COVID-19 EU Briefing 01 March 2021

General

COVID-19 Vaccine

- The US Food and Drug Administration authorized emergency use of Johnson & Johnson’s single-dose coronavirus vaccine.
- This decision was based on scientific evidence, including data from the Phase 3 ENSEMBLE study that demonstrated the vaccine was 85 percent effective in preventing severe disease across all regions studied, and showed protection against COVID-19 related hospitalization and death, beginning 28 days after vaccination.
- French Industry Minister Agnès Pannier-Runacher said that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine could be authorised in the EU in early March.

Pfizer:

- Reportedly, Italian researchers have discovered that healthcare workers with obesity produced only about half the amount of antibodies in response to a second dose of the jab compared with healthy people.

Moldova:

- A consignment of 21,600 doses of COVID-19 vaccines is being delivered to Moldova from Romania to support the country’s response to the pandemic.

Vaccine certificates:

- In a letter to Charles Michel, the EPP group requested that only EMA-approved vaccines can be covered by the common European vaccine certificate.

Apple:

- Euractiv reported comments from ‘a person familiar with Apple’s position’ on the matter of the company offering vaccine certificate solutions to the World Health Organisation (WHO). The individual claimed that Apple had never discussed a possible vaccine application with the WHO or the EU and emphasised that the company does not seek access to people’s personal data.
EU Summit

- Following the end of the European Council meeting, the participants published a joint statement.

Key conclusions:

- Non-essential travel needs to be restricted. The unhindered flow of goods and services within the Single Market must be ensured, including by making use of Green Lanes.
- Need to urgently accelerate the authorisation, production and distribution of vaccines, as well as vaccination.
- On vaccination certificates, they agreed to continue to work on a common approach, but more work needs to be done.

Member States

Germany

- German health authorities on Sunday designated the Moselle region of eastern France as a “high risk” zone because of the prevalence of coronavirus variants and said tougher border restrictions would be imposed beginning Tuesday.

Hungary

- The FT highlights Hungary’s use of China’s Sinopharm vaccine and Russia’s Sputnik V vaccine, neither of which have yet gained approval from the European Medical Agency (EMA).

International

United Kingdom

The UK has identified 6 cases of the Manaus variant of COVID-19

Source: DeHavillandEU