



## Spotlight

### Last Week

#### European Commission:

- On Wednesday the Commission granted a conditional marketing authorisation (CMA) for the COVID-19 vaccine developed by Moderna, the second COVID-19 vaccine authorised in the EU.
- On Thursday the Commission decided to register a European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) entitled 'Civil society initiative for a ban on biometric mass surveillance practices'
- On Friday the Commission proposed to the EU Member States to purchase an additional 200 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine produced by BioNTech and Pfizer, with the option to acquire another 100 million doses.

#### Council:

Portugal commenced its Presidency of the Council of the European Union on the 1 January. The Presidency says its vision and priorities are clearly stated in its motto "Time to deliver: a fair, green and digital recovery". Link to Presidency website [here](#) and background to description of the logo [here](#)

### Coming Week:

**European Parliament:** The week ahead is assigned for Committee and political groups' meetings, Brussels. COSAC Chairs have a video conference on Monday, hosted by the Portuguese Presidency.

**Commission:** College Seminar on Thursday

## European Parliament

### Committees – Coming Week Highlights

#### WEEK 2

**President's Diary.** EP President David Sassoli will meet Kosovo's acting President and Speaker of Parliament Vjosa Osmani, on Tuesday. On Wednesday, the EP President will have a remote meeting with European Disability Forum President Yannis Vardakastanis, as well as with Lok Sabha's (Indian Parliament) Speaker Shri Om Birla. President Sassoli will meet the Commission College and have an audience with H.M. King Philippe of Belgium, on Thursday.

## European Parliament

### Committees – Coming Week Highlights

**COVID-19 vaccines.** The Environment, Public Health and Food Security Committee will debate with Commission Director-General of Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) Sandra Gallina, who is the EU lead negotiator on COVID-19 vaccines contracts. They are expected to discuss the EU's procedure to approve the vaccines, what stage of the review process various vaccines have reached as well as the quantities bought by the EU (Tuesday).

**EU-UK deal scrutiny.** European Parliamentary oversight of the draft EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, reached in December, kicks off with a debate in the International Trade Committee on Monday, and continues on Thursday jointly with the Committee of Foreign Affairs. These two committees are responsible for recommending whether MEPs should approve the text. The EP's consent is needed for the agreement to enter into force (Monday and Thursday).

**EU-UK deal and sectoral policies.** EP committees on Transport and Tourism, Fisheries, Economic and Monetary Affairs as well as Internal Market and Consumer Protection will debate, with the Commission's Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom, the impact of the EU-UK deal on their respective policies (Monday and Thursday).

**Biodiversity.** The Environment, Public Health and Food Security Committee will hold a public hearing on "Facing the sixth mass extinction and increasing risk of pandemics: what role for the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030". MEPs will also discuss the committee's draft resolution on Parliament's reaction to this strategy, which was presented last year by the Commission (Thursday).

**Plenary Preparations.** EP political groups will prepare for the 18-21 January plenary session, where MEPs will debate the working programme of the Portuguese Presidency, which includes the implementation of the EU Recovery Plan and the response to the social and employment crisis. MEPs are also scheduled to debate and vote on a resolution calling for an EU 'right to disconnect', on the revision of EU powers in trade disputes, on how to improve gender equality in the EU, on the state of human rights and democracy in the world as well as on the EU's Common Foreign and Defence Policy.

Link to all committee meetings [here](#)

## European Commission

### Coming Week Highlights

**Thursday 14 January Seminar of the College of Commissioners.**

Link to Commission Calendar [here](#)


