caused by the coronavirus pandemic calls for greater resilience of our air traffic management, by making it easier to adapt traffic capacities to demand.

Commissioner for Transport, Adina Vălean, declared: «Planes are sometimes zig-zagging between different blocks of airspace, increasing delays and fuel consumed. An efficient air traffic management

system means more direct routes and less energy used, leading to less emissions and lower costs for our airlines. Today's proposal to revise the Single European Sky will not only help cut aviation emissions by up to 10% from a better management of flight paths, but also stimulate digital innovation by opening up the market for data services in the sector. With the new proposed rules we help our aviation sector advancing on the dual green and digital transitions.»

Not adapting air traffic control capacities would result in additional costs, delays and CO2 emissions. In 2019, delays alone cost the EU €6 billion, and led to 11.6 million tonnes (Mt) of excess CO2. Meanwhile, obliging pilots to fly in congested airspace rather than taking a direct flight path entails unnecessary CO2 emissions, and the same is the case when airlines are taking longer routes to avoid charging zones with higher rates.

The European Green Deal, but also new technological developments such as wider use of drones, have put digitalisation and decarbonisation of transport at the very heart of EU aviation policy. However, curbing emissions remains a major challenge for aviation. The Single European Sky therefore paves the way for a European air-

space that is used optimally and embraces modern technologies. It ensures collaborative network management that allows airspace users to fly environmentally-optimal routes. And it will allow digital services which do not necessarily require the presence of local infrastructure.

To secure safe and cost-effective air traffic management services, the Commission proposes actions such as:

- Strengthening the European network and its management to avoid congestion and suboptimal flight routes;
- Promoting a European market for data services needed for a better air traffic management;
- Streamlining the economic regulation of air traffic services provided on behalf of Member States to stimulate greater sustainability and resilience;
- Boosting better coordination for the definition, development and deployment of innovative solutions.

Next Steps

The current proposal will be submitted to the Council and the Parliament for deliberations, which the Commission hopes will be concluded without delay. Subsequently, after final adoption of the proposal,

implementing and delegated acts will need to be prepared with experts to address more detailed and technical matters. ★

BACKGROUND

The Single European Sky initiative was launched in 2004 to reduce fragmentation of the airspace over Europe, and to improve the performance of air traffic management in terms of safety, capacity, cost-efficiency and the environment. A proposal for a revision of the Single European Sky (SES 2+) was put forward by the Commission in 2013, but negotiations have been stalled in Council since 2015. In 2019, a Wise Person's Group, composed of 15 experts in the field, was set up to assess the current situation and future needs for air traffic management in the EU, which resulted in several recommendations. The Commission then amended its 2013 text, introducing new measures, and drafted a separate proposal to amend the EASA Basic Regulation. The new proposals are accompanied by a Staff Working Document, presented today.



NUMERO 30

JOURNAL GÉNÉRAL DE L'EUROPE.

MARDI 10 MARS 1789.

GRANDE-BRETAGNE : preuves du rétablissement du roi , & sa certitude ; en conséquence le bill de la régence est de nouveau différé ; détails de ce qui s'est passé en Irlande à la même occasion.

Unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem.

E N N I U S.

L'événement a donc justifié la conduite temporelle de M. Pitt. A force de délais, de subterfuges, de questions & de difficultés savamment élevées les unes après les autres, de discussions & d'ajournemens parlementaires menagés à propos, il a eu le grand art de traîner l'affaire de la régence, jusqu'au moment où elle est devenue inutile; il a su conserver à son roi la faculté de se montrer encore à ses peuples avec la plénitude de sa raison & de ses pouvoirs; lui-même a recueilli le fruit de ses lenteurs, en s'affermissant & les siens dans les postes éminens que ses adversaires s'étoient déjà distribués; enfin il a mérité que la science de la médecine ou plutôt que la fortune complétât ses triomphes, en amenant dans la santé du monarque un changement, d'autant plus heureux qu'il étoit inespéré.

Ce changement qu'on a pu soupçonner d'abord d'exagération ou de n'être qu'une nouvelle ruse de la part du ministre, paroît aujourd'hui hors de toute équivoque. Non-seulement aucune apparence de rechûte ne l'a démenti jusqu'à présent, mais au contraire des symptômes plus favorables l'ont confirmé de jour en jour. Sans nous arrêter à la suite des bulletins, publiés depuis le 20 jusqu'au 27 février, date des lettres les plus récentes que nous ayons reçues de Londres, il nous suffira de dire que tous annoncent les progrès

TOME II.

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(50)

successifs du rétablissement de S. M. ; & qu'ils sont alternativement signés par les différens médecins qui l'approchent, ce qui ajoute encore à la confiance qu'on doit y avoir.

