

Investment Plan for Europe: EIB backs Italian CNS drug developer Newron Pharmaceuticals with up to EUR 40m

The European Commission has approved an investment package of €243 million from the EU budget for projects under the LIFE programme supporting nature, the environment and quality of life in Europe's transition to a more sustainable and low-carbon future.

Investment Plan for Europe: EIB backs Italian CNS drug developer Newron Pharmaceuticals with up to EUR 40m

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and Newron Pharmaceuticals S.p.A. ("Newron") (SIX: NWRN), a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development of novel therapies for patients with diseases of the central and peripheral nervous system (CNS), signed a financing agreement today, which will allow the Company to borrow up to EUR 40 million over the coming years, subject to achieving a set of agreed performance criteria.

This EIB loan is backed by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the central pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe, the Juncker Plan.

"Neurological disorders affect up to one billion people worldwide^[1]. In Europe alone, the annual economic cost of neurological diseases was estimated at about EUR 139 billion in 2004^[2]", said Ambroise Fayolle, Vice President of the EIB responsible for operations under EFSI and Innovation. "Many patients with CNS diseases are in need of new or more efficacious therapeutics. The EU bank provides long-term and stable capital support to help drive innovation and clinical success in this field. It's this type of support for innovative companies like Newron that is crucial to strengthening Europe's competitiveness."

European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis said: "Sustained investment in research and innovation for treatment of neurological disorders is critical. This new agreement provides further evidence of the EU added value of the Investment Plan, not only for the competitiveness of the EU economy, but above all for the citizens' wellbeing."

Stefan Weber, Chief Executive Officer of Newron Pharmaceuticals, added: “We are very pleased that the EIB has recognized the potential of Newron’s current R&D activities. This loan will provide us with additional financial flexibility over the coming years and significantly enhance our resources. We may use it to further advance our key assets to market and beyond and help in maximizing their market potential.”

Newron aims to build a leading Central Nervous System (CNS) company that searches, develops and commercializes innovative drugs, with a special focus on rare diseases. The company’s first product developed in-house, Xadago® (safinamide), is the first New Chemical Entity in a decade approved in Europe and the U.S. for the treatment of Parkinson’s disease (PD). The product is commercialized in a number of European markets as well as in the USA and the Company’s partners Zambon and Meiji Seika Pharma are working towards global approval. Newron has two advanced product candidates in late stage clinical development: Sarizotan for the treatment of respiratory disturbances in Rett syndrome, which is evaluated in the ongoing potentially pivotal STARS (Sarizotan Treatment of Apneas in Rett Syndrome) study, and Evenamide as an add-on therapy for the treatment of certain symptoms of schizophrenia, with the additional potential to improve the life of patients who are treatment resistant to Clozapine.

Newron plans to directly market orphan or orphan like drugs emerging of its innovative clinical pipeline, and to consider partner opportunities directed at larger markets when offering the best return to Newron’s shareholders.

EIB financing is intended to boost Newron’s R&D activities and will primarily be used to support the Company’s pivotal and post approval stage development programs in diseases of the central nervous system.

[\[1\]](#) World Health Organization (WHO), “Neurological Disorders – public health challenges”, 2006

[\[2\]](#) According to a study published in the European Journal of Neurology, June 2005.

Daily News 30 / 10 / 2018

Le Plan Juncker investit dans la recherche médicale pour le traitement des troubles neurologiques

La Banque européenne d’investissement (BEI) vient d’accorder un prêt de 40 millions d’euros à la société biopharmaceutique italienne Newron afin de lui permettre de développer ses activités de recherche et développement sur le

traitement des troubles neurologiques, avec un focus sur les maladies rares. Cet accord est soutenu par le Fonds européen pour les investissements stratégiques (EFSI) – le cœur du [Plan d'investissement pour l'Europe, le Plan Juncker](#). Vytenis **Andriukaitis**, Commissaire à la santé et à la sécurité alimentaire, a déclaré: *“Il est essentiel d’investir de manière soutenue dans la recherche et l’innovation pour le traitement des troubles neurologiques. Ce nouvel accord apporte une preuve supplémentaire de la valeur ajoutée du Plan d’Investissement, non seulement pour la compétitivité de l’économie de l’UE, mais surtout pour le bien-être de ses citoyens.”* Un communiqué de presse est disponible [ici](#). En octobre 2018, le Plan Juncker a déjà mobilisé 344,4 milliards d’euros d’investissements supplémentaires à travers l’Europe, permettant à 793 000 petites et moyennes entreprises de bénéficier d’un meilleur accès aux financements. (Pour plus d’informations: Christian Spahr – Tél.: +32 229 50055, Sophie Dupin de Saint-Cyr – Tél.: +32 229 56169)

