

COVID-19 EU Briefing 14 January 2021

General

COVID-19 Vaccine

- The EU Health Ministers [met](#) on 13 January to assess the state of play of the European Union's strategy for fighting the pandemic and of the vaccine rollout in the different Member States.
- Peter Liese MEP [noted](#) that Commissioner Kyriakides has announced that a marketing authorisation application is already expected for Johnson & Johnson in February.

Vaccination Programmes:

- **Politico** reported that the European Commission has told EU ambassadors that it will step up efforts to help EU countries with their vaccination campaigns.
- It was reported that the Commission is looking into providing hands-on assistance, including via its civil protection and humanitarian aid department, known as DG ECHO, according to diplomats and one official.
- The issue will be discussed in the Council during the General Affairs Council next week, and the European Parliament will hold a plenary debate on the issue amongst the Conference of Presidents.

Freedom of Movement:

- **Politico** reported the words of EPP Leader Manfred Weber who said "If people are vaccinated, they must be able to travel", also outlining that according to a Commission spokesperson that a common Passenger Location Form is still in the works.

Member States

Italy

- **Politico** reported that Matteo Renzi withdrew his two ministers from the Italian government, stripping current Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte of his ruling majority in Parliament.
- The dispute concerned €209bn in grants and low-interest loans, and could prompt a series of results including a snap election. That said, Mr Renzi said neither an election or a change of prime minister is warranted.

Poland

- People who get vaccinated against COVID-19 in Poland will receive a confirmation document, a "vaccine passport", after having received a second dose of the vaccine.

Spain

- The Spanish government [is ready](#) to approve an extension of temporary lay-off schemes put in place last March to protect jobs for around 800,000 workers still affected by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Germany

- Germany's health minister on Wednesday [defended](#) the government's decision to procure and approve vaccines against the coronavirus along with the rest of the European Union amid criticism for a slow vaccination campaign.
- Meanwhile, the German economy [shrank](#) by a smaller-than-expected 5.0% in 2020, preliminary data from the statistics office showed on Thursday.

France

- French Prime Minister Jean Castex [defended](#) the government's vaccination strategy: "Don't try to judge our vaccination strategy, which will take several months, you know that in France and elsewhere," he pleaded. "

Portugal

- Portugal's government [announced](#) a new nationwide lockdown Wednesday. The new restrictions will come into force at midnight Thursday and be similar to those imposed during the spring, shutting non-essential business and telling citizens to stay home. However, schools will remain open.

Romania

- Euractiv [reports](#) that Romanian President Klaus Iohannis has rejected a proposal by Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis for an EU-wide COVID-19 vaccination certificate for travel.

Source: DeHavillandEU