

Europe de l'espace: le président Juncker visite le Centre Spatial Guyanais

Demain, le président **Juncker** et le président de la République française Emmanuel Macron visiteront le Centre Spatial Guyanais à Kourou. Cette visite du "port spatial" de l'Europe, une infrastructure unique pour l'Europe qui assure un accès autonome à l'espace, intervient un an après la présentation de la [Stratégie Spatiale pour l'Europe](#) et s'inscrit dans la promotion d'une ambitieuse politique industrielle au service des intérêts stratégiques de l'Union européenne. L'engagement de la Commission se caractérise par le développement de projets spatiaux de grande envergure tels que les programmes d'observation de la Terre [Copernicus](#) et de navigation par satellite [Galileo](#) et [EGNOS](#) pour un investissement de plus de 12 milliards d'euros sur la période 2014-2020. Ces programmes spatiaux européens fournissent d'ores et déjà des services dont bénéficient des millions de personnes: grâce à l'utilisation des données spatiales, les services d'urgence et de secours, les réponses face aux catastrophes naturelles, l'aviation ou encore l'agriculture voient leur efficacité améliorée. De nombreuses entreprises utilisent également ces données pour des applications toujours plus innovantes. Une [vidéo](#) et une fiche [FR](#) et [EN](#) détaillent les produits et services fournis par les programmes spatiaux de l'UE. Vous pouvez suivre la visite du Président Juncker en Guyane sur [le portail audiovisuel](#) de la Commission européenne. (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maud Noyon – Tel. +32 229-80379; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040)

Banking Reform: EU reaches agreement on first key measures

On Wednesday, the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission agreed on elements of the review of the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD) and of the Capital Requirements Regulation (CRR) and Directive (CRD) [proposed in November 2016](#), an important piece of the Commission's ongoing work to reduce risk in the banking sector and in line with the efforts to complete the Banking Union, as set out in [the Commission's Communication of 11 October 2017](#). The agreement on the BRRD creates a new category of unsecured debt in bank creditors' insolvency ranking. It establishes an EU harmonised approach on the priority ranking of bank bond holders in insolvency and in resolution. The agreement on the CRR/CRD implements the new International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS 9). This will help mitigate the impact of IFRS 9 standards on EU banks' capital and ability to lend. It will also avoid potential disruptions in government bond markets that would result from rules limiting large exposures to a single counterparty. Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President responsible for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union said: *"Today's agreements are the first deliverables of our banking risk reduction package. First, harmonised rules for bank bond holders in a situation of insolvency gives banks clarity for building up buffers to absorb losses and protect taxpayers. It is a key step towards complying with the global standard on Total Loss-Absorbing Capacity (TLAC). This measure will also enhance the effectiveness of bank resolution*

processes. The second agreement gives banks more time to adjust to the introduction of the new accounting standard IFRS 9 and to the expiry of certain exemptions from the large exposure limits, thereby avoiding disruption in lending and in government bond markets.” Wednesday’s political agreements will be followed by further technical talks to finalise the text. A full press release is available [online](#). (For more information: Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Letizia Lupini – Tel.: +32 229 51958)

MiFID II: EU issues guidance on obtaining brokerage and research services from non-EU brokers

Today, the European Commission has issued guidance in the form of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) to clarify how EU investment firms should interact when they seek out brokerage and research services from broker-dealers in non-EU countries. Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, said *“With the issued guidance EU firms will have greater clarity on how to deal with non-EU brokers that provide research. In this context, we welcome the decision of the staff of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission to simultaneously agree to relief for US brokers supplying research to EU firms. Our coordinated action again shows the excellent EU-US cooperation in international financial regulatory matters.”* The Commission recognised the need to clarify how firms subject to the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID II) can obtain such services from other jurisdictions. The Commission FAQ notes the relevant provisions and explains how EU firms can procure international research and brokerage services in full compliance with their obligations. MiFID II is a cornerstone of the reforms we put in place following the financial crisis to improve investor protection and the transparency and oversight of financial markets. Today’s initiative will contribute to ensure that research budgets are decoupled from brokerage, in compliance with the requirements laid out in MiFID II. (For more information Annika Breidhardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Letizia Lupini – Tel.: +32 229 51958)

