

Daily News 03 / 05 / 2019

EU releases its proposal for rules on global electronic commerce

As part of its commitment to transparency and inclusiveness in development of its trade policy, the Commission today made public its [proposal](#) for future international rules on e-commerce. Despite a fast increase in digital trade, there are currently no multilateral rules in this area. In January 2019, a group of 76 members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), including the EU, decided to launch [negotiations](#) that should result in a multilateral legal framework that consumers and businesses could rely on to make it easier and safer to buy, sell and do business online. The rules proposed by the EU would among others guarantee the validity of e-contracts and e-signatures, strengthen consumers' trust in the on-line environment, introduce measures to effectively combat spam, tackle barriers that prevent cross-border sales and permanently ban customs duties on electronic transmissions. A group of interested WTO Members held a first meeting on 6 March to agree on the process for WTO e-commerce negotiations. The EU proposal will be discussed along proposals from other participating WTO members during meetings planned from 13 to 15 May in Geneva. More information available [here](#). *(For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)*

Strengthening EU-Japan cooperation in artificial intelligence, research and innovation

Today, Andrus **Ansip**, European Commission Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, and Carlos **Moedas**, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, met Takuya Hirai, Japan's Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy. They discussed new opportunities to strengthen cooperation, building on the [joint statement](#) of the 26th EU-Japan summit, which took place on 25 April. More specifically, Vice-President **Ansip** and Minister Hirai discussed how to promote a human-centric approach to artificial intelligence as well as common work on data and trust (in line with the recent [Communication on Building trust in human-centric artificial intelligence](#)). Today's discussions also aimed to prepare the ministerial meetings on digital of the G7 and G20 respectively taking place in Paris on 15 May and in Japan on 8-9 June. Vice-President **Ansip** will participate in both events. Commissioner **Moedas** and Minister Hirai discussed the introduction of new programmes for research and innovation on both sides. They expect EU-Japan cooperation in science, technology and innovation to increase in areas of mutual interest, in line with last year's [EU-Japan Strategic Partnership Agreement](#). More information on the meetings and joint statements are available [here](#) and [here](#). *(For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)*

TRADE: Commission publishes first trade defence measures based on new anti-

dumping methodology

The Commission today published its first [anti-dumping](#) and [anti-subsidy](#) measures based on the [new anti-dumping methodology](#) for imports from countries with significant market distortions. The measures published today will ensure fair market conditions for EU producers of organic coated steel, used mainly in the construction sector. The measures on Chinese imports put in place initially in 2013 will now be extended for another 5-year period. The duties range from 13.7% to 58.3%. This is one more example of the Commission's consistent action to support the European steel industry when confronted with unfair trade, in line with a [strategy](#) adopted in 2016 to handle consequences of the global overcapacity crisis. 52 EU anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures currently in place concern steel products and shield 141,000 direct jobs in the sector. The value of the European market of organics coated steel is estimated for €4 billion. *(For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Kinga Malinowska – Tel: +32 229 51383)*

State aid: Commission publishes the non-confidential version of decision to open in-depth investigation into Luxembourg's tax treatment of Huhtamäki

Today, the Commission has published the non-confidential version of its decision, adopted on 7 March 2019, to [open an in-depth investigation into Luxembourg's tax treatment of Huhtamäki](#). The Commission has concerns that three tax rulings granted by Luxembourg to Finnish food and drink packaging company Huhtamäki may have allowed the company to pay less tax and, hence, given it an unfair advantage over its competitors, in breach of EU State aid rules. The opening of an in-depth investigation gives Luxembourg and interested third parties an opportunity to submit comments. It does not prejudice the outcome of the investigation. One of the three tax rulings under investigation was disclosed as part of the over 500 files disclosed as part of the "Luxleaks" investigation led by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists in 2014. Furthermore, about 200 files disclosed as part of "Luxleaks" concerned financing companies and intercompany financing. In January 2017, following discussions with the Commission, Luxembourg introduced changes to their national tax rules to make the tax treatment of financing companies more stringent. The new rules, which concern a significant number of "Luxleaks" rulings aim to ensure that financing companies are taxed sufficiently and imply that the rulings regarding certain financing companies issued before 2017, including those from the Luxleaks files, no longer bind the tax authorities in Luxembourg. The decision is available under the case number [SA.50400](#) on the Commission's [competition](#) website. *(For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel. +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