## Portuguese Presidency of the EU Council Programme for Inter-Parliamentary Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>EP Committee</b>	<b>Location</b> Provisional
<b>11 January</b>	Portuguese Presidency Meeting COSAC Chairpersons meeting		Remote Lisbon
<b>1 - 2 February</b>	8th Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol pursuant to Article 88 TFEU and the Europol Regulation (EU) 2016/794	LIBE	Remote Lisbon
<b>22 - 23 February</b>	European Parliamentary Week 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conference on the European Semester</li> <li>• Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union (Conference under Article 13 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union)</li> </ul>	BUDG ECON EMPL	EP, Brussels
<b>3 - 4 March</b>	Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy CFSP/CSDP		Remote Lisbon
<b>29 March</b>	Meeting of the Secretaries-General from the national Parliaments of the EU member states and the European Parliament	Bundestag Bundesrat	Remote Berlin
<b>12 April</b>	High level Interparliamentary Conference on Migration and Asylum in Europe		E Parl Brussels
<b>13 April</b>	Conference on Covid 19: impact on health and social effects		Lisbon tbc
<b>4 May tbc</b>	Conference on the European Union's Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: bringing nature back into our lives		Lisbon tbc
<b>10/11 May</b>	Conference of the Speakers from the national parliaments of the EU member states and the European Parliament (EUSC), organised by the German Bundestag in cooperation with the Bundesrat	Bundestag Bundesrat	Berlin
<b>30 May - 1 June</b>	Portuguese Presidency Meeting LXV COSAC Plenary Meeting	COSAC	Lisbon



## Portuguese Presidency of the EU Council Programme for Inter-Parliamentary Events

<b>15 June tbc</b>	Conference on Rural Development		Lisbon tbc
<b>20 -21 June</b>	Conference on the role of Parliaments in deepening the EU Africa relationship		Lisbon



## Highlights of Week 1: 4 to 10 January 2021

### European Parliament Plenary and Committee

#### Highlights Week 1. 4 to 10 January 2021

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##### High Profile Issues for 2021

Issues likely to be high on European Parliaments agenda for 2021 are:

- Recovery plan and the EU's long-term budget
- Sustainable recovery
- Climate change
- Digital services
- Artificial intelligence
- Migration
- Conference on the Future of Europe
- Agriculture
- EU4Health
- EU support for emergencies
- EU-UK relations

Link to EP report [here](#)

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### European Commission

#### Highlights Week 1: 4 to 10 January 2021

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##### State Aid

**Germany:** The European Commission has approved [German plans](#) to contribute up to €1.25 billion to the recapitalisation of TUI AG (TUI), the parent company of the TUI Group, as part of a wider support package. The measure was approved under the State aid Temporary Framework.

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##### Second vaccine against COVID-19 authorised

On Wednesday the Commission granted a conditional marketing authorisation (CMA) for the COVID-19 vaccine developed by Moderna, the second COVID-19 vaccine authorised in the EU. This authorisation follows a positive scientific recommendation based on a thorough assessment of the safety, effectiveness and quality of the vaccine by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and is endorsed by the Member States.

Link to Commission statement [here](#)

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## **European Citizens' Initiative: Commission decides to register an initiative for 'a ban on biometric mass surveillance practices'**

On Thursday the Commission decided to register a European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) entitled 'Civil society initiative for a ban on biometric mass surveillance practices'. The organisers of the ECI urge the Commission to propose a legal act to permanently end indiscriminate and arbitrarily-targeted uses of biometric data in ways which can lead to mass surveillance or any undue interference with fundamental rights.

The Commission considers that the ECI is legally admissible, as it meets the necessary conditions, and therefore decided to register it. The Commission has not analysed the substance of the ECI at this stage.

Link to Commission statement [here](#)

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## **Proposal to purchase up to 300 million additional doses of BioNTech-Pfizer vaccine**

On Friday the Commission proposed to the EU Member States to purchase an additional 200 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine produced by BioNTech and Pfizer, with the option to acquire another 100 million doses.

This would enable the EU to purchase up to 600 million doses of this vaccine, which is already being used across the EU. The additional doses will be delivered starting in the second quarter of 2021.

Link to statement [here](#)

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## **Questions and Answers: COVID-19 vaccination in the EU**

Link to Commission Q & A on vaccination in the EU [here](#)

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**Sources:** *EU Parliament, Commission, and Council websites*