State of children’s medicines in the EU

Today the Commission presents a [report](#) to the European Parliament and the Council, on progress made in children’s medicines since the Paediatric Regulation came into force 10 years ago. It concludes that positive advances in the development of medicines for children could not have been achieved without specific EU legislation – e.g. the authorisation of 260 new medicines. The Paediatric Regulation also gives a good return on investment. However, the report acknowledges that more effort is needed to combine the effects of the Paediatric with those of the Orphan medicines Regulation to address shortcomings in treating rare diseases in children. *“When we consider the advances in adult oncology, it upsets me deeply that we have not made the same progress in treating the cancers that affect children. In the next 10 years we must focus on making similar breakthroughs for children, by combining the incentives under the Orphan and Paediatric Regulations, and by ensuring that the European Reference Networks – in particular on paediatric*

cancer, reach their full capacity”, said Vytenis Andriukaitis, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety. Full press release in EN, FR and DE is available [here](#). A Q&A doc is also available [here](#). (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

State aid: Commission opens in-depth investigation into UK tax scheme for multinationals

The European Commission has opened an in-depth investigation into a UK scheme that exempts certain transactions by multinational groups from the application of UK rules targeting tax avoidance (the UK CFC rules). It will investigate if the scheme allows these multinationals to pay less UK tax, in breach of EU State aid rules. Commissioner Margrethe Vestager in charge of competition policy said: *“All companies must pay their fair share of tax. Anti-tax avoidance rules play an important role to achieve this goal. But rules targeting tax avoidance cannot go against their purpose and treat some companies better than others. This is why we will carefully look at an exemption to the UK’s anti-tax avoidance rules for certain transactions by multinationals, to make sure it does not breach EU State aid rules.”* The general purpose of the UK CFC rules is to prevent UK companies from using a subsidiary, based in a low or no tax jurisdiction, to avoid taxation in the UK. They reallocate income artificially shifted to offshore subsidiaries of UK parent companies to the UK for taxation. CFC rules in general are an effective and important feature of many tax systems to address tax avoidance. However, since 2013, the UK CFC rules include an exception for certain financing income (i.e. interest payments received from loans) of multinational groups active in the UK – the *Group Financing Exemption*. At this stage, the Commission has doubts whether this exemption complies with EU State aid rules. In particular, the Commission has doubts whether this exemption is consistent with the overall objective of the UK CFC rules. The Commission’s State aid investigation does not call into question the UK’s right to introduce CFC rules or to determine the appropriate level of taxation. The role of EU State aid control is to ensure Member States do not give some companies a better tax treatment than others. The opening of an in-depth investigation gives the UK and interested third parties an opportunity to submit comments. It does not prejudge the outcome of the investigation. The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Yizhou Ren – Tel.: +32 229 94889)

Mergers: Commission clears the creation of a joint venture by GETEC and Briva

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the creation of a joint venture between GETEC Wärme und Effizienz AG (‘GETEC’) of Germany and Briva Group B.V of the Netherlands. The joint venture will be active in the conception, development, operation and maintenance of energy generation and distribution systems, the provision of energy contracting services for buildings, as well as in measures to increase energy efficiency and development of new business models. GETEC is active in energy contracting in Germany. It is a subsidiary of EQT Fund Management S.à.r.l of Luxembourg and GETEC Energy Holding GmbH of Germany. Briva, ultimately controlled by the

Ten Brinke Group B.V. of the Netherlands, is active in project development, construction, sale or lease of residential, commercial and industrial real estate, mainly to strategic investors in Germany and the Netherlands. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the joint venture's limited activities in the EEA. 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.8627](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of US engineering company CH2M by Jacobs Engineering Group

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of CH2M HILL Companies, Ltd. by Jacobs Engineering Group Inc., both of the US. CH2M is a professional consulting services provider across a full spectrum of technical topics such as engineering, construction management and operations as well as maintenance projects. Jacobs Engineering Group is a technical professional services firm providing a range of technical, professional, and construction services to a large number of industrial, commercial and governmental clients. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the transaction's limited impact on the market structure 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.8641](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Irish wind farms by Fixarra, Luricawne, Sojitz and Kansai Electric Power