Qualité de l’air urbain: la Commission annonce le lauréat du prix Horizon pour la qualité de l’air

La Commission a annoncé aujourd’hui le lauréat du prix Horizon pour la qualité de l’air, d’une valeur de 3 millions d’euros, récompensant une technologie durable et à prix abordable permettant de réduire la concentration de particules dans les zones urbaines. La Commission soutient ainsi la nécessité pour les Européens de respirer de l’air pur, comme récemment rappelé dans la [Communication sur la qualité de l’air](#). Les particules sont le polluant atmosphérique ayant le plus grand impact sur la santé, provoquant des maladies telles que l’asthme, le cancer du poumon ou les complications cardiovasculaires et respiratoires. L’équipe de recherche lauréate, dirigée par le Dr Jean-Jacques Theron de Corning SAS (France), a mis au point un filtre à air en céramique en nid d’abeille pouvant atténuer le problème de la mauvaise qualité de l’air, en enlevant jusqu’à 95% des particules fines de l’air et de le maintenir en deçà des normes de qualité de l’air de l’Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS). Cette invention peut réduire la concentration de particules dans les villes, en intérieur et à l’extérieur, par exemple à proximité d’écoles ou d’hôpitaux. Environ 90% des habitants des villes européennes sont exposés à des niveaux de particules supérieurs aux recommandations de l’OMS, comme le souligne également le rapport de l’Agence européenne pour l’environnement intitulé [«La qualité de l’air en Europe – 2018»](#). Carlos **Moedas**, le commissaire chargé de la recherche, de la science et de l’innovation, a déclaré: *“Dans de nombreuses villes européennes, la pollution de l’air est une préoccupation majeure pour les citoyens car elle affecte leur santé et pose des problèmes environnementaux. La solution innovante mise au point par le Dr Theron et son équipe contribuera à réduire la concentration de particules en particulier dans les zones urbaines fortement contaminées.”* Karmenu **Vella**, le commissaire chargé de l’environnement, des affaires maritimes et de la pêche, a ajouté: *«C’est le type d’innovation pour la promotion de la santé que nous serons heureux de promouvoir lors de nos dialogues sur la qualité de l’air dans les États membres de l’UE»*. [Les dialogues sur la qualité de l’air](#) font partie de la vaste étude sur la mise en œuvre environnementale réalisée par l’UE pour

aider les États membres à améliorer leurs normes environnementales. Le [prix Horizon pour la qualité de l'air](#), financé dans le cadre du [programme européen de recherche et d'innovation Horizon 2020](#), a été présenté à la [conférence sur les technologies industrielles à Vienne](#). Plus d'informations sont disponibles en ligne avec [notre article](#), [fiche technique](#) et [vidéo](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Enrico Brivio – Tel.: + 32 229 56172; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040; Daniela Stoycheva – Tel.: +32 229 53664)

New EU rules bring more transparency and information on bank fees for consumers

As of tomorrow, banks and financial services providers across the EU will have to better inform their customers about the fees associated with opening and maintaining bank accounts thanks to new EU rules. Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, said *“Bank accounts are an essential part of everyday life, allowing us to make and receive payments, shop online, and pay our bills. Thanks to the Payment Accounts Directive, consumers have the right since 2016 to open a basic bank account anywhere in the EU, as well as switching to a new provider. With tomorrow’s new rules, we will increase transparency of fees for all consumers. This will make it easier to shop around for the best and cheapest offers from banks.”* Commissioner **Věra Jourová** added *“Recent figures show that consumer trust in banking services is low due to a lack of transparency. These new rules will make sure that banks’ offers are more transparent and clearer on fees. This is good news for consumers: it will not only make it easier for them to get an overview of the fees, but they will also be able to compare different offers”*. The ‘Fee Information Document’ (FID) is a standardised document with a short summary presenting the fees related to most common services, such as money transfers, that a bank will provide customers with when they open a bank account (see document [here](#)). In addition, EU consumers will also be receiving – at least annually and free of charge – a ‘Statement of Fees’, an information document following the same standardised format. In this document, banks have to detail all expenses incurred by their customers as well as information regarding the interest rates for services linked to a bank account. The [Payment Accounts Directive](#) requires all banks in the EU to present this document as of 31 October 2018, except France and Italy, which already have similar information requirements in place and will implement these changes by the end of July 2019. More information on the new obligations is available on the [Access to bank accounts](#) page. The 2018 Consumer Markets Scoreboard, presenting consumer trust in different markets, is also available [online](#). (For more information: Christian Wigand– Tel.: +32 229 62253; Mélanie Voin – Tel.: +32 229 58659)

