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Juncker Plan supports €40 million loan to finance research of cancer treatment

The Juncker Plan's European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) has provided its backing to a European Investment Bank (EIB) loan worth €40 million to biotechnology company [Nanobiotix](#). The loan will help finance research and development by Nanobiotix of innovative cancer treatments. Commenting on the agreement, Commissioner Vytenis **Andriukaitis** said: *"Cancer is the second-highest cause of death in the EU and with Europe's ageing population, fighting cancer will undoubtedly remain a priority in the years to come. We need to have innovative and dedicated research to always be in search of new treatments. Nanoparticle based cancer treatment research funding is one example of how serious we are in fighting cancer, with the significant support from the EIB to finance research and innovation."* These latest loan agreements come following the [confirmation that the Juncker Plan's European Fund for Strategic Investments \(EFSI\) has mobilised €335 billion](#) in additional investment across the EU since July 2015, exceeding the initial target of mobilising €315 billion of investment. Factsheets on the results of the Juncker Plan are available [here](#). A press release is available [here](#). (For more information: Christian Spahr – Tel.: +32 229 50055; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976)

Digital Single Market: Enjoy your new digital rights across Europe during summer holiday

This summer, the [Digital Single Market](#) brings Europeans more digital rights than ever before, strengthening citizens' online trust and security. Since the [abolition of roaming charges](#) in June 2017, people already have been able use their mobile phones while travelling in the EU without paying extra charges. Under the new data protection rules, which have been in place across the EU since 25 May 2018, Europeans have more control over their personal data. Additionally, since April 2018, consumers can [access online content services](#) they have subscribed to in their home country also when travelling across the EU. To mark the digital achievements, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus **Ansip** said: *"Europeans are already starting to feel the benefits of the Digital Single Market. This summer you will be able to bring your favourite TV programmes and sports matches with you wherever you travel in the EU. By the end of this year, you will also be able to buy festival tickets or rent cars online from all over the EU without being geo-blocked or re-routed."* In the upcoming months, more digital rights will become a reality. From September onwards, Europeans will have increasingly the right to use their national electronic identification (eID) across the whole EU to access public services; and from December, everyone will benefit from the [free flow of non-personal data](#) and will be able to shop online without unjustified discrimination wherever they are in the EU. All existing and upcoming digital rights are in the [press release](#). (For more information:

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From mini-organs to ultrafast filming: early career researchers get funding from the European Research Council

What can we eat to prevent dementia? Are our eyes really the windows to our personalities? How do birds help forests flourish? 403 talented early career researchers have been awarded [European Research Council](#) grants to answer such questions. Scientists will benefit in total from €603 million to create their own research teams and conduct pioneering projects. Carlos **Moedas**, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: *“In addition to supporting early stage European researchers, the ERC Starting Grants also help enrich the European research field by attracting and retaining foreign scientists in Europe. More than one in ten grantees comes from outside the EU or its associated countries. Europe is open to the world!”* The grants are part of the ‘excellent science’ pillar of the EU’s current Research and Innovation programme, Horizon 2020. More information [here](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maud Noyon – Tel.: +32 229 80379)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Augusta refinery and ancillary assets by Sonatrach

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of a refinery located in Augusta (Italy) and a number of ancillary assets by Sonatrach of Algeria. The Augusta refinery and the ancillary assets are all currently owned and controlled by Esso Italiana S.r.l., an affiliate of the ExxonMobil Corporation of the US. Sonatrach is an Algerian government-owned company operating in the oil and gas sector. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given the companies’ moderate combined positions in the markets where their activities overlap and their limited individual market positions where their activities are vertically linked. 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.8959](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – +32 229 55344)

Concentrations: la Commission autorise l’acquisition de ROLAND Rechtsschutzversicherungs par le groupe AXA

La Commission européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l’acquisition de ROLAND Rechtsschutzversicherungs AG, basé en Allemagne, par le groupe AXA, basé en France. ROLAND est actif dans la fourniture d’assurances de protection juridique, d’assurances contre les accidents et les pannes, ainsi que dans le service d’assistance en Allemagne. AXA est actif dans l’assurance et la gestion d’actifs dans le monde entier. La Commission a conclu que l’opération envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence compte tenu de son impact très limité sur la

structure du marché. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le site internet [concurrence de la Commission dans le registre public des affaires](#) sous le numéro [M.8905](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – +32 229 55344)

State aid: Commission approves €500 million in German public funding to promote energy efficiency in rail transport

The European Commission has approved under EU State aid rules a German scheme to support railway companies that invest in energy efficiency technologies. Under the scheme, companies providing electrically powered rail transport services may be compensated for up to 50% of expenses incurred from energy efficiency measures, such as acquisition of modern energy-saving rolling stock including hybrid locomotives or automated solutions. To benefit from this public support, rail transport companies need to demonstrate a year on year improvement of 1.75% (2% from 2020) in their energy efficiency. The Commission found that the scheme is beneficial for the environment and for mobility because it supports and promotes rail transport, which is less polluting than road transport. The Commission also found that the measure is proportionate and necessary to achieve its objective to support the modal shift from road to rail. As a result, the Commission has concluded that the measure complies with EU State aid rules, in particular the [2008 Commission Guidelines on State aid for railway undertakings](#). Commissioner Margrethe Vestager in charge of competition policy, said: “Electrically powered rail transport is one of the most environmentally friendly transport options. By promoting a shift from road to rail, the German scheme will contribute to meeting the EU’s environmental and transport objectives, without distorting competition”. A full press release is available in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – +32 229 55344)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

European solidarity on Energy: Better integration of the Iberian Peninsula into the EU energy market

In the presence of the European Commission, the Prime Minister of Portugal António Costa, the President of France Emmanuel Macron, and the President of the government of Spain Pedro Sanchez will meet in Lisbon this afternoon to strengthen their regional cooperation in the framework of the Energy Union. Leaders will take stock of the important progress achieved in better integrating the Iberian Peninsula into the internal energy market and will formally agree on ways to strengthen the regional cooperation between Spain, France and Portugal. Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said: “Today’s event shows the value of European solidarity and regional unity. By agreeing on steps forward to complete the energy interconnections between France, Portugal and Spain and ways to enhance our regional cooperation, we are strengthening the security of energy supply across Europe, and delivering on our promise to make Europe number one on clean energy and renewables. The world looks to us for leadership in these turbulent times. Let’s show just how much unity can achieve.” Climate Action and Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete added: “This summit will showcase the commitment of the Juncker

Commission to get the hardware of the Energy Union built on the ground and make a difference. A solid and resilient energy infrastructure is also essential to encourage regional action in new areas, such as renewables and energy efficiency. This will help us deliver on our Paris Agreement commitments. I am particularly pleased by the signing of a grant agreement for the power line crossing the Bay of Biscay, the largest investment in energy infrastructure under Connecting Europe Facility ever awarded. It is good for Spain and Portugal, good for France, and good for Europe". Since the Juncker Commission took office, the integration of the Iberian Peninsula into the internal energy market has been a priority. By supporting the construction of the necessary infrastructure, the EU's goal is to end the energy isolation of this part of Europe, whilst improving energy security, giving consumers more choice, and spurring economic growth and jobs. These interconnections are also essential for renewable energy sources to thrive and make Europe world number one in renewable energy. Read full [IP/18/4621](#) and [MEMO/18/4622](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Nicole Bockstaller – Tel.: +32 229 52589)

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