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Financial services: Commission sets out its equivalence policy with non-EU countries

The European Commission is today taking stock of its overall approach to equivalence in the area of financial services. EU equivalence has become a significant tool in recent years, fostering integration of global financial markets and cooperation with third-country authorities. The EU assesses the overall policy context and to what extent the regulatory regimes of a given third country achieves the same outcomes as its own rules. A positive equivalence decision, which is a unilateral measure by the Commission, allows EU authorities to rely on third-country rules and supervision, allowing market participants from third countries who are active in the EU to comply with only one set of rules. Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President for Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services, and Capital Markets Union said: *"Equivalence is mutually beneficial because it enables us to have a robust cooperation with our partners and to open up our markets to non-EU market players and vice-versa. Our equivalence policy has proven effective so far, and we now have even better rules in place to meet our objectives of preserving financial stability while promoting international integration of EU financial markets."* Today's Communication sets out how recent updates to EU legislation will ensure even greater effectiveness of the EU single rulebook, supervision and monitoring, while also fostering cross-border business in global markets. The Commission has to date taken over 280 equivalence decisions with regard to over 30 countries. More information is available in this [press release](#) (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Guillaume Mercier – Tel.: +32 229 80564)

European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking launches first research and innovation calls

The [European High Performance Computing](#) (EuroHPC) Joint Undertaking opened its first calls to fund research and innovation activities in high performance computing (HPC). The calls have a total budget of €190 million, and focus on areas highlighted in the Joint Undertaking's work plan for 2019: the development of essential technologies for high-performance computing hardware and software, supporting manufacturing and engineering small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to use HPC in innovative ways, and establishing HPC Competence Centres in every EuroHPC participating country. Mariya **Gabriel**, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, said: *"These calls complement our substantial investment in Europe's supercomputing infrastructure. They will help us draw on the skills and knowledge of European SMEs and industry to put its ambitious work plan into action and use this infrastructure to develop applications and services. I am looking forward to seeing EU support for supercomputing continuing in the years to come."* In June, the Joint Undertaking announced the [selection of eight sites](#) to host its first supercomputers. More details about the calls are available [here](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Johannes Bahrke –

Tel.: +32 229 58615; Marietta Grammenou – Tel.: +32 229 83583)

Le Centre commun de recherche de la Commission ouvre aux chercheurs ses laboratoires de renommée mondiale

Le Centre commun de recherche (JRC), le service scientifique interne de la Commission européenne, met davantage de laboratoires et d'installations scientifiques à la disposition des chercheurs européens. Les chercheurs de toute l'Europe bénéficieront désormais de possibilités supplémentaires pour utiliser les installations ultramodernes du Centre commun de recherche. Après une [première expérience d'ouverture des laboratoires](#), pour laquelle près de 100 propositions éligibles ont été reçues de 92 institutions de recherche, d'autres laboratoires de la Commission sont maintenant à la disposition des scientifiques externes à la Commission. Les scientifiques pourront y effectuer, par exemple, des expériences sur les solutions énergétiques à émission zéro et sur la sûreté nucléaire. Avec cette initiative, le Centre commun de recherche vise à stimuler la recherche scientifique et la compétitivité, ainsi qu'à renforcer la coopération entre les chercheurs européens. Plus d'informations sont disponibles dans ce [communiqué de presse](#) et dans cette [fiche d'information](#) sur le JRC. (Pour plus d'informations: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tél.: +32 229 67083; Marietta Grammenou – Tél.: +32 229 83583; Joseph Waldstein – Tél.: +32 229 56184)

Concentrations: La Commission autorise l'acquisition du contrôle conjoint de Oney Bank par BPCE et Auchan Holding

La Commission Européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition du contrôle conjoint de Oney Bank SA, par BPCE SA et Auchan Holding SA (« Auchan »), toutes trois basées en France. Oney Bank est un établissement de crédit spécialisé dans les crédits à la consommation, l'émission de cartes de paiement et les produits d'assurances. BPCE est un groupe bancaire français intervenant notamment dans les secteurs de la banque de détail et d'investissement, ainsi que la gestion d'actifs. Auchan est un acteur de la grande distribution en Europe. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence compte tenu des parts de marché modérées des entreprises concernées sur les marchés considérés, ainsi que de la complémentarité de leurs activités. La transaction a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure normale 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.9366](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: + 32 229 90526)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of GAME by Sports Direct International

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of sole control of GAME Digital plc ('GAME') by Sports Direct

International plc ('SDI'), both based in the UK. GAME is a specialist retailer of gaming consoles, games and accessories, as well as digital content and other gaming-related products. SDI is a sporting goods retailer, which operates a diversified portfolio of sports, fitness, fashion and lifestyle brands. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would not raise competition concerns because it does not result in horizontal overlaps or vertical relationships between the business activities of GAME and SDI. 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.9429](#). *(For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Maria Tsoni + 32 229 90526)*

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Panalpina Welttransport by DSV

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Panalpina Welttransport Holding AG of Switzerland by DSV A/S of Denmark. Both Panalpina and DSV provide international land, air and sea freight forwarding services and contract logistics services to businesses. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would not raise competition concerns given the companies' moderate combined market position and the presence of a large number of other players providing freight forwarding services, both to customers in the European Economic Area and other geographies worldwide. 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.9371](#). *(For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Maria Tsoni + 32 229 90526)*

Antitrust: Commission consults stakeholders on guidance for national courts when handling disclosure information

The European Commission is inviting comments on a draft communication to assist national courts in dealing with requests to disclose confidential information in proceedings for the private enforcement of EU competition law. The [Antitrust Damages Directive](#) helps citizens and companies claim damages if they are victims of infringements of EU antitrust rules. In this regard, national courts are likely to receive requests for disclosure of evidence containing confidential information. To support national courts in this task, the Commission has drafted a communication seeking to provide practical guidance to national courts in selecting effective protective measures. The draft communication presents a number of measures available to disclose relevant information while protecting confidentiality, and highlights the elements that courts could consider for choosing the most effective, within the boundaries of their national procedural rules. Responses to the consultation can be submitted until 18 October 2019. The consultation document is available [here](#). The full press release is available online in [EN](#), [FR](#) and [DE](#). *(For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Maria Tsoni + 32 229 90526)*

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