

Actualités

The EU and Canada adopt rules putting in place the CETA investment court. The fundamentals of the Investment Court System are already established under CETA. However, for the system to work, the two sides needed to agree on additional detailed rules, procedures and structures, which they did today. For the Investment Court System rules under CETA to enter into force, full ratification of CETA by all Member States is required. Nevertheless, at the time of the signature of CETA, the EU, its Member States and Canada already agreed to put in place all of its necessary elements before the entry into force of the agreement. The four decisions adopted today by the EU and Canada concern: Rules setting out the functioning of the [Appellate Tribunal](#): these rules will ensure an effective appeal function, the first such appeal function to become operational in international investment agreements; A [code of conduct](#) for the judges of the Investment Court System: this will further bolster the assurances of the highest ethics standards already contained in the agreement; [Rules for mediation](#): mediation is an area which traditional investment agreements have largely overlooked and; [Rules for binding interpretations](#) to be adopted by the CETA Joint Committee: these rules will facilitate the EU and Canada to maintain control of the interpretation of the agreement.

EIT Strategy 2021 – 2027. The Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) proposed for 2021-2027 ensures alignment with the objectives of Horizon Europe and introduces the following main new features:

Increasing the regional impact of Knowledge and Innovation Communities: In the future, the EIT will strengthen its networks, involving more higher education institutions, businesses and research organisations by developing regional outreach strategies. The selection of cooperation partners and the preparation of KIC activities will be more inclusive. KICs will also develop links to **Smart Specialisation Strategies**, an EU initiative to spur economic growth and job creation by enabling each region to identify and develop its own competitive advantages.

Boosting the innovation capacity of higher education: The EIT will support 750 higher education institutions with funding, expertise and coaching, enabling them to develop economic activities within their area of interest. The EIT will build on successful policy initiatives such as **HEInnovate**, a free self-assessment tool for all types of higher education institutions, or the **Regional Innovation Impact Assessment Framework**, which allows universities to assess how they are fostering innovation in the regions they are based in.

Launch of new KICs: The EIT will launch two new KICs, selected in fields most relevant to Horizon Europe policy priorities. The first new KIC is set to focus on the **cultural and creative industries (CCI)** ([more information found here in Annex 1B - page 24](#)) and is planned to start in 2022. [Upcoming Call for proposals | EIT \(europa.eu\)](#)

Feu vert pour le projet paneuropéen sur les batteries innovantes. La Commission a autorisé, en vertu des règles de l'UE en matière d'aides d'État, un deuxième projet important d'intérêt européen commun («PIIEC») visant à soutenir la recherche et l'innovation dans la chaîne de valeur des batteries. Dénommé projet «**European Battery Innovation**», a été élaboré et notifié conjointement par l'Allemagne, l'Autriche, la Belgique (avec Hydrometal et Prayon), la Croatie, l'Espagne, la Finlande, la France, la Grèce, l'Italie, la Pologne, la Slovaquie et la Suède. Le projet couvrira l'ensemble de la chaîne de valeur des batteries: l'extraction des matières premières, la conception et la fabrication des cellules et des packs de batteries et, enfin, le recyclage et l'élimination dans le cadre d'une économie circulaire, en mettant fortement l'accent sur la durabilité.

Des nouveaux pouvoirs en cas de litiges commerciaux. Les députés européens ont adopté les nouvelles règles permettant à l'Union de recourir à des contre-mesures dans le cadre de litiges commerciaux, lorsque l'arbitrage est bloqué. Elles permettront à l'Union d'agir à condition d'avoir obtenu une décision favorable de l'organe de règlement des différends de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC). Le règlement doit encore être formellement adopté par le Conseil...A suivre. [TA \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

Pour un cadre juridique sur l'intelligence artificielle. Les députés européens ont appelé à un cadre juridique européen sur l'intelligence artificielle (IA). Ils souhaitent que l'IA soit conçue explicitement pour servir le bien commun et respecte certains principes éthiques comme l'interdiction de la discrimination ou la protection des données personnelles. Ils demandent également l'interdiction des armes létales autonomes... A suivre [TA \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

The Commission authorises eight genetically modified crops for use as food and feed. The Commission has authorised five genetically modified crops (3 maize and 2 soybeans) and renewed the authorisation for three maize crops used for food and feed. All of these GMOs have gone through a comprehensive and stringent authorisation procedure, including a favourable scientific assessment by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The authorisation decisions do not cover cultivation. Member States did not reach a qualified majority either in favour or against at the Standing Committee and at the subsequent Appeal Committee. The European Commission has therefore the legal duty to proceed with the authorisations. The authorisations are valid for 10 years, and any product produced from these GMOs will be subject to the EU's strict rules. [Traceability and labelling | Food Safety \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