Dans une nouvelle consultation qu'ils firent le 20 entr'eux, l'avis unanime fut que le roi étoit aussi bien qu'il avoit jamais été dans aucune époque de sa vie ; que S. M. étoit en état de reprendre dès ce moment l'exercice des fonctions royales ; que cependant il conviendrait que S. M. différât encore pendant quelques jours de s'occuper des affaires, pour ne pas trop fatiguer sa tête par une attention dont elle a perdu l'habitude. Par les mêmes principes, on avoit écarté de sa vue toutes les personnes qui pouvoient soit lui rappeler les soirs & les inquiétudes que la politique entraîne à sa suite, soit l'émouvoir par des impressions encore plus vives. C'est ainsi que M. Pitt & les autres ministres ont été privés pendant long-tems de la présence de leur souverain : & qu'on n'a pas osé dans les premiers momens de convalescence, accorder aux deux fils aînés de S. M. le prince de Galles & le duc d'York la douce satisfaction de voir leur auguste pere, à qui l'on fait qu'ils ont donné quelquefois des sujets de mécontentement & de chagrin.

Mais depuis le 20 on n'a plus gardé tous ces ménagemens ; les deux princes ont vu le roi jusqu'à deux fois ; ils sont restés seuls avec lui pendant plusieurs heures, & autant qu'on a pu conjecturer par l'expression des visages, il a paru que l'entrevue a été des plus satisfaisantes pour tous les trois.

Lorsque les médecins revinrent de Kew après leur dernière consultation, & que le docteur Warren eut fait au prince de Galles le rapport de la convalescence complète de S. M., il se tint sur le champ une conférence entre les princes de la famille & du sang royal, dans laquelle il fut décidé qu'il étoit nécessaire de suspendre toute délibération ultérieure, concernant le bill de la régence, puisque S. M. se trouvoit en état de reprendre elle-même l'exercice du pouvoir exécutif. Le même jour, il y eut un grand conseil d'Etat, à l'issue duquel on a expédié différentes dépêches pour le duc de Dorset, & Sir.

(51)

Robert Ainslie, ambassadeurs Britanniques, l'un auprès de la cour de France, l'autre à Constantinople.

Le duc de Glocester, le chancelier & M. Pitt ont eu aussi depuis le 20 plusieurs entrevues avec le roi, qui les avoit exprellément mandés. S. M. avoit même écrit une lettre aux deux ministres, & l'on tire de cette circonstance une nouvelle preuve de la cessation absolue du désordre qui affligoit S. M. La confiance qu'inspire son état actuel, est poussée au point, que déjà l'on a cessé de réciter la priere ordonnée pendant sa maladie, que déjà on parle de lui en substituer une autre d'actions de grâces composée par l'archevêque de Cantorbery, que déjà enfin il a été décidé, qu'à commencer du 2 de ce mois, on ne donneroît plus de bulletins.

Il étoit en conséquence naturel de s'attendre que dans la séance de la chambre-haute du 24, il seroit proposé ou une mesure différente de celle qui étoit actuellement sur le tapis, ou tout au moins un nouvel ajournement. C'est ce dernier parti qu'on a pris. Le lord chancelier s'étant levé, après qu'on eut terminé quelques affaires particulières, dit : " que c'étoit avec la plus vive satisfaction qu'il annonçoit à la chambre que depuis sa dernière assemblée, la santé de S. M. n'avoit point cessé de s'améliorer de jour en jour ; que les médecins n'avoient plus le moindre doute sur son rétablissement ; que tous sans exception le regardoit comme *parfait* ; mais qu'il falloit encore laisser écouler quelques jours, avant de savoir, si & quand son corps affoibli par une secousse si longue & si violente seroit en état de s'occuper des affaires publiques ; si par conséquent il seroit nécessaire de poursuivre ultérieurement l'examen du bill de régence, ou d'adopter une autre mesure quelconque. Sa seigneurie finit en exprimant son vœu que les nobles lords n'eussent aucune objection à faire contre l'ajournement qu'il alloit proposer, & qu'il fixa au lundi suivant 2 mars. "

Le duc de Norfolk toutefois ne put s'empêcher de proposer quelques difficultés, sous prétexte que le tems approchoit où il falloit renouveler les bills annuels, tel que celui de la mutnerie &c. Il demandoit donc que le chancelier informât la chambre de ce qu'on

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avoit résolu de faire dans le cas où S. M. ne seroit pas jugée totalement en état de prendre en main les renes du gouvernement ; si l'on poursuivroit le bill actuel, ou si on lui en substitueroit un autre ; si les médecins du roi seroient appellés à la barre de la chambre, ou si l'on s'en rapporteroit à un simple examen devant le conseil-privé, pour constater le rétablissement de S. M. Sa seigneurie trouvoit nécessaire d'avoir une réponse cathégorique à ces diverses demandes, afin de pouvoir se préparer d'avance, & ainsi trainer le moins possible en longueur ces décisions préparatoires, & pouvoir s'occuper à tems de bills annuels.

