



Daily News 31 / 07 / 2023

Brussels, 31 July 2023

Sustainable Finance: Commission adopts the European Sustainability Reporting Standards

The Commission has today adopted the **European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS)** for use by all companies subject to the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive ([CSRD](#)). This marks another step forward in the transition to a sustainable EU economy.

Mairead **McGuinness**, Commissioner for Financial Services, Financial Stability and Capital Markets Union, said: *"The standards we have adopted today are ambitious and are an important tool underpinning the EU's sustainable finance agenda. They strike the right balance between limiting the burden on reporting companies while at the same time enabling companies to show the efforts they are making to meet the Green Deal Agenda, and accordingly have access to sustainable finance."*

The standards cover the full range of environmental, social, and governance issues, including climate change, biodiversity and human rights. They provide information for investors to understand the sustainability impact of the companies in which they invest. They also take account of discussions with the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) in order to ensure a very high degree of interoperability between EU and global standards and to prevent unnecessary double reporting by companies.

The reporting requirements will be phased in over time for different companies.

A detailed [Q&A](#) will be available shortly.

(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 2 298 70 24; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

1,2 million d'euros pour un nouveau projet visant à mieux comprendre la désinformation sur la guerre, les élections et le genre

Aujourd'hui, la Commission a lancé un [appel à propositions de projets](#) permettant de décrypter la manière dont les récits de désinformation sur la guerre de la Russie contre l'Ukraine, les élections et la communauté LGBTQ+ émergent en ligne et hors ligne, et de contribuer à la lutte contre ces récits et leurs effets. Cet appel s'appuie sur un [projet similaire déjà en cours](#), à la suite d'un [appel à propositions](#) publié en juillet 2022.

Ce nouvel appel prévoit un financement de l'UE de près de 1,2 million d'euros pour aider à mieux comprendre comment la désinformation se forme et se propage, comment elle façonne l'esprit des gens, ainsi que son impact dans la vie réelle. Cela revêt une importance particulière dans le contexte des informations fausses et trompeuses sur la guerre de la Russie contre l'Ukraine, qui peuvent déstabiliser les démocraties, du préjudice que la désinformation peut causer à l'intégration et à l'égalité de la communauté LGBTQ+, ainsi que de son effet sur les élections.

En complément des travaux de [l'Observatoire européen des médias numériques \(EDMO\)](#), le projet devrait également proposer des stratégies et des mesures, de futures actions politiques et de nouvelles pratiques pour soutenir les récits positifs et contrer les récits erronés et préjudiciables, y compris en démystifiant les récits de désinformation attendus.

La date limite de dépôt des candidatures est fixée au 22 septembre 2023 et le projet retenu devrait débuter en septembre 2024. Les universités, les centres de recherche, les ONG, les autorités publiques et autres sont éligibles pour postuler. Plus d'informations sur cet appel à propositions sont disponibles [ici](#).

Ces projets s'inscrivent dans le cadre d'efforts plus vastes visant à lutter contre la désinformation, notamment le [code de bonnes pratiques contre de désinformation](#) et l'initiative ["EU vs Disinfo"](#). D'ici la fin du mois d'août, les [très grandes plateformes en ligne désignées](#) dans le cadre du [Règlement sur les services numériques](#) devront également procéder à leur première évaluation régulière des risques, qui portera notamment sur la propagation de la désinformation et l'utilisation non authentique de leurs services.

(Pour plus d'informations : Sonya Gospodinova – Tel. : +32 2 296 69 53; Thomas Regnier – Tel. : +32 2 299 10 99)

Digital Markets Act: Commission seeks views regarding template for reporting consumer profiling techniques used by platforms

Today, the Commission is launching a [consultation](#) on a draft template for the description of consumer profiling techniques, which gatekeepers apply to their core platform services. Gatekeepers are obliged to submit the description to the Commission as part of their obligations under the [Digital Markets Act](#) (DMA). All interested parties have six weeks to submit on [EUSurvey](#) their views on the draft, i.e. until 15 September 2023.