Eurostat: Estimation rapide préliminaire pour le troisième trimestre 2018 – Le PIB en hausse de 0,2% dans la zone euro et de 0,3% dans l’UE28 – +1,7% et +1,9% respectivement par rapport au troisième trimestre 2017

Au cours du troisième trimestre 2018, le PIB corrigé des variations

saisonniers a augmenté de 0,2% dans la zone euro (ZE19) et de 0,3% dans l'UE28 par rapport au trimestre précédent, selon l'estimation rapide préliminaire publiée par Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. Au cours du deuxième trimestre 2018, le PIB avait progressé de 0,4% dans la zone euro et de 0,5% dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse est à votre disposition [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Christian Spahr – Tél.: +32 229 50055; Enda McNamara – Tél.: +32 229 64376)

Mergers: Commission approves Mars' acquisition of AniCura, subject to conditions

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of AniCura by Mars, subject to conditions. Mars is a global supplier of consumer products, including pet food. AniCura is a Swedish veterinary clinic chain, active in several EU Member States. It also owns VetFamily, a purchasing organisation for independent veterinary clinics. The Commission examined the effects of the proposed transaction on the retail market of dietetic pet food sold by veterinarians. It was concerned that the transaction, as originally notified, would have enabled Mars to shut out its dietetic pet food competitors from the downstream retail channels, namely the AniCura veterinary clinics and the VetFamily member clinics, in particular in Denmark and Sweden. In these markets AniCura and VetFamily together account for a very significant share of sales of dietetic pet food. The Commission was concerned that the transaction could affect the ability of other producers of dietetic pet food to compete with Mars, possibly resulting in higher prices, less choice or lower quality and in a reduction in innovation in dietetic pet food. To address these concerns, Mars offered to divest AniCura's VetFamily business in its entirety in the whole of Europe. As a result Mars will not be able to influence the purchasing activities of the clinics belonging to VetFamily. The commitments fully address the Commission's concerns as they will significantly reduce Mars' overall influence on the downstream retail channels in Denmark and Sweden. On this basis, the Commission concluded that the proposed transaction, as modified by the commitments, would no longer raise competition concerns. A full press release is available in [EN](#), [FR](#), [DE](#), [SV](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)

Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of joint venture by Continental, CITC and JHDT

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over the newly created joint venture Continental CALB Battery Power System Co., Ltd by Continental Automotive Holding Co., Ltd ("Continental"), Sichuan Chengfei Integration Technology Corp., Ltd ("CITC") and Jiangsu Jintan Hualuogeng Technology Development Ltd ("JHTD"), all of China. The joint venture will develop, produce and sell battery systems for hybrid electric vehicles. Continental belongs to the German automotive manufacturing group Continental AG which mainly specialises in products for

automotive and transportation industries. CITC is owned by Aviation Industry Corporation of China and is active in designing and manufacturing batteries and power systems. JHTD is a vehicle ultimately controlled by two local government bodies of Changzhou, in China. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns because the companies' activities do not overlap in the European Economic Area. More information is available on the Commission's [competition](#) website, in the public [case register](#) under the case number [M.9075](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

Mergers: Commission clears joint venture by SNAM and Società Gasdotti Italia

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the proposed creation of a joint venture, Sardinia Newco, by SNAM and Società Gasdotti Italia, all of Italy. The joint venture will build and operate a natural gas transmission pipeline in the Sardinian territory. SNAM is active in the development and management of gas infrastructures in Italy and other European countries. Società Gasdotti Italia, jointly controlled by the Macquarie Group of Australia and the Swiss Life Group of Switzerland, is active in the transmission of natural gas in Italy. The Commission concluded that the proposed transaction would raise no competition concerns because the companies' activities do not overlap 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.9091](#). *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

Antitrust: Commission closes investigation into Brussels Airlines and TAP Air Portugal codeshare agreement on Brussels-Lisbon route

