COVID-19 EU Briefing 22 September 2020

Synopsis

Several Member States have started to share data between their COVID-19 tracing apps in order to account for travellers from those states who will be able to use either app and still get notified in case of contact with an infected person.

General Recovery MFF

- President von der Leyen discussed via videoconference with the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, and Chancellor Angela the next steps regarding the adoption of the next Multiannual Financial Framework and the NextGenerationEU recovery plan. The three Presidents reaffirmed their strong commitment to reaching an agreement swiftly.

Recovery Plan

- The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) has argued that the European Commission's Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy (published on Thursday) has provided little clarity on how it intends to deliver greater social fairness. ETUC note that the report is intended to highlight the next steps for the EU's recovery.

Contact Tracing

- For the past week, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, the Czech Republic and Latvia have run a pilot project to test out the new digital infrastructure to share data between each of the national coronavirus tracing apps.

- France will not join the new system which will become operational as of October.
  - The plan is to use a Luxembourg-based EU server to enable pan-European tracing and notifications.
  - Once set up, Germany's tracing app would be able to warn users who crossed paths with an infected person in another EU state, and vice versa.
  - Users will be able to opt into this integrated EU-wide data sharing scheme in their respective apps.
Member States

**Infection Rate (measured by positive cases per 100,000 over 14 days)**

- The infection rate of Belgium has increased from 105.4 to 116.1 (20/09 compared to 21/09).
- The Czech Republic (193 – 198), Luxembourg (140.7 – 147.9) and Ireland (61.3 – 66.5) have also recorded a rise.
- However, Malta (125.4 – 120.4), Portugal (78.6 – 75.6), Croatia (73.3 – 72.6) and Sweden (28.4 – 26.7) have noted a decline in their infection rates.

**Germany**

- Bavaria is expected to implement stricter coronavirus restrictions in the state for areas where there are more than 50 infections per 100,000 people over the course of seven days.
- In these high-infection areas, masks will be required in crowded public areas, and there will also be a ban on alcohol.

**Portugal**

- Portugal will set up a 'Task Force' to respond to non-COVID-19 patients in public health services as a measure of the government's autumn/winter pandemic response strategy.

**The Czech Republic**

- Czech Health Minister Adam Vojtěch resigned Monday after three years in office and was immediately replaced by epidemiologist Roman Prymula who led the country’s Central Crisis Staff in spring.
- He stepped down as the number of cases has soared in the country the past days.

*Source: DeHavillandEU*