

Daily News 06 / 02 / 2019

Mergers: Commission prohibits Siemens' proposed acquisition of Alstom

The European Commission has prohibited Siemens' proposed acquisition of Alstom under the EU Merger Regulation. The merger would have harmed competition in markets for railway signalling systems and very high-speed trains. Today's decision follows [an in-depth investigation](#) by the Commission. The takeover would have combined Siemens' and Alstom's transport equipment and service activities in a new company fully controlled by Siemens. It would have brought together the two largest suppliers of various types of railway and metro signalling systems, as well as of rolling stock in Europe, both also with leading positions globally. The merger would have created the undisputed market leader in some signalling markets and a dominant player in very high-speed trains. It would have significantly reduced competition in both these areas, depriving customers, including train operators and rail infrastructure managers of a choice of suppliers and products. The Commission received several complaints during its in-depth investigation, from customers, competitors, industry associations and trade unions. It also received negative comments from several National Competition Authorities in the European Economic Area. Stakeholders were worried that the proposed transaction would significantly harm competition and reduce innovation in signalling systems and very high-speed rolling stock, lead to the foreclosure of smaller competitors and to higher prices and less choice for customers. Since the parties were not willing to offer adequate remedies to address these concerns, the Commission blocked the merger to protect competition in the European railway industry. Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *"Millions of passengers across Europe rely every day on modern and safe trains. Siemens and Alstom are both champions in the rail industry. Without sufficient remedies, this merger would have resulted in higher prices for the signalling systems that keep passengers safe and for the next generations of very high-speed trains. The Commission prohibited the merger because the companies were not willing to address our serious competition concerns."* The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission prohibits Wieland's proposed acquisition of Aurubis Rolled Products and Schwermetall

The European Commission has prohibited, under the EU Merger Regulation, Wieland's proposed acquisition of Aurubis Rolled Products and Aurubis' stake in Schwermetall. It had serious concerns the merger would reduce competition and increase prices for rolled copper products used by European manufacturers. Today's decision follows an [in-depth investigation](#) by the Commission. The proposed merger would have combined Wieland and Aurubis Rolled Products, both producers of rolled copper products. Through the merger, Wieland would also have taken full control over Schwermetall, which manufactures and sells pre-rolled strip to both Wieland and Aurubis Rolled Products, as well as to other copper manufacturers and is responsible for

over 60% of European pre-rolled strip sales. Rolled copper products are used as an input for the manufacturing of many products, including in electrical engineering or electronics industries. Pre-rolled strip is used as an input in the manufacturing of rolled copper products. During the investigation, a large number of European industrial customers expressed strong and substantiated concerns about the significant negative impact of the transaction— both upstream regarding access to pre-rolled strip from Schwermetall, and downstream regarding price increases for rolled products. The Commission's analysis of internal documents of the parties confirmed that these concerns were justified. Wieland was not willing to address comprehensively the concerns. Therefore, the Commission has prohibited the proposed transaction. Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, in charge of competition policy, said: *"Rolled copper products are a key input for many industries in Europe, including for producing parts used in cutting edge sectors such as electric cars, trains and electronic devices. The proposed merger would have created a new dominant player, significantly reducing competition for rolled copper products and increasing prices for European manufacturers. The remedies offered by Wieland were not sufficient to prevent this. Therefore, the Commission had to prohibit the merger, to protect industrial customers and final consumers."* The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

COLLEGE MEETING: Commission makes it easier for citizens to access health data securely across borders

Today the Commission presents a [Recommendation](#) for the creation of a secure system that will enable citizens to access their electronic health files across Member States. Member States have already started to make some parts of electronic health records accessible and exchangeable across borders. Since 21 January 2019, Finnish citizens can buy medicines using their [ePrescriptions](#) in Estonia and Luxembourgish doctors will be soon able to access the patient summaries of Czech patients. Today's recommendations propose that Member States extend this work to three new areas of the health record, namely to laboratory tests, medical discharge reports and images and imaging reports. In parallel, the initiative paves the way for development of the technical specifications to be used to exchange health records in each case. For more information see this [press release](#) and [Questions and Answers](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083 – Marietta Grammenou – Tel.: +32 229 83583)

