

Daily News 11 / 07 / 2019

Droit des consommateurs de l'UE: Airbnb coopère avec la Commission européenne et les autorités de protection des consommateurs de l'UE afin d'améliorer la manière dont elle présente ses offres

La Commission européenne a annoncé aujourd'hui qu'à la suite de négociations avec Airbnb, la plateforme a amélioré et pleinement clarifié la manière dont elle présente les offres d'hébergement aux consommateurs, offres désormais conformes aux normes fixées par la législation de l'UE en matière de protection des consommateurs. Cette initiative fait suite à l'appel lancé par la Commission européenne et les autorités de protection des consommateurs de l'UE en juillet 2018. Věra **Jourová**, commissaire en charge de la justice, des consommateurs et de l'égalité des genres, a déclaré: « Pour leurs vacances d'été, les Européens obtiendront réellement ce à quoi ils s'attendent lorsqu'ils réservent leurs vacances. La comparaison et la réservation d'un hôtel ou d'un logement en ligne ont permis aux consommateurs d'effectuer leurs réservations de manière simple et rapide. Désormais, les consommateurs peuvent également avoir la certitude que le prix qu'ils voient en première page sera le prix réel à payer. Je me réjouis qu'Airbnb se soit montrée disposée à coopérer avec la Commission européenne et les autorités nationales chargées de la protection des consommateurs afin d'améliorer le fonctionnement de sa plateforme. J'attends des autres plateformes qu'elles lui emboîtent le pas». Airbnb a répondu à toutes les demandes formulées par la Commission européenne et les autorités nationales chargées de la protection des consommateurs pour mettre ses pratiques et conditions de vente pleinement en conformité avec les règles de l'UE en matière de protection des consommateurs. Les changements principaux consistent, entre autres, en une présentation claire du prix final sur les pages de résultats, mais aussi, établissent une distinction claire entre un bien proposé par un particulier ou un professionnel. Un communiqué de presse est disponible en [ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations : Christian Wigand – Tel.: + 32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin-Tel.: + 32 229 58659)

Juncker Plan supports social reintegration of Dutch military personnel into the labour market

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has provided €10 million in financing to the Social Impact Bond "Joining Forces" ("SIB") under the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the core element of the Investment Plan for Europe, or Juncker Plan. The programme will help military personnel of the Dutch Army reintegrate into the labour market by giving them job training and coaching, and helping them secure financial stability and improve their wellbeing. More than 1.500 former military personnel are foreseen to be enrolled in the programme. First Vice-President of the European Commission Frans **Timmermans** said: "I warmly welcome this valuable agreement, which will provide much-needed support to incapacitated military personnel as they seek to re-enter the civilian workforce after having served their country. This

project is a powerful demonstration of how the European Investment Fund can support social programmes in the EU.” A press release is available [here](#). As of June 2019, the Juncker Plan has mobilised nearly €410 billion of additional investment, including €11.7 billion in the Netherlands. The Plan is currently supporting 952,000 small and medium businesses across Europe. (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

La Commission européenne dresse le bilan des relations avec les parlements nationaux

Le 11 juillet, la Commission européenne a adopté son rapport annuel sur les relations avec les parlements nationaux et sur l'application des principes de subsidiarité et de proportionnalité. Le rapport donne une image complète des relations intensives et fructueuses entre les parlements nationaux et la Commission et les autres institutions de l'UE. La grande majorité des parlements nationaux coopèrent très activement avec la Commission et un grand nombre d'entre eux ont envoyé des délégations à Bruxelles pour rencontrer des membres de la Commission l'année dernière. Au total, 140 visites et réunions ont eu lieu en 2018. De plus, des fonctionnaires de la Commission ont assisté à plus de 80 réunions de commissions de parlements nationaux pour examiner des propositions législatives. L'année dernière également, la «task-force subsidiarité, proportionnalité et “faire moins mais de manière plus efficace”» a examiné les moyens de mieux impliquer les parlements nationaux, ainsi que les autorités régionales et locales, dans la préparation et le suivi de la législation et des politiques de l'Union. Dans son rapport annuel, la Commission décrit une série de mesures déjà prises ou destinées à atteindre cet objectif à l'avenir. Le rapport est disponible [ici](#). (Pour plus d'informations : Natasha Bertaud – Tél.: +32 229 67456; Tim McPhie – Tél.: +32 229 58602; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tél.: +32 229 63444)

EU invests €50 million to create network of Artificial Intelligence excellence centres