Gatekeepers collect and accumulate large amounts of data from users, which limit the possibility for potential entrants and start-ups to compete with them. Transparency on profiling techniques should help prevent deep consumer profiling from becoming the industry standard, allowing competitors to differentiate themselves by offering improved privacy guarantees.

The draft template specifies the minimum information that the Commission expects gatekeepers to provide to enhance transparency and accountability of their profiling techniques. The description must be independently audited, and gatekeepers must publish a meaningful and non-confidential overview of it. Both the description and the overview must be updated annually.

The aim of the consultation is to gather feedback from stakeholders on the draft template to ensure that all relevant aspects of consumer profiling are considered. This will ensure transparency and facilitate the supervision by the Commission and the competent authorities. In particular, the Commission welcomes feedback from potential gatekeepers, consumer interest groups, data experts, relevant national competent authorities, platforms' business users such as advertisers, and auditors active in relevant areas.

The Commission will designate the gatekeepers under the DMA by 6 September 2023. Designated companies will then have six months to comply with the list of [obligations and prohibitions](#) in the DMA.

(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 2 298 70 24; Sonya Gospodinova – Tel.: +32 2 296 69 53; Nina Ferreira – Tel.: +32 2 299 81 63; Thomas Regnier – Tel.: +32 2 299 10 99)

Agriculture: The Commission approves a new geographical indication from Bulgaria - 'Българско бяло саламурено сирене / Bulgarsko byalo salamureno sirene'

The Commission approved the addition of '[Българско бяло саламурено сирене / Bulgarsko byalo salamureno sirene](#)' – as **Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)** from **Bulgaria**.

'Българско бяло саламурено сирене / Bulgarsko byalo salamureno sirene' is a fermented milk product made from whole cow's, sheep's, goat's, buffalo's or mixed milk with the addition of starter cultures containing *Lactococcus lactis* subsp. *lactis* and *Lactobacillus casei*, as well as symbiotic starters from the bacteria *Lactobacillus delbrueckii* subsp. *bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*, obtained by curdling with yeast for cheese, that has undergone necessary treatment, matured in brine and is intended for consumption.

This new denomination will be added to the list of 1,648 agricultural products already protected. The list of all protected geographical indications can be found in the [eAmbrosia](#) database. More information is available online at [Quality Schemes](#) and on our [GIVIEW](#) portal.

(For more information: Miriam García Ferrer – Tel.: +32 2 299 90 75; Roberta Verbanac – Tel.: +32 2 298 24 98)

Antitrust: Commission sends Statement of Objections to Pierre Cardin and its licensee Ahlers over distribution and licensing practices for clothing*

The European Commission has informed **Pierre Cardin** and its licensee **Ahlers** of its preliminary view that the companies may have breached EU antitrust rules by restricting cross-border sales of Pierre Cardin-licensed clothing, as well as sales of such products to specific customers.

The Commission has concerns that, for more than a decade, Pierre Cardin and Ahlers entered into **anticompetitive agreements** and **coordinated** to restrict the ability of other Pierre Cardin licensees and their customers to sell Pierre Cardin-licensed clothing, both offline and online: (a) into

Ahlers' EEA licensed territories; and/or (b) to low-price retailers (such as discounters) offering lower prices to consumers in such territories.

The Commission preliminarily found that the ultimate objective of such coordination between Pierre Cardin and Ahlers was to **ensure Ahlers' absolute territorial protection** in the countries covered by its licensing agreements with Pierre Cardin in the EEA.

If the Commission's preliminary view were confirmed, the companies' behaviour would violate EU rules that prohibit anticompetitive agreements between companies ([Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#) ('TFEU') and Article 53 of the EEA Agreement). Sending a Statement of Objections does not prejudice the outcome of an investigation.

Executive Vice-President Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: "*Consumers in the EU must be able to shop around for the best deals. Our concern is that the licensing and distribution practices of Pierre Cardin and Ahlers, its largest licensee, may have prevented consumers from benefiting from lower prices and a greater choice of clothing.*"

A press release is available [online](#).