COLLEGE MEETING: European Commission publishes practical arrangements for Commissioners participating in European Parliament elections

The European Commission has today issued detailed and practical guidance on ethical standards for Members of the Commission who campaign for the European Parliament elections in May. The Guidelines will ensure the coherent application of the revised [Code of Conduct](#) for Members of the European Commission. President Juncker [proposed](#) in November 2016 a new Code of Conduct in order to explicitly allow Commissioners – all of them experienced and

high-calibre politicians – to actively participate in the campaign for the European Parliament elections, including as lead candidates for the position of President of the Commission, without having to temporarily withdraw from their duties in the Commission. The amended Code of Conduct [entered into force](#) in January 2018. Commenting on today's Guidelines, President Juncker said: *"From the very beginning, I wanted this Commission to be a political one. Commissioners take full political ownership and responsibility for all decisions of this Commission. At the same time, I expect them to engage fully and personally with citizens. Actively participating in the upcoming European Parliament elections is part and parcel of this engagement. Therefore, I have changed the Code of Conduct to allow Commissioners to campaign without having to leave the Commission – provided that they keep their campaigning activities clearly separate from their institutional ones."* More information is available in the press release [here](#). The Guidelines have been published [here](#). (For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229-93265; Andreana Stankova – Tel.: +32 229 57857)

European Commission appoints new Directors-General for Communication and for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Today, and with effect of 16 March 2019, the European Commission appointed current Deputy Secretary-General Pia **Ahrenkilde Hansen** as Director-General of its Communication department (DG Communication) – the first woman to hold this post. Timo **Pesonen**, the current Director-General of DG Communication, will be heading the Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs department (DG GROW) as of 1 March 2019. He will succeed Lowri **Evans** in that position, who will retire as of 1 March 2019, after more than three decades of distinguished and dedicated service in many positions of great responsibility. Ms **Ahrenkilde Hansen** is a Danish national who, as one of three Deputy Secretaries-General, is currently the Commission's Chief Operating Officer. She joined the Commission in 1995 and spent almost her entire career working on communication about the European Union and its policies, including as the Chief Spokeswoman of the Commission from 2009 to 2014. Her extensive experience, coupled with her current corporate and high-level managerial responsibilities make her ideally suited for her new assignment. Mr **Pesonen**, a Finnish national, is the current Director-General of DG Communication with a distinguished career both outside and within the Commission. Before leading DG Communication from 2015 onwards, he headed the private office of Mr Olli Rehn when the latter was Vice-President for Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Euro between 2010 and 2014 and Commissioner for Enlargement from 2004 to 2009, respectively. He will bring ample experience in policy-making, management and communication to his new job. More information is available in the press release [here](#). (For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229-93265)

COLLEGE MEETING: Commission on track to reach its target of at least 40% female managers within the Commission

The European Commission is closer than ever to reaching the target set by President Jean-Claude **Juncker** at the start of his mandate to have at least 40% of middle and senior management positions occupied by women in the European Commission by the end of the current mandate. As of 1 February, the figure stands at 39.6%, up from 30% in November 2014. The most significant progress has been achieved at the level of Deputy Directors-General, where the figure is even higher than the 40% target: women currently make up for 43% of all Deputy Directors-General, up from 8% in November 2014. The 40% target has also been reached where the Commission has the highest number of managers – Heads of Units: women currently make up for 40.6% of all positions, compared to 31% when the Juncker Commission took office. Commissioner Günther H. **Oettinger**, in charge of human resources and budget, said: *“Not only is it the mark of a fair and just system, gender-diverse management is a common feature of all successful organisations across the world. The Commission’s progress towards at least 40% of women in management is proof that we are leading by example. In many management posts we have already gone above and beyond the target we set, and we will soon achieve this across the board.”* More information about the measures to improve gender balance which the Commission has put in place since the beginning of its mandate is available [here](#). (For more information: Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229-93265; Andreana Stankova – Tel.: +32 229 57857)

Simpler EU rules for derivatives will reduce costs and regulatory burdens for market participants