The European Commission launched a new [call for proposals](#) to develop a vibrant European network of artificial intelligence excellence centres to enhance cooperation within the European [Artificial Intelligence](#) (AI) research community and boost technological advancements in the field of AI. Through this [call](#), which is part of the [Horizon 2020](#) Work Programme 2018-2020, the most rigorous research teams in Europe are encouraged to join forces to tackle major scientific and technological challenges, hampering the deployment of AI-based solutions. It has two parts: the first part aims to bring leading researchers together in European networks of excellence centres that will work on key AI topics. Each network of researchers will choose an important scientific or technological challenge with industrial relevance to work on. The second part aims to foster coordination and exchange among the selected projects, and other relevant initiatives. Priority is given to the development of PhD programmes, the integration of AI in curricula (including in non-digital courses) and the organisation of internships. Moreover, enhanced cooperation with the industry is expected to foster an ecosystem of

research and development resources as well as expertise and infrastructure in areas such as supercomputing, robotics equipment and Internet of Things. Candidates can submit their proposals until 13 November 2019. Today's call follows the recent announcement of the €20 million investment for the creation of the [AI4EU](#), an online platform that allows the exchange of AI tools and resources across Europe, in line with the [European AI Strategy](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel. +32 229 67083; Marietta Grammenou – Tel.: +32 229 83583)

Institut européen d'innovation et de technologie: la Commission propose une stratégie pour 2021-2027

La Commission européenne a proposé aujourd'hui une mise à jour de la base juridique de l'Institut européen d'innovation et de technologie (EIT) ainsi que son nouveau programme stratégique d'innovation pour la période 2021-2027. Les propositions adoptées aujourd'hui aligneront l'EIT sur le prochain programme de l'UE pour la recherche et l'innovation [Horizon Europe](#) (2021-2027), qui mettra en œuvre l'engagement pris par la Commission de renforcer encore le potentiel d'innovation de l'Europe. Tibor **Navracsics**, commissaire chargé de l'éducation, de la culture, de la jeunesse et du sport et responsable de l'[EIT](#), a fait la déclaration suivante: « Depuis 2008, l'Institut européen d'innovation et de technologie favorise le talent et la créativité par l'accent particulier mis sur l'éducation et l'esprit d'entreprise. La stratégie que nous mettons en place pour la période 2021-2027 contribuera à garantir que toutes les régions de l'Union européenne bénéficient du potentiel de l'EIT et stimulera encore davantage la capacité d'innovation de notre secteur de l'enseignement supérieur. Et je suis particulièrement fier d'annoncer aujourd'hui le lancement d'une nouvelle communauté de la connaissance et de l'innovation destinée à soutenir l'innovation dans les secteurs de la culture et de la création, prévu pour 2022. » L'EIT est un organe indépendant de l'UE, créé en 2008 et basé à Budapest, qui renforce la capacité d'innovation de l'Europe. Avec un budget proposé de 3 milliards d'euros, soit une augmentation de 600 millions d'euros ou de 25 % par rapport au programme stratégique d'innovation actuel (2014-2020), l'EIT financera les activités des communautés de la connaissance et de l'innovation (CCI) existantes et de nouvelles CCI et soutiendra la capacité d'innovation de 750 établissements d'enseignement supérieur. Les [propositions législatives](#), le [communiqué de presse](#) complet et une [fiche d'information](#) sont disponibles en ligne. (Pour plus d'informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tél.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tél.: +32 229 56184)

Portugal joins the European cooperation on quantum technologies

Portugal signed yesterday the [declaration](#) on laying the groundwork for the development and deployment of a quantum communication infrastructure across the EU. By now nine EU Member States have joined the cooperation to explore the possibilities offered by [quantum technologies](#) to keep Europe's digital infrastructure safe and promote the use of [Quantum Key Distribution](#) for making encryption even more secure. Mariya **Gabriel**, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, said: "Cyber-threats are becoming an everyday reality, and Europe needs to be prepared and ensure that it remains ahead in the technological race. The planned quantum communication infrastructure will

make a real difference to the security of our sensitive communications and data, and will help to keep our citizens safe.” The cooperation was launched in June at the [Digital Assembly](#). Together with the European Commission, the signatory countries will now devise an action plan exploring the benefits and feasibility of building a quantum communication infrastructure in Europe. More information is available [here](#). (*Pour plus d’informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tél.: +32 229 67083; Joseph Waldstein – Tél.: +32 229 56184*)

Mergers: Commission approves GlaxoSmithKline’s acquisition of Pfizer’s Consumer Health Business, subject to conditions