(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 2 298 70 24; Nina Ferreira – Tel.: +32 2 299 81 63)

State aid: Commission approves €380 million Czech scheme to support rail network interoperability

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, the reintroduction of a Czech scheme aimed at **removing barriers to rail interoperability and increasing safety** in the sector. The reintroduced scheme was originally approved in April 2017 ([SA.44621](#)) and partially prolonged in [February 2020](#) ([SA.55861](#)) until 31 December 2022.

Czechia notified the Commission of its intention to reintroduce the scheme until 31 July 2028, with a budget of **€380 million (CZK 9 billion)**. The scheme will support removing barriers to rail interoperability in accordance with the applicable technical specifications, in particular upgrading of [European Rail Traffic Management System](#) ('ERTMS') on vehicles running on the Czech rail network. In addition, Czechia intends to introduce a new measure to support the installation of Digital Automatic Coupling, a component to automatically couple and decouple the rolling stock in a freight train both physically and digitally, that was not supported under the two previous schemes.

Under the approved scheme, the support will take the form of **direct grants** to (i) owners or operators of railway rolling stock, (ii) railway carriers, and (iii) in certain cases the Czech railway infrastructure manager.

The Commission assessed the scheme under EU State aid rules, in particular [Article 93](#) TFEU on transport coordination, and the [2008 Commission Guidelines on State aid for railway undertakings](#). The Commission found that the scheme is necessary to coordinate transport and promote the use of intermodal transport, which is less polluting than road transport and reduces road congestion in line with the objectives of the [EU Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy](#) and the [European Green Deal](#). Furthermore, the Commission found that the aid will have an 'incentive effect' as the beneficiaries would not carry out the investments in the absence of the public support. Finally, the Commission concluded that the scheme is proportionate, as it is limited to the minimum necessary, and has a limited impact on competition and trade between Member States. On this basis, the Commission approved the Czech scheme under EU State aid rules.

The non-confidential version of the decision will be made available under the case number SA.103325 in the [State aid register](#) on the Commission's [competition](#) website once any confidentiality issues have been resolved.

(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 2 298 70 24; Nina Ferreira – Tel.: +32 2 299 81 63)

State aid: Commission approves €30 million Italian scheme to support the agricultural, forestry, fishery and aquaculture sectors in the context of Russia's war against Ukraine

The European Commission has approved an approximately **€30 million** Italian scheme to support companies active in the **agricultural, forestry, fishery and aquaculture sectors** in the context of Russia's war against Ukraine. The scheme was approved under the State aid [Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework](#), adopted by the Commission on [9 March 2023](#) to support measures in sectors which are key to accelerate the green transition and reduce fuel dependencies. The new Framework

amends and prolongs in part the [Temporary Crisis Framework](#), adopted on [23 March 2022](#) to enable Member States to support the economy in the context of the current geopolitical crisis, already amended on [20 July 2022](#) and on [28 October 2022](#).

Under the scheme, the aid will consist in **limited amounts of aid** in the form of **guarantee on loans**, up to a maximum of €250,000 per beneficiary. The purpose of the measure is to support the liquidity needs of the eligible beneficiaries, affected by the current geopolitical crisis.

The Commission found that the Italian scheme is in line with the conditions set out in the Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework. In particular, the aid (i) will not exceed €250,000 per beneficiary active in the primary production of agricultural products, €300,000 per beneficiary active in the fishery and aquaculture sectors and €2 million per beneficiary active in all other sectors; and (ii) will be granted no later than 31 December 2023. The Commission concluded that the scheme is necessary, appropriate and proportionate to remedy a serious disturbance in the economy of a Member State, in line with **Article 107(3)(b) TFEU** and the conditions set out in the **Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework**. On this basis, the Commission approved the scheme under EU State aid rules.

More information on the Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework and other actions taken by the Commission to address the economic impact of Russia's war against Ukraine and foster the transition towards a net-zero economy can be found [here](#). The non-confidential version of the decision will be made available under the case number SA.108084 in the [State aid register](#) on the Commission's competition [website](#) once any confidentiality issues have been resolved.

