

Daily News 16 / 01 / 2018

COLLEGE MEETING: Circular Economy: Commission presents Strategy for Plastics

The first-ever Europe-wide strategy on plastics was adopted today as part of the transition towards a more circular economy. It will protect the environment from plastic pollution whilst fostering growth and innovation, turning a challenge into a positive agenda for the Future of Europe. Under the new plans, all plastic packaging on the EU market will be recyclable by 2030, the consumption of single-use plastics will be reduced and the intentional use of microplastics will be restricted. The Commission will also develop labels for biodegradable and compostable plastics and propose new rules on packaging to improve the recyclability of plastics used on the market and increase the demand for recycled plastic content. To stop littering at sea, measures include new rules on port reception facilities to ensure that waste generated on ships or gathered at sea is not discharged at sea but returned to land and appropriately managed there. Driving investment and innovation, the Commission will scale up its support for national authorities and businesses, with an additional €100 million for financing the development of smarter and more recyclable plastics materials. The Commission will work with partners from around the world to come up with global solutions and develop international standards. You can follow [live](#) the press conference on the presentation of the package by First Vice-President **Timmermans** and Vice President **Katainen** in Strasbourg. All elements of the Strategy are available at the following links: [press release](#), [Q&A](#) and [factsheets](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Iris Petsa – Tel.: +32 229 93321)

Economie Circulaire: Nouvel page web d'Eurostat montrant le progrès de l'Union Européenne

Une économie circulaire vise à maintenir le plus longtemps possible la valeur des produits, matières et ressources et à réduire au minimum la production de déchets. La Commission européenne publie aujourd'hui une communication sur un cadre de suivi pour l'économie circulaire, accompagnée d'un document de travail de ses services. Pour appuyer cette initiative, Eurostat, l'Office statistique de l'Union européenne, lance une [nouvelle page sur son site web consacrée à l'économie circulaire](#), qui présente l'ensemble des indicateurs du cadre de suivi, fait l'objet de mises à jour sur la base des dernières données disponibles et comporte des outils de visualisation. Le cadre de suivi de la Commission est un outil essentiel qui permet de mesurer les progrès accomplis et de couvrir les différentes phases de l'économie circulaire dans l'UE et dans les États membres. Grâce à celui-ci, il sera possible de déterminer si les initiatives stratégiques existantes contribuent efficacement à atteindre les résultats escomptés et de mettre en évidence les domaines dans lesquels des mesures supplémentaires sont nécessaires. Cet outil constitue un appui crucial aux efforts déployés par l'UE pour favoriser une économie durable, à faible intensité de carbone, efficace dans l'utilisation des ressources et compétitive. Un communiqué de presse Eurostat est à votre disposition [en ligne](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio –

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Le Fonds de Cohésion investit pour une eau potable plus saine et accessible en Roumanie

Le [Fonds de Cohésion](#) de l'UE investit 57,4 millions d'euros dans des infrastructures de distribution, de gestion et de traitement de l'eau dans le comté de Caraş, à l'Ouest du pays. *“L'Union européenne, à travers sa politique de Cohésion, investit pour que chacun ait accès à une eau saine, dans un environnement préservé,”* a commenté la Commissaire à la politique régionale Corina Creţu. Le projet comprend, entre autres, la construction ou rénovation de plus de 120 km de réseau de distribution d'eau potable, la réhabilitation de 20 réservoirs et l'extension du réseau d'égout sur plus de 160 km. Ce projet financé par l'UE contribuera à protéger l'environnement, en limitant notamment les infiltrations des eaux usées dans les sols, dans une zone où vivent près de 138 000 personnes et 19 050 habitants du comté bénéficieront pour la première fois d'un accès continu à une eau potable de qualité. Les travaux devraient être achevés à l'été 2018. *(Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)*

State aid: 2017 Scoreboard confirms benefits of modernisation leading to quicker implementation on the ground of public support by Member States

The 2017 State Aid Scoreboard, published today by the European Commission, confirms the benefits of the Juncker Commission's [State Aid Modernisation](#) package. The annual [State Aid Scoreboard](#) is based on expenditure reports provided by Member States and covers all existing aid measures to industries, services, agriculture and fisheries. It also includes aid granted to financial institutions in the context of the financial and economic crisis. Aid to railways and services of general economic interest is not covered by the Scoreboard. The 2017 State Aid Scoreboard shows that more than 97% of new aid measures for which expenditure was reported fell under the [General Block Exemption Regulation \(GBER\)](#) and could be more quickly disbursed – an absolute increase of about 25% compared to 2013. This development is in line with the Commission's proposal under the “Doing Less More Efficiently” scenario of the [White Paper on the Future of Europe by 2025](#) – to focus on delivering more and faster, while doing less where it is perceived not to have an added value. The Scoreboard also shows that around 94% of total State aid spending was allocated to horizontal objectives of common interest, such as environmental protection, research, development and innovation and regional development. Margrethe Vestager, Commissioner in charge of competition, said: *“More than 97% of new aid measures are being paid out without prior authorisation from the Commission. This is confirmed in the latest State aid Scoreboard. Our modernisation of State aid rules means less red tape and faster allocation of resources. This allows us to focus on measures that have the biggest impact on competition, to be “big on big things and small on small things”, to the benefit of all European citizens.”* A full press release is available in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)*

Antitrust: Commission confirms unannounced inspection in kraft paper sector

The European Commission can confirm that on 15 January 2018 its officials carried out an unannounced inspection at the premises of a company operating in the kraft paper sector. The inspection took place in one Member State and is part of the same investigation that led the Commission to carry out unannounced inspections in [2016](#) and [2017](#) in the sector of kraft paper and industrial paper sacks. The Commission has concerns that the inspected company may have violated [Article 101](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which prohibits anticompetitive practices such as price fixing and customer allocation. The Commission officials were accompanied by their counterparts from the relevant national competition authority. Unannounced inspections are a preliminary step in investigations into suspected cartels. The fact that the Commission carries out such inspections does not mean that the companies are guilty of anti-competitive behaviour; nor does it prejudge the outcome of the investigation. A full statement is available [here](#). (*For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740*)

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