

## **Slovenia: Cohesion Policy upgrades rail section at Maribor**

The EU invests €101 million from the [Cohesion Fund](#) to upgrade the rail section between the Slovenian cities of Maribor and Šentilj, near the border with Austria in the direction of Graz. EU-funded works aim to reduce travel times, increase speed as well as railway safety and ensure greater freight-carrying capacity on the line. The project will increase the number of trains running between Maribor and Šentilj from 67 to 84 per day, taking into account projected increases in traffic volumes by 2039 on this part of the Baltic-Adriatic corridor, on the core Trans-European Transport Network. Commissioner for Transport Violeta Bulc said: *"Thanks to this cohesion investment, locals and tourists will enjoy faster, safer travel between Maribor and Šentilj and to the border. I hope it will convince people to leave their cars at home and adopt this greener transport option. In addition, this EU-funded project will allow for intensified freight transport, which will have positive effects on jobs, trade and growth in the country."* Works also include the refurbishment of the Maribor Tezno, Maribor, Pesnica and Šentilj stations, improvements at the Šentilj tunnel and the construction of the Pekel tunnel. The new railway line should be operational by February 2023. (For more information: Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tel.: +32 229 56169)

## **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of Pfleiderer by SVP**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of Pfleiderer Group S.A. of Poland by Strategic Value Partners, LLC ("SVP") of the US. Pfleiderer is active in the production and supply of a range of engineered wood and surface finished products as well as laminates. SVP is an investment firm. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns, given the limited horizontal overlaps and vertical links between the activities of SVP's portfolio companies and Pfleiderer in 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.9423](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

## **STATEMENTS**

### **Statement by First Vice-President Timmermans and Commissioner Jourová ahead of the Europe-Wide Day of Remembrance for the victims of all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes**

*"Every 23 August, we honour the memory of the millions of victims of all totalitarian regimes. The signature of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union on this day in 1939 opened a dark chapter*

*in European history. A time during which citizens were neither free to make their own decisions nor had a say on political choices. A Europe in which freedom and democracy were not more than a dream. (...) This year we also mark the 30 years of events in 1989 when citizens of Central and Eastern Europe stood up and broke through the Iron Curtain and accelerated its fall. The courageous actions of citizens brought back freedom and democracy to all of Europe. They helped overcome divisions and unify Europe. This then is a collective European legacy that we all must cherish, nourish, and defend. 80 years have now passed since 1939 and the generation that has witnessed the scourge of totalitarianism is almost no longer with us; living history is turning into written history. We must therefore keep those memories alive to inspire and guide new generations in defending fundamental rights, the rule of law and democracy. It is what makes us who we are. We firmly stand together against totalitarian and authoritarian regimes of all kinds. A Free Europe is not a given but a choice, every day." The full statement can be found [here](#). (For more information : Christian Wigand – Tel.: + 32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin- Tel.: + 32 229 58659)*

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