Chemicals: The EU protects wildlife from negative effects of lead in the environment. The Commission took firm steps to ensure that wildlife is protected from the negative effects of lead in the environment, by restricting its use in gunshot in or around wetlands. Adopted under the framework of the [EU's chemicals regulation](http://europa.eu), the measure will help to protect the environment by significantly reducing lead pollution. The measure adopted will harmonise and enhance the effectiveness of national legislation limiting the use of lead gunshot in wetlands already in place in 24 Member States. It will start applying in two years' time. [Lead in shot, bullets and fishing weights - ECHA \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

The Commission launches a public consultation on the current VAT rules for financial and insurance services. Currently, under the VAT Directive, most financial and insurance services are exempt from VAT. However, it has become clear that the VAT rules around this important sector have become outdated. Because of the exemption, providers of financial and insurance services cannot deduct the VAT incurred on inputs, notably – but not exclusively – on investment goods such as IT costs. This deprives the tax of its neutrality with VAT becoming a cost for providers of financial and insurance services, and, eventually, for their customers. At the same time, the VAT rules of these services have become overly-complex, difficult to apply and have not kept pace with the developments of new products and services, such as fintech. This leads in turn to legal uncertainty, high administrative and regulatory costs, and a negative effect on competitiveness for business. Dead line: 3 May 2021. [Have your say \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

The Commission launches a public consultation on the digital levy. This initiative aims to ensure fair taxation in the digital economy, while at the same time contributing to Europe's recovery. Tax systems have been lagging behind global technological developments over the past number of years. This has resulted in digital companies paying much less tax than they should. The COVID-19 crisis has also exacerbated this situation as it has accelerated the transition towards a more digital world and boosted profits and revenues for many online companies. Dead line: 12 April 2021. [A fair & competitive digital economy – digital levy \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

Stratégie sur le rôle international de l'euro. Cette stratégie vise à renforcer la capacité de l'Europe à jouer un rôle de premier plan dans la gouvernance économique mondiale, tout en protégeant l'UE contre les pratiques déloyales et abusives. L'approche proposée repose sur trois objectifs: Renforcer le **rôle international de l'euro** en dialoguant avec les pays tiers partenaires pour promouvoir l'utilisation de l'euro, en soutenant le développement d'instruments et d'indices libellés en euros et en favorisant le statut de monnaie internationale de référence de l'euro dans les secteurs de l'énergie et des produits de base. Par ailleurs, la Commission continuera également de soutenir les

travaux de la Banque centrale européenne (BCE) concernant l'émission éventuelle d'un euro numérique, en complément des espèces. **Poursuivre le développement des infrastructures des marchés financiers de l'UE et améliorer leur résilience**, dans le cas notamment de l'application extraterritoriale de sanctions par des pays tiers. Continuer à **promouvoir la mise en œuvre et l'exécution uniformes des sanctions prises par l'UE**. Cette année, la Commission mettra au point une base de données pour garantir l'efficacité des rapports et des échanges d'informations entre les États membres et la Commission sur la mise en œuvre et l'exécution des sanctions. [Communication from the Commission: The European economic and financial system: fostering openness, strength and resilience \(europa.eu\)](#)

Augmentation du budget pour l'aide humanitaire en 2021. 505 millions € seront alloués à l'Afrique, pour soutenir les populations confrontées à la crise prolongée du bassin du lac Tchad, qui touche le Nigeria, le Niger, le Cameroun et le Tchad; les victimes de crises alimentaires et nutritionnelles aggravées par les incidents liés à la sécurité et les conflits communautaires au Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritanie et Niger); et les personnes déplacées en raison des conflits armés au Soudan du Sud, en République centrafricaine et dans la Corne de l'Afrique (Somalie et Éthiopie). 385 millions € de fonds d'aide humanitaire de l'UE seront mobilisés en faveur du Moyen-Orient et de la Turquie pour venir en aide aux personnes touchées par la crise régionale en Syrie et pour faire face aux besoins du Yémen. 180 millions € de fonds d'aide humanitaire seront encore mobilisés en faveur des populations les plus vulnérables en Asie et en Amérique latine. L'Union européenne continuera également d'apporter son aide dans les pays d'Asie tels que l'Afghanistan, et le Bangladesh. L'UE allouera également 28 millions € pour financer des projets visant à faire face aux crises en Ukraine, dans les Balkans occidentaux et dans le Caucase.

Commission study finds positive impact of trade agreements on agri-food sectors. Trade agreements are due to result in substantial increases in EU agri-food exports, with more limited increases in imports, creating a positive trade balance overall. The study also confirms that the EU's approach to grant a limited amount of lower duty imports (through tariff rate quotas) is the best approach in terms of protecting specific vulnerable agri-food sectors in the EU. The study covers free trade agreements (FTAs) recently concluded or implemented by the EU. In addition, included in the scenarios, the five concluded FTAs are modelled on the basis of the negotiated outcome. The Sustainability Impact Assessments prepared in support of trade negotiations already provide the Commission with an in-depth analysis of the potential economic, social, human rights, and environmental impacts . [irc-cumulative-economic-impact-of-trade-agreements-on-eu-agriculture_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