The Commission has welcomed yesterday’s agreement between the European Parliament and EU Member States on the targeted reform of the European Market Infrastructure Regulation (EMIR), the rules first adopted in 2012 following the financial crisis to better manage and monitor the risks arising from derivatives markets for financial stability. The agreed reform will provide simpler and more proportionate rules for over-the-counter derivatives, helping to reduce costs and regulatory burdens for market participants without compromising financial stability. First [presented by the Commission in 2017](#), this initiative builds on the results of the Commission’s Call for Evidence, a public consultation looking at the cumulative effect of the new financial sector rules put in place since the crisis, and is a prime example of better regulation in practice. Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President responsible for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union said: *“This political agreement is a tangible deliverable of the Commission’s Call for Evidence – we will reduce the regulatory burden for the real economy to a minimum, while ensuring that EMIR keeps achieving its objective of reducing systemic risk in the derivatives market.”* The reform exempts the smallest financial counterparties from the clearing obligation, while ensuring that the overwhelming majority of trades in the relevant classes of derivatives continues to be cleared in central counterparties. This political agreement will be followed by further technical work before the European Parliament and the Council can formally adopt the final texts. A press release is [online](#). (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Patrick McCullough – Tel.: +32 229 87183)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Fleet Complete by OTPP and MDP

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over Complete Innovations Holdings Inc (“Fleet Complete”) by the Ontario Teachers’ Pension Plan Board (“OTPP”), both of Canada, and Madison Dearborn Partners, LLC (“MDP”) of the US. Fleet Complete provides mobile-tracking technologies, which are focused on connecting fleet vehicles, mobile assets and mobile workforce-based businesses. OTPP is a pension fund and institutional investor. MDP is a private equity investment firm. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the limited activities of Fleet Complete in the European Economic Area. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission’s [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9235](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint control over Xingfu assets by Pierburg and Xingfu

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over the automotive pumps business of Xingfu by Pierburg Pump Technology GmbH (“Pierburg”) of Germany and Shanghai Xingfu Motorcycle Co., Ltd (“Xingfu”) of China, through their joint venture company Pierburg Huayu. Xingfu, which belongs to the group of Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (Group), manufactures automotive pumps. Pierburg, which is controlled by Rheinmetall Automotive AG, manufactures pumps especially for the automotive industry. Pierburg Huayu is active in the production of automotive pumps in China. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, since Pierburg Huayu has no activity within the European Economic Area. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission’s [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9203](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)*

Concentrations: la Commission autorise l’acquisition du contrôle en commun du Groupe IMA Italia par Cattolica et IMA France

La Commission Européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l’acquisition du contrôle en commun des entreprises IMA Italia Assistance Spa et IMA Servizi Scarl (ensemble, “Groupe IMA Italia”), par Società Cattolica di Assicurazione – Società cooperativa (“Cattolica”), toutes basées en Italie, et Inter Mutuelles Assistance SA (“IMA France”), basée en France. Le Groupe IMA Italia est actif dans l’assurance non-vie, la réassurance non-vie et la prestation de services d’assistance en Italie. Cattolica est une société active dans l’assurance vie et non-vie en Italie.

IMA France est une société active dans l'assurance non-vie, la réassurance non-vie et la prestation de services d'assistance, principalement en France. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence, compte tenu des chevauchements limités entre les activités des entreprises et de son impact limité sur la structure du marché. L'opération a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée de contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.9241](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of control over the fluid pressure and controls business of Magna by Hanon

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed acquisition of control over the fluid pressure and controls business ("Rotor") of Magna International Inc. ("Magna") of Canada by Hanon Systems ("Hanon") of South Korea. Rotor provides car manufacturers with cooling and pump technology to support their emission reduction and thermal management needs. Magna is a global automotive manufacturer. Hanon is mainly engaged in the manufacture and supply of automotive thermal management systems worldwide, also known as climate control systems. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns because the horizontal and vertical links between the two companies are limited. The transaction was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9197](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Dombrovskis in Riga for a European Semester visit

Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, will be in Latvia for a European Semester visit on 7 and 8 February. He will meet Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš, Minister of Finance Jānis Reirs, and Minister of Health Ilze Viņķele. He will also visit the new [Academic Centre of the University of Latvia](#), supported by the Juncker Plan's European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), together with Indriķis Muižnieks, rector of the University. (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Annikky Lamp – Tel.: +32 229 56151)