Eurostat: Les prix à la production industrielle en baisse de 0,1% dans la zone euro, hausse de 0,1% dans l'UE28

En mars 2019 par rapport à février 2019, les prix à la production industrielle ont diminué de 0,1% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et ont augmenté de 0,1% dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En février 2019, les prix avaient augmenté de 0,1% dans la zone euro et de 0,2% dans l'UE28. En mars 2019 par rapport à mars 2018, les prix à la production industrielle ont augmenté de 2,9% dans la zone euro

et de 3,1% dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse est [disponible en ligne](#).
(Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tél.: +32 229 56182; Victoria Von Hammerstein – Tél.: +32 229 55040)

Eurostat: Estimation rapide – avril 2019 – Le taux d'inflation annuel de la zone euro en hausse à 1,7%

Le taux d'inflation annuel de la zone euro est estimé à 1,7% en avril 2019, contre 1,4% en mars selon une estimation rapide publiée par Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. S'agissant des principales composantes de l'inflation de la zone euro, l'énergie devrait connaître le taux annuel le plus élevé en avril (5,4%, comparé à 5,3% en mars), suivie des services (1,9%, comparé à 1,1% en mars), de l'alimentation, alcool & tabac (1,5%, comparé à 1,8% en mars) et des biens industriels hors énergie (0,2%, comparé à 0,1% en mars). Un communiqué de presse est [disponible en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations : Vanessa Mock +32 22956194; Enda McNamara – Tél.: +32 229 58615)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Le commissaire Navracsics à Paris pour la réunion ministérielle à la suite de l'incendie dans la cathédrale de Notre-Dame

Tibor **Navracsics**, commissaire chargé de l'éducation, de la culture, de la jeunesse et des sports, est aujourd'hui à Paris pour assister à une réunion spéciale des ministres de la Culture, organisée à la suite de l'incendie qui a frappé Notre-Dame de Paris. Les discussions porteront sur la mise en place d'un mécanisme de coopération pour mettre en commun des ressources et des compétences afin de mieux protéger le patrimoine culturel européen en péril. Le commissaire Tibor **Navracsics** a déclaré: « *Notre patrimoine culturel est une ressource commune sur laquelle nous devons bâtir notre avenir. Nous ne devons jamais oublier que l'absence d'action, le manque d'entretien ou de prévention sont également coûteux. Nous devons investir davantage, mais il s'agit d'une responsabilité partagée des gouvernements, des entreprises et des citoyens de toute l'Europe. L'UE se tient toujours prête à aider à mieux promouvoir et protéger notre patrimoine culturel.* » Parallèlement à la réunion des ministres de la Culture, les ministres des Affaires européennes discuteront des moyens d'améliorer la coordination et l'utilisation des mécanismes de financement existants de l'UE pour soutenir le patrimoine. Une réunion conjointe de tous les ministres suivra, au cours de laquelle ils devraient adopter une déclaration. En 2018, en clôture de [l'Année européenne du patrimoine culturel](#), la Commission avait annoncé une [série d'actions](#) en faveur du patrimoine culturel. (Pour plus d'informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tél. : +32 229 67083, Joseph Waldstein Tél.: +32 2 29 56184)

27ème Journée Portes Ouvertes des institutions européennes: le Berlaymont ouvre ses portes aux visiteurs

Demain, les institutions européennes se mobilisent une journée entière pour faire découvrir l'Europe et leur travail au public. Du côté de la Commission européenne, la cérémonie d'ouverture est prévue au Berlaymont à 10 heures, en présence du commissaire chargé de l'aide humanitaire et de la gestion des

crises, Christos **Stylianides**. Trente stands y présenteront de manière divertissante et interactive les principales réussites de l'UE et mettront en lumière ce que l'Europe fait pour les citoyens dans la vie quotidienne ainsi que pour promouvoir l'engagement dans le processus démocratique. Des visites guidées du 13ème étage de la Commission, où se trouve la salle de réunion du Collège des Commissaires, seront proposées aux visiteurs, ainsi que des visites des studios audiovisuels, de la salle de presse et de la salle de cinéma avec la projection de court métrages de réalisateurs européens dans le cadre de la campagne EUandMe. Une série de mini-débats/présentations avec des personnalités de la Commission européenne sera organisée à partir de 11 heures. Des activités de plein air sur l'esplanade du Berlaymont seront aussi disponibles, avec un jeu de l'Oie géant sur l'UE, un grand mur d'expressions, des animations et concerts. 15 000 visiteurs sont attendus demain à la Commission européenne. Plus d'informations [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Enrico Brivio – Tél.: + 32 229 56172)

