

EUROPE DIRECT

Weekly guidelines for the EUROPE DIRECT centres

TO KEEP YOU IN THE BIG PICTURE

[Video message from
Alessandro Giordani](#)

A very special meeting: Special Meeting of the European Council (24-25 May). A special meeting of the EU leaders started on Monday when discussions were "hijacked" by the forced landing of a commercial flight by Belarus. As a result, the Monday "menu" saw a quick response to the Belarus act in addition to the planned discussions on Russia, relations with the UK, the Middle East and Mali. On the Tuesday "menu": Covid-19 and climate change. Here is the [story](#), plus [statement on Belarus](#).



Alessandro Giordani, Head of unit C.4. Copyright notice: 2019: Image exclusively owned by Alessandro Giordani. Reuse is strictly prohibited.

Travel again: Parliament and Council reach provisional agreement on EU Digital COVID Certificate. The agreement has been reached just two months after the Commission's [proposal](#). President von der Leyen said: "... At EU level, the system will be ready in the next few days. It is now crucial that all Member States press ahead with the roll-out of their national systems to ensure that the system can be up and running as soon as possible...". The certificate will cover Covid-19 vaccination, test or recovery and be available in a digital and paper-based format. It will be free of charge and Member States may use it for national purposes, if this is provided for in national law.

Firm commitment: Global Health Summit: EU launches initiatives to fight Covid-19 and avoid future pandemics: Leaders of the G20 committed on 21 May to a series of actions to accelerate the end of the Covid-19 crisis and better prepare for future pandemics. President von der Leyen also announced an initiative on manufacturing and access to vaccines, medicines and health technologies in Africa. The initiative is backed by €1 billion funding from the EU budget, European development finance institutions, such as the European Investment Bank (EIB). More [here](#) plus a [Press release on the initiative](#) and [Factsheet on EU global response to the Covid-19 pandemic](#).

CALL FOR ACTION THIS WEEK ...

Share the conclusions from the Special Meeting of the European Council: Check out the latest state of play by following the [story](#) and share the results. On **climate change**: Remind your audience that the EU is the first major economy to commit to climate neutrality by 2050 and to an emissions reduction target of at least 55% by 2030. These goals are now enshrined into binding legislation, the European Climate Law. The EU leaders are expected to reaffirm the conclusions of 10-11/12/2020 and seek to provide additional guidance to the Commission.

You've seen the story on the EU Digital COVID Certificate. Now, tell the story! Join us in showing that the EU is firmly committed to restoring normal life. The Commission [proposal](#) is meant to give hope and reassurance to all European citizens.

Talk about the Global Health Summit: Consider this: The EU will come forward with a proposal in the WTO focusing on:

- clarifying and facilitating the use