The European Commission has decided to close its antitrust investigation into a codeshare agreement between Brussels Airlines and TAP Air Portugal relating to the Brussels-Lisbon route, which the Commission was carrying out on its own initiative. On 27 October 2016, the Commission adopted a [Statement of Objections](#) against the two airlines, raising preliminary concerns that their codeshare cooperation on passenger services between Brussels and Lisbon may have restricted competition between them. Today's closure decision is based on a thorough analysis of all relevant evidence, including information received from the two airlines in their replies to the Statement of Objections and during an oral hearing, which took place in May 2017. The Commission concluded that the evidence collected was not sufficient to confirm its initial concerns and has therefore decided to close its investigation. Throughout the investigation, the Commission emphasised that its concerns related to certain specific features of this particular codeshare, rather than to codeshares in general. However, today's closure decision does not mean that close forms of cooperation between competing airlines will not raise competition concerns. Finally, it should be noted that since 2014 new airlines have begun to compete with the code-sharing airlines on the Brussels-Lisbon route, to the benefit of consumers. The Commission will continue to monitor the European air travel market. *(For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Giulia Astuti – Tel.: +32 229 55344)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Hahn in Belarus on 30-31 October for the Munich Security Conference core group meeting

Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes **Hahn** is in Minsk, today and tomorrow for an official bilateral visit to [Belarus](#) and to attend the [Munich Security Conference \(MSC\) core group meeting](#). At the MSC core group meeting, Commissioner **Hahn** will address the roundtable on transnational security, where he will call for a joint inclusive approach for the security challenges faced across the region, notably by maintaining open channels of communication and fostering mutual understanding. As part of the official bilateral visit he will meet with Prime Minister of Belarus Sergei Rumas and Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei. The Commissioner will also meet human rights defenders including representatives of civil society and media organisations. More information on EU-Belarus relations is available on our dedicated [factsheet](#). Photos and videos of the visit will be available on [EbS](#). (For more information: Maja Kocijancic – Tel.: +32 229 86570; Alceo Smerilli – Tel.: +32 229 64887)

Commissioner Andriukaitis in Lithuania

Today, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis **Andriukaitis** is in Kelme, Lithuania. He is attending a conference on oncologic diseases, where he will deliver the keynote speech entitled 'The future of preventing oncologic diseases – decisions needed and cooperation'. *"I am looking forward to highlight once again the importance of prevention and the need to mitigate risk factors to reduce the risk of oncological diseases"*, said Commissioner **Andriukaitis** before the event. Whilst in Kelme, he will also hold a [Citizens' Dialogue](#), during which there will be discussions on several issues, including the future of Europe and the importance of prevention, promotion and protection in healthcare. (For more information: Anca Paduraru – Tel.: +32 229 91269; Aikaterini Apostola – Tel.: +32 229 87624)

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

[Preliminary flash estimate for the third quarter of 2018 – GDP up by 0.2% in the euro area and by 0.3% the EU28 – +1.7% and +1.9% respectively compared with the third quarter of](#)

2017

Seasonally adjusted GDP rose by 0.2% in the **euro area** (EA19) and by 0.3% in the **EU28** during the third quarter of 2018, compared with the previous quarter, according to a preliminary flash estimate published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**. In the second quarter of 2018, GDP had grown by 0.4% in the **euro area** and by 0.5% the **EU28**.

[Full text available on EUROSTAT website](#)

Two euro counterfeiting rings dismantled

24 October 2018

✘ Under the direction of the French and Italian authorities, and with the support of Eurojust and Europol, 22 arrests by the French Judicial Police (DCPJ) and the Italian Carabinieri took place on 16 October in France and Italy. Two criminal networks suspected of producing and distributing counterfeit banknotes in France and Italy were dismantled.

In February 2018, the French investigative judge of Nancy requested the assistance of Eurojust in a counterfeiting case, after the French National Police received a tip about distribution of fake banknotes. Investigations led to a euro counterfeiting production site in Naples, Italy. The organised criminal group (OCG) produced counterfeit EUR 20, 50 and 100 banknotes. The banknotes were then distributed in France via another OCG.

Two [coordination meetings](#) were held at Eurojust between France and Italy. At the second coordination meeting, in May, a [joint investigation team](#) (JIT) agreement was signed, the [first JIT agreement between the two Member States](#). Eurojust provided the necessary financial and logistical support for this JIT to help coordinate the parallel investigations. The JIT was decisive in the success of this action.

On the 16 October action day, French police were active in Italy, and Italian police were active in France. Nine suspects were arrested in France, and nine premises were searched. In Italy, 13 suspects were arrested, five in execution of European Arrest Warrants, and printing and digital equipment was seized.

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