Food Waste: 6th meeting of EU Platform to focus on the business case for food waste prevention

Next Monday, 06 May, Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, Jyrki **Katainen**, currently in charge of Health and Food Safety, will open the 6th [EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste](#), which will take stock of recent progress made in [EU actions to fight food waste](#) as one of the priority areas of the Circular Economy [Action Plan](#) of the [Commission](#). Ahead of the meeting, Vice-President **Katainen** said: *"The actions launched in recent years have put the EU at the forefront of global action aiming to halve food waste by 2030. However, this target cannot be reached without making food waste reduction and prevention part and parcel of business operations and of our daily lives. Together, we need to redesign a food system that minimises losses, promotes circularity and maximises value. Europe needs a comprehensive, innovative and integrated approach to move towards more sustainable food systems and each actor has an important role to play. I look forward to hearing innovative proposals in the context of this sixth Platform meeting."* Launched in 2016, the Platform brings together both public and private interests in order to foster cooperation amongst all key players in the food value chain and help accelerate the EU's progress towards the global [Sustainable Development Goal](#) of halving food waste by 2030. On 06 May, members will discuss the importance of assessing the effectiveness of food waste prevention actions in order to accelerate transfer of learning, adoption and uptake of food waste prevention solutions. With support of the Platform, the Commission has adopted EU guidelines to facilitate food donation and the feed use of food no longer intended for human consumption, developed food waste measurement methodology and is undertaking work to improve date marking practices. The meeting will be web-streamed [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 66430 – Aikaterini Apostola – Tel. +32 229 8762)

Commissioner Hahn in Bratislava in the run-up to the Eastern Partnership 10th Anniversary

Johannes **Hahn**, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, will travel to Bratislava, Slovakia on 6 May to participate in the informal Eastern Partnership [V4](#) ministerial meeting. The meeting is organised by the [Visegrád Group](#) and precedes the [10th year Anniversary event of the Eastern Partnership](#), which will take place in Brussels from 13 to 14 May. The Bratislava meeting will focus on the future of the Eastern Partnership, regional security, economic cooperation, connectivity, infrastructure and energy. *“This year the EU and its six Eastern partner countries are celebrating 10 years of strengthened cooperation within the framework of the Eastern Partnership”,* said Commissioner **Hahn**. *“This meeting will provide all partners with the opportunity to showcase our many joint achievements. The implementation of reforms and delivering tangible benefits for citizens will remain a key priority in the years to come. In this context, the commitment of the Visegrád countries to the Eastern Partnership demonstrates that we are stronger together.”* Commissioner **Hahn** will meet with Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Visegrád Group – Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia – and of the Eastern Partnership countries – [Armenia](#), [Azerbaijan](#), [Belarus](#), [Georgia](#), the [Republic of Moldova](#) and [Ukraine](#). Photos and video of the mission will be available on [EbS](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Adam Kaznowski – Tel: +32 229 89359)

Le commissaire Moscovici à Nancy, France, pour participer à un Dialogue citoyen ce lundi

Le commissaire Pierre **Moscovici**, en charge des affaires économiques et financières, la fiscalité et les douanes, sera à Nancy, en France, ce lundi 6 mai pour participer à [un Dialogue citoyen](#) avec les étudiants de Sciences Po sur le thème « Quelle Europe au lendemain des élections européennes ? ». Le débat sera retransmis [en direct sur Facebook](#). Il rencontrera également M. Laurent Hénart, Maire de Nancy et des membres du Conseil Municipal. Le Commissaire participera aussi à un déjeuner de travail avec M. Eric Freysselinard, préfet de Meurthe-et-Moselle, le Maire de Nancy et des acteurs locaux sur le thème « Comment favoriser le développement de l'économie locale avec l'Europe », à la Mairie de Nancy. (Pour plus d'informations : Vanessa Mock +32 22956194; Enda McNamara – Tél.: +32 229 58615; Patrick McCullough – Tel.: +32 229 87183)

[Calendar](#)– Commissioner's weekly activities

[Upcoming events](#) of the European Commission (ex-Top News)