(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 2 298 70 24; Nina Ferreira – Tel.: +32 2 299 81 63)

Mergers: Commission clears creation of joint venture by PAI Partners and Nestlé

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the creation of a joint venture by PAI Partners S.à.r.l. of Luxembourg and Nestlé S.A. of Switzerland.

The joint venture, Nestlé's frozen pizza business, produces and distributes frozen pizza in Andorra, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands Slovakia, Sweden and the UK. PAI Partners manages private equity funds which acquire companies, including in the food and consumer sector. Nestlé produces and sells a large variety of food and beverages, as well as pet food and healthcare nutrition products.

The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given its limited impact on the market. 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.11147](#).

(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 2 298 70 24; Nina Ferreira – Tel.: +32 2 299 81 63)

Mergers: Commission clears creation of joint venture by VAS and MAPFRE

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the creation of a joint venture by Vittoria Assicurazioni S.p.A. ('VAS') of Italy and MAPFRE Asistencia, Compañía Internacional de Seguros y Reaseguros S.A. ('MAPFRE') of Spain.

The joint venture will offer assistance services in Italy in the areas of car glass repair and certain services for pets. In the future, it may extend its operations to assistance services in the areas of home and health. VAS and MAPFRE are both active in the insurance sector.

The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given that the joint venture has negligible foreseen activities in the European Economic Area. In addition, VAS and MAPFRE's combined market position resulting from the proposed transaction would remain very limited.

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.11096](#).

(For more information: Arianna Podesta – Tel.: +32 2 298 70 24; Nina Ferreira – Tel.: +32 2 299 81 63)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

La présidente von der Leyen reçoit les lettres de créance de chefs de mission auprès de l'UE

Vendredi dernier, la présidente de la Commission Ursula **von der Leyen** a reçu les lettres de créance de 19 chefs de mission d'États tiers auprès l'Union européenne, ainsi que du Saint-Siège.

Il s'agit de : S.E. Pablo Sader, Ambassadeur de la République orientale de l'Uruguay; S.E. Naomi Aretha Ngwira, Ambassadrice de la République du Malawi; S.E. Gloria Navarrete Pinto, Ambassadrice de la République du Chili; S.E. Aidit Erkin, Ambassadeur de la République kirghize; S.E. El Hadji Alhousseini Traore, Ambassadeur de la République du Mali; S.E. Noël Treanor, Nonce apostolique, Ambassadeur du Saint-Siège; S.E. Faruk Kaymakci, Ambassadeur de la République de Turquie; S.E. Pa Musa Jobarteh, Ambassadeur de la République de Gambie; S.E. Haifa Bint Abdulrahman Al Jedea, Ambassadrice du Royaume d'Arabie Saoudite; S.E. Bitange Ndemo, Ambassadeur de la République du Kenya; S.E. Luis Enrique Chavez Basagoitia, Ambassadeur de la République du Pérou; S.E. Sapar Pavlanov, Ambassadeur du Turkménistan; S.E. Sylvester Mundanda, Ambassadeur de la République de Zambie; S.E. Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba, Ambassadrice de la République du Botswana; S.E. Jorge Enrique Rojas Rodríguez, Ambassadeur de la République de Colombie; S.E. Jaime Victor B. Ledda, Ambassadeur de la République des Philippines; S.E. Gianni Avila, Ambassadeur du Belize; S.E. Samuel Luete Lominsuk, Ambassadeur de la République du Soudan du Sud; et S.E. Atilio Berardi Hueda, Ambassadeur de la République argentine.

Des photos de la cérémonie sont disponibles sur le [portail audiovisuel](#) de la Commission.

(Pour plus d'informations : Eric Mamer – Tél. : +32 2 299 40 73)

[Liste des points prévus](#) à l'ordre du jour des prochaines réunions de la Commission

Veillez noter que ces informations sont données sous réserve de modifications.

[Prochains événements](#) de la Commission européenne

[Eurostat](#): communiqués de presse

*Updated on 31/07/23 at 12:50 CEST