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Pfizer’s Consumer Health Business by GlaxoSmithKline. The decision is conditional upon the global divestment of Pfizer’s topical pain management business carried out under the ThermaCare brand. GlaxoSmithKline (“GSK”) and Pfizer’s Consumer Health Business are both manufacturers and suppliers of a variety of consumer healthcare pharmaceuticals, which are typically available to patients without a prescription from a doctor and generally referred to as “over-the-counter” (“OTC”) pharmaceutical products. The Commission examined the effects of the proposed transaction on competition in the markets where the activities of the companies overlap. Based on the investigation, the Commission was concerned that the acquisition would reduce competition for topical pain management products, possibly resulting in price increases in a number of European Economic Area (“EEA”) countries, including Austria, Germany, Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands. To address these concerns, the companies offered to divest Pfizer’s topical pain management business carried out under the ThermaCare brand globally. This includes all relevant assets that contribute to the current operation or are necessary to ensure the viability and competitiveness thereof. These assets will have to be divested as a package to one suitable purchaser to be approved by the Commission. These commitments remove almost entirely the overlaps between GSK and Pfizer’s Consumer Health Business in the topical pain management category in the EEA. Therefore, the Commission concluded that the proposed transaction, as modified by the commitments, would no longer raise competition concerns in the EEA. The Commission’s decision is conditional upon full compliance with the commitments. The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (*For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526*)

STATEMENTS

European Union becomes an observer to Council of Europe’s anti-corruption body GRECO

Yesterday, the Council of Europe adopted a decision accepting a request by the European Union to become an observer with the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). Welcoming this decision, the First Vice-President of the European Commission, Frans **Timmermans**, said: *“The European Union’s participation in the GRECO as an observer brings the European Union and the Council of Europe closer and reinforces our joint efforts to strengthen the rule of law and fight against corruption across Europe. It is very fitting for this to happen in the year in which GRECO celebrates its 20th*

anniversary". The Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Thorbjørn Jagland, said: "This is another example of good co-operation between the European Union and the Council of Europe. Working together to protect the rule of law and to prevent corruption, our actions will be more effective and we will have a greater impact." The full statement is available [online](#). (For more information: Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tove Ernst – Tel.: +32 229 86764; Katarzyna Kolanko – Tel.: +32 229 63444)

Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and Commissioner Johannes Hahn on the commemoration of the Srebrenica Genocide

"Today we commemorate the genocide in Srebrenica. This was twenty-four years ago; yet this tragedy still haunts us. Our hearts and thoughts are with the victims and all those whose lives have been affected by these tragic events. It is our shared duty to always remember Srebrenica, one of the darkest moments of humanity in modern European history. While remembering, we have the responsibility to firmly anchor peace and ensure a stable future for all people living in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region. We need to end impunity and overcome the legacies of the past. There is no place for inflammatory rhetoric, for denial, revisionism or the glorification of war criminals. Attempts to rewrite history in Bosnia and Herzegovina or anywhere are unacceptable. While Bosnia and Herzegovina has expressed its desire to become member of the European Union, the priority is for all political leaders in the country to work actively towards the promotion of dialogue and respect. The European Union remains committed to support Bosnia and Herzegovina in establishing a society where pluralism, justice and human dignity prevail." The [statement](#) is available online. (For more information: Maja Kocijančič – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Alceo Smerilli – Tel.: +32 229 64887)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Katainen in Helsinki to attend informal Environment Council and the Finnish Government's EU Affairs Ministerial Committee

Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, will be in Helsinki, Finland on 11 and 12 July. Today, the Vice-President will meet Ms Tytti Tuppurainen, Minister for European Affairs of Finland, to discuss the Finnish Presidency of the Council, the Multiannual Financial Framework and the Rule of Law, in addition to other topical EU issues. He will also meet Mr Mika Lintilä, Minister of Finance of Finland, to discuss topical economic and financial issues. On Friday 12 July, Vice-President **Katainen** will attend the Finnish Government's Ministerial Committee on European Union Affairs. He will also participate in the Working Session on Circular Economy of the informal meeting of the Environment Ministers. Finally, he will visit Fortum Corporation to discuss the Circular Economy. (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Enda

McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

Commissioner Stylianides addresses the 16th Batumi International Conference in Georgia

Today, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management Christos **Stylianides** delivers a speech at the [16th Batumi International Conference](#) in Georgia. In the margins of celebrations of the 10th Anniversary of strong Eastern Partnership, Commissioner **Stylianides** will underline the central part that stronger civil protection and disaster risk management plays in EU's partnership with its Eastern neighbours. When responding to any crisis and helping people in need, working together is essential and no country must be left alone. The EU has recently taken concrete operational steps to strengthen its [EU Civil Protection Mechanism](#) by establishing rescEU. During his visit to Georgia, Commissioner **Stylianides** will hold bilateral meetings with the Prime Minister of Georgia, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and with the Head of the Emergency Service. *(For more information: Carlos Martin Ruiz De Gordejuela – Tel.: +32 229 65322; Daniel Puglisi – Tel.: +32 229 69140)*

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