The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the acquisition of joint control over Evalair Limited and Plum Wind Farm Holdings Limited ("Plum"), both of Ireland, by Fixarra Limited, also of Ireland, as well as Luricawne Wind S.a.r.l. of Luxembourg, Sojitz Corporation and Kansai Electric Power Co. Inc. ("KEPCO") both of Japan. Evalair owns and operates four wind farms in Ireland. Plum owns a wind farm in Ireland that is currently in development. Fixarra is owned by the Craydel Group of Ireland, an engineering provider. Luricawne is owned by HgCapital of the UK, which is a private equity firm. Sojitz is a conglomerate primarily active in the area of trading goods and services, including in the energy sector. KEPCO is active in several businesses including electrical power and gas supply. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because the acquisition does not give rise to an overlap between the companies' activities. 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. 8635](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Dombrovskis in Bucharest, Romania

Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, is in Bucharest for a European Semester visit from 26 to 27 October. Vice-President Dombrovskis' visit also includes several bilateral meetings, including with Klaus Iohannis, President of Romania, Ionuț Misa, Minister of Public Finance of Romania, Mugur Isărescu, Governor of the National Bank of Romania, as well as meetings with social partners. On Thursday, the Vice-President will deliver a closing speech at a conference entitled "10 years of EU membership: from cohesion to convergence", organised by the National Bank of Romania. On Friday, Vice-President **Dombrovskis** will deliver an opening speech at a Commission event entitled "Inclusive growth in Romania – Challenges and opportunities", organised within the framework of the European Semester. (For more information: Annika Breidthardt – Tel.: +32 229 56153; Juliana Dahl – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

Commissioner Arias Cañete opens European Electric Vehicle Congress in Madrid

On Friday 27 October, Commissioner for Energy and Climate Action Miguel **Arias Cañete** will open today the IV European Electric Vehicle Congress in Madrid. In his speech he will underline the crucial importance of zero- and low-emission mobility for the future of the European transport sector. Ahead of the conference, the Commissioner said: "*Europe has fallen behind in the clean vehicle race. We could lose technological leadership in clean vehicles if others keep accelerating away from us. Our upcoming standards for cars and vans will be a fundamental tool to push for innovation and investments in clean vehicles in Europe. We want all European manufacturers to invest and innovate, to succeed in this key new market.*" The second delivery of the mobility package scheduled for adoption in the coming weeks will comprise legislative proposals and initiatives to deliver on the [European Strategy for low-emission mobility](#) from June 2016. It will include proposals to decarbonise the transport sectors, the revision of the clean vehicles directive and CO₂ standards for new cars and vans for the period after 2020, an Action Plan for alternative fuel infrastructures with dedicated measures including new funding opportunities as well as a flagship initiative on batteries. The upcoming package will be part of the wider political context to make European industry stronger and more competitive as outlined by Commission President Jean-Claude **Juncker** in his [State of the European Union](#) speech in September this year. Following up on this, the [Renewed EU Industrial Policy Strategy](#) will help the EU industries to stay or become the world leader in innovation, digitisation and decarbonisation. Building on

Europe's leadership in a low-carbon and circular economy, this helps the EU to implement its [Paris Agreement](#) commitments. More information about the conference [here](#). (For more information: Anna-Kaisa Itkonen – Tel.: +32 229 56186; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)

Commissioner Vella on official visit to Sweden to discuss circular economy and UN development goals

On 26 – 27 October, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu **Vella**, will be in Sweden for an official visit. The Commissioner will speak before the Swedish Parliament at the Committee on Environment and Agriculture and the Committee on EU Affairs. He will also meet with Minister of the Environment, Karolina Skog and Minister for Rural Affairs, Karl-Erik Bucht. A roundtable discussion is planned with participants from the business, public and non-governmental sectors on the Commission's Circular Economy package and the upcoming EU Plastics Strategy. The Commissioner is also invited to speak at a public seminar on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, together with Professor Johan Rockström of the Stockholm Resilience Centre and founder of the Planetary Boundaries concept. Finally, a visit is planned to the world's first Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries in Lake Mälaren, a project supported by the [European Maritime and Fisheries Fund](#). (For more information: Enrico Brivio – Tel.: +32 229 56172; Iris Petsa – Tel.: +32 229 93321)

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