Le chancelier répondit qu'il ne lui étoit pas possible de satisfaire le noble lord sur toutes les questions, surtout de la maniere dont elles étoient faites. Il se borna à dire ce dont il avoit été lui-même témoin dans les entrevues différentes qu'il avoit eues avec le roi, & assura la chambre que S. M. lui avoit paru jouir de l'usage de ses facultés mentales, aussi parfaitement qu'aucun des membres présens à cette séance. — L'ajournement passa enfin sans autre opposition.

Tout en rendant justice aux talens & à l'habileté avec lesquels M. Pitt a heureusement conduit cette affaire de la régence, les personnes impartiales n'ont pu cependant s'empêcher de regretter qu'il ait dû employer des moyens de corruption pour parvenir à ses fins, & maintenir dans le parlement la majorité constante qui l'a fait triompher des efforts redoublés de ses ennemis. Malheureusement pour la gloire pure à laquelle ce ministre sembloit aspirer, il est aujourd'hui impossible de le disculper de ce reproche, puisque ses propres partisans ont eu la maladresse d'en publier des preuves. Ce fut à l'occasion de ce qui s'est passé en Irlande, où le parti ministériel a eu le dessous dans les deux chambres. Le ministre par diverses faveurs croyoit s'y être assuré la majorité ; mais la défection de trois seigneurs sur lesquels il comptoit le plus, la lui fit perdre. C'étoit le duc de Leinster qui dans le courant des six derniers mois avoit obtenu du marquis de Buckingham une charge de

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J E U D I 12 M A R S 1789.

FRANCE : Ecueils qui environnent M. Necker ; nouvelles lettres de convocation ; toujours des troubles en Bretagne & en Provence ; la cour rejette la demande du Languedoc ; arrêté du parlement de Paris.

Mais les difficultés sont le champ des vertus.

R O T R O U.

Si le directeur-général des finances a de nombreux partisans, des partisans même aveugles dans leur admiration ; il faut convenir qu'il a aussi des ennemis non moins injustes, & bien plus ardens. Nous ne rangeons point dans cette classe ceux qui peuvent avoir sur l'administration des principes différens des siens. Ceux-là ne sont que des adversaires qui n'emploient que les armes de la raison, pour combattre ce que ses opérations pourroient avoir de defectueux ; mais ils savent rendre justice à la pureté de ses intentions ; mais ils sont toujours prêts à applaudir à tout ce qu'il a déjà fait, à tout ce qu'il fera encore pour les vrais intérêts, la vraie gloire, le vrai bonheur de la nation, & du souverain.

Ceux que nous appellons ses ennemis, n'ont garde au contraire de lui faire un crime de ses fausses démarches ; ils ne lui en veulent, ils ne sont acharnés contre lui, qu'à cause du bien qu'il fait. Ce sont tous les gaspilleurs, ce sont tous les intéressés aux desordres, ce sont ceux qui profitent des abus, ce sont les courtisans & les riches, tous ceux qui volent ou qui oppriment le peuple, tous ceux qui le tiennent dans la misère ou l'avilissement, voilà les vrais ennemis de M. Necker, les seuls dangereux. Ils ne lui pardonnent pas la préférence marquée pour les intérêts &

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la dignité du tiers-Etat ; ils obsèdent sans cesse le trône pour l'émouvoir contre lui, ils font naître mille difficultés sous ses pas, ils lui tendent pièges sur pièges, on dit même mais nous n'osons garantir le fait, tant il est atroce ! on dit que l'on a osé attenter depuis peu à ses jours, & que par la trahison la plus noire on a semé la corruption dans sa propre maison, pour exécuter plus sûrement ce complot affreux. --- Mais ces obstacles, ces dangers même ne doivent pas le décourager. S'il a vraiment une ame forte & vigoureuse, les difficultés ne peuvent que l'élever & l'aggrandir encore. Il est toujours glorieux de n'avoir pour ennemis que les ennemis du peuple.

Au reste ce ministre n'en poursuit pas moins avec vigueur le grand ouvrage de l'assemblée nationale.