Opportunités

Webinar series on Standard Essential Patents. DG Grow is organising a number of webinars on Standard Essential Patents (SEPs) in winter/spring 2021 so that it can take stock of the state-of-play, share some of the ideas developed under recent actions and discuss with stakeholders potential improvements to the framework governing SEPs. Event date: to 04/05/2021. Online via Teams. [Webinar series on Standard Essential Patents | Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs \(europa.eu\)](#)

Second ELIIT Call for Proposals . The European Light Industries Innovation and Technology project (ELIIT Project) launched its second Call for Proposal. Like the first call, this call aims to foster the collaboration between SMEs active in the textile, clothing, leather and footwear sectors (TCLF) and technology providers with innovative solutions that can bring the SMEs' performance to a new level. The deadline for applications is 14 April 2021. [APPLY+ | Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs \(europa.eu\)](#)

Call for Expressions of Interest to be part of the list of vendors to be invited to tender for contracts related to economic analysis of trade policy. The European Commission has published a call for expression of interest to facilitate the procurement of studies and analytical work in the area of trade, the potential development of analytical tools for trade policy, carrying out trade policy related surveys and peer reviews. this call remains open until 2 December 2022. [eTendering - Data \(europa.eu\)](#)

Expert insight: LIFE 2020 Call for Proposals from NGOs on the European Green Deal. As part of the LIFE programme's response to the Covid-19 crisis, a special Call for Proposals has been launched to help Europe's NGOs boost public participation in the European Green Deal. The three main evaluation criteria are: Quality of the proposal in terms of addressing specific needs; Relevance of the approach; Financial coherence and value for money. Dead line: 31 March 2021. [LIFE 2020 Call for Proposals from NGOs on the European Green Deal \(NGO4GD\) - Q&A Summary | EASME \(europa.eu\)](#)

Call for Tender DG Health on Best Practices for the Welfare of Dairy Calves and Cows This is a pilot project from the European Parliament aiming at producing a clear set of good and best practice guidelines for the welfare of dairy heifers, cows and calves on the basis of robust animal-based indicators. 26/03/2021. [Services - 70762-2021 - TED Tenders Electronic Daily \(europa.eu\)](#)

Call for tender EASME Improving the Availability and the Scope of Services for Companies in Financial Difficulties. The tenderer must prove experience in the fields of insolvency prevention and second chance policies, and in the delivery of services in those fields to companies. It must prove experience in developing curricula and testing training programmes for entrepreneurs and in organising events. Budget: 900000.00 EUR, - dead line 23/03/2021. [Services - 48746-2021 - TED Tenders Electronic Daily \(europa.eu\)](#)

A lire

Multilateral cooperation behind the trade war headlines: How much trade is freed up? The Commission published a paper at the Centre for European Policy Studies. This paper highlights the importance of multilateral cooperation as an avenue for tackling technical barriers to trade (TBTs). These non-tariff barriers are some of the most prevalent affecting global trade. While the US-China trade war and its tariff escalation was grabbing headlines, multilateral cooperation was happening behind the scenes. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) TBT Committee has spent the past decade removing EUR 80 billion worth of unnecessary trade costs affecting EU exports. [Multilateral cooperation behind the trade war headlines – CEPS](#)

The Atlas of the Human Planet: open geoinformation for research, policy and action. Based on GHSL data, the 2020 edition of the Atlas of the Human Planet provides 37 examples of applications of GHSL data in various policy domains, from disaster risk management to urbanisation, sustainable development and the green deal. In addition, the Atlas presents the plan for a future production of the GHSL data under the umbrella of the Copernicus services. [Atlas 2020.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

Evénements

Recherche européenne Horizon Europe, ateliers du NCP wallonie. La séance généraliste du 2 mars sera suivie par 18 ateliers thématiques en ligne, programmés du 3 au 8 mars : Industry 4.0, énergies renouvelables et batteries, sécurité et cybersécurité, réseaux et stockage d'énergie, efficacité énergétique, biodiversité et écosystème, économie circulaire, culture, créativité et société inclusive, farm2Fork, clean environment & zero pollution, santé, recyclage, matériaux avancés, industrie du process, ICT, AI, Blockchain, Clouds, Big data, 5G, robotic, climat, green communities & Innovative Governance, technologies spatiales, transport, mobilité. [Séance du 2 mars : infos et inscription](#) [Ateliers thématiques du 3 au 8 mars : infos et inscriptions](#)

Water Knowledge Europe 2021 Spring Edition 23 - 26 March 2021. It will be presenting the new Calls for Proposals of the Horizon Europe (HEU) R&I FP & Project Ideas will be offering presentations of market scenarios, challenges and solutions from Technology Providers to foster the market outreach of innovations under the hot topic of Digital Water & Cyber-security & Marketplace . [Water Knowledge Europe 2021 - Spring Edition - Home \(b2match.io\)](#)

« Le talent n'est presque rien et l'expérience est tout, que l'on acquiert à force de modestie et de travail.

Patrick Suskind.