Le vice-président Katainen se rend en Espagne pour prendre part à des réunions politiques et des Dialogues avec les citoyens

Le vice-président en charge de l'emploi, de la croissance, de

l'investissement et de la compétitivité Jyrki **Katainen** se rendra en Espagne du 6 au 8 février. Le mercredi 6 février, il sera à Madrid et rencontrera la ministre de la Défense, Mme Margarita Robles et le président du Partido Popular, M. Pablo Casado. Le vice-président participera ensuite à un dîner de travail organisé par la Confédération espagnole des organisations d'entreprises (CEOE). Le lendemain, le vice-président **Katainen** prononcera un discours inaugural au [Forum Nueva Economia](#) et rencontrera la vice-présidente du gouvernement et ministre de la présidence, des relations avec le Parlement et de l'égalité, Mme Carmen Calvo. Il prendra ensuite la parole devant la commission mixte pour l'Union européenne du Parlement espagnol et participera à un déjeuner de travail avec la ministre de l'économie et des entreprises, Mme Nadia Calviño. Vendredi, le vice-président **Katainen** se rendra à Malaga où il rencontrera le président du gouvernement régional d'Andalousie, M. Juan Manuel Moreno, ainsi que le maire de Malaga, M. Francisco de la Torre. Le vice-président participera à un [Dialogue avec les citoyens](#) sur "L'économie européenne et l'Avenir de l'Europe". Dans l'après-midi, M. **Katainen** visitera la ville de Fuengirola, où il participera à un [Dialogue avec les citoyens](#) sur "l'Avenir de l'Europe" avec des représentants locaux finlandais. Le vice-président **Katainen** assistera ensuite à l'inauguration du Smart Work Plaza avec la maire de Fuengirola, Mme Ana Mula. (Pour plus d'informations: Annika Breidhardt – Tél.: +32 229 56153; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tél.: +32 229 56169)

Commissioners Avramopoulos, Jourová and King in Bucharest for informal meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers

Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris **Avramopoulos**, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality Věra **Jourová** and Commissioner for the Security Union Julian **King** will attend the informal Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting in Bucharest on 7 and 8 February. The meeting of Home Affairs Ministers will start on Thursday morning with sessions dedicated to EU counter-terrorism and police cooperation, with the participation of Commissioners Avramopoulos and King. Discussions will continue over lunch with an exchange of views on the functioning of the Schengen area. In the afternoon, Commissioner Avramopoulos will discuss with Ministers the way forward on migration and asylum. Commissioner Avramopoulos and the Minister of Internal Affairs of Romania Carmen Daniela Dan will then give a press conference at +/- 16.15 (CET), which will be livestreamed on [EbS+](#). On Friday, Commissioner Jourová will join Justice Ministers to discuss the way forward in the area of judicial cooperation in civil and commercial matters. Over lunch, Justice Ministers will discuss cross-border access to electronic evidence for criminal investigations. In this context, Commissioners Jourová and King will then present the negotiating mandates for the EU-US agreement on the exchange of e-evidence and for the Second additional protocol to the Budapest Convention (see [press release](#)). A press conference will take place at +/- 14:30 (CET). (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Christian Wigand- Tel.: +32 229 62253)

Commissioner Navracsics in Germany for Citizens' Dialogue with young people

Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport,

Tibor **Navracsics**, will be in Düsseldorf tomorrow morning (7 February) to hold a [Citizens' Dialogue](#) with young people alongside Sabine Verheyen, Member of the European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education. The event will focus on young people's engagement in society and is part of the ["Y Vote"](#) campaign organised by the [European Students' Forum](#) ahead of the European Parliament elections in May. Bringing together young people from different European countries, the event is designed to help make young voters aware of the relevance of the elections and the importance of making informed choices. This approach also resonates with the new [EU Youth Strategy](#), which emphasises the importance of engaging, connecting and empowering young people in Europe. *(For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: [+32 229 67083](#); Joseph Waldstein – Tel.: [+32 229 56184](#))*

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