Tout est en mouvement à Versailles ; on y travaille avec la plus grande activité aux préparatifs nécessaires pour la prochaine tenue des Etats-généraux, ainsi qu'à la formation des logemens pour les députés. Ceux-ci seront plus nombreux qu'on ne l'avoit d'abord pensé, le ministre ayant jugé convenable d'accueillir les différentes réclamations qui lui ont été adressées par différens baillages pour une plus exacte représentation. Mr. le vicomte de Noailles, grand-bailli de Nemours, avoit formé quatre demandes principales au sujet de la convocation de son baillage : 1^o pour qu'il fut convoqué autrement que par corporations ; 2^o pour que tous les curés fussent convoqués, en laissant à leur conscience le soin de pourvoir au service de leurs paroisses pendant le tems de l'assemblée ; 3^o pour qu'il fut libre au baillage de procéder ensemble sans séparation d'ordres à la conférence, & à l'élection des députés ; 4^o enfin pour réserver au Tiers-Etat la liberté de ne pas réduire à 200 le nombre de ses membres.

Le ministre a répondu à ces demandes, en déclarant que le règlement étoit de pure instruction, qu'ainsi tous les changemens étoient permis, hormis ceux qui pourroient nuire ou préjudicier aux droits de quelque ordre. Cette décision semble se confirmer par l'expédition des lettres de convocation qui viennent d'être adressées aux provinces régies autrement que

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par élections. Ces lettres & les reglemens qui les accompagnent se prêtent aux justes demandes des localités, quoiqu'en se rapprochant, le plus qu'il est possible, de la forme générale adoptée par le reglement du 24 janvier dernier.

Ces lettres font au nombre de onze; savoir pour le Cambresis dont le nombre des députés est fixé à - 4

La Franche Comté à - - - - - 28

Les marches communes franches de Poitou

& Bretagne - - - - - 4

Le Roussillon - - - - - 8

Le comté de Foix - - - - - 4

La Navarre - - - - - 4

La sénéchaussée de Tartas au duché d'Albret 4

Le pays de Soule - - - - - 4

La principauté d'Orange - - - - - 4

La haute-Auvergne - - - - - 12

La Flandre. - - - - - 20

Ce qui, en y joignant le nombre des

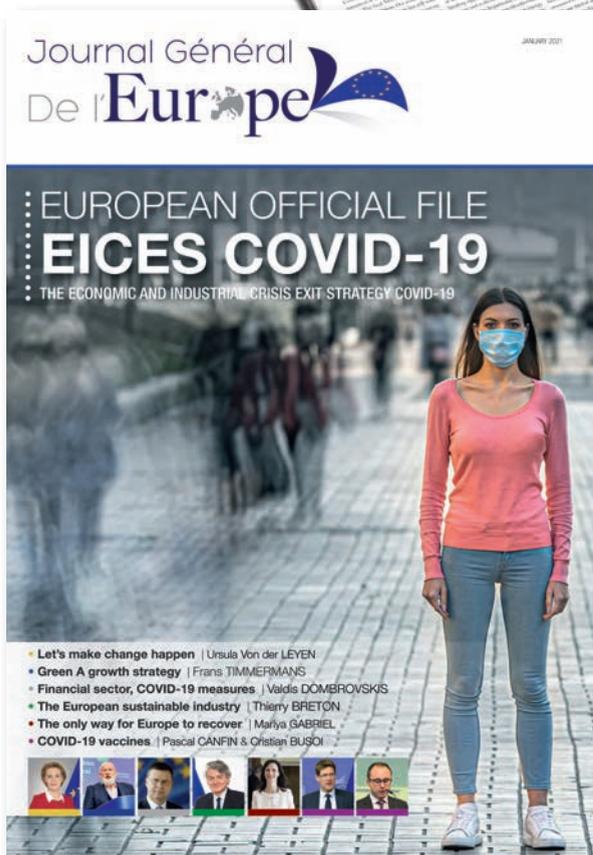
députés fixés antérieurement - - - - - 875

Fera un total de - - - - - 971

Il ne reste donc plus à expédier que la ville de Paris, l'Artois, la Provence & la Bretagne. Mais les troubles qui continuent dans cette dernière province, où la noblesse & les tiers-Etat ne sont pas rapprochés, augmentent les difficultés de sa convocation, & en arrêtent la conclusion. Mais M. le comte de Thiars qui y commande en chef, étant de retour à Paris depuis le 5, on espere qu'il pourra donner quelques moyens de lever ces obstacles, & que la prudence qu'il a constamment montrée au milieu de la fermentation générale, lui inspirera également à Versailles des conseils salutaires. On en attend du moins des éclaircissements sur la véritable situation des esprits & des affaires, l'incertitude qui regne dans les relations venues de la Bretagne, étant telle qu'on ne peut absolument s'y fier. Ici l'on mande que le tiers-Etat est enrégimenté & armé; là que la noblesse s'est donnée une uniforme, & qu'elle est aussi en armes; ailleurs on parle d'un envoi considérable de troupes pour ramener le calme dans la province; toutes ces versions ont besoin d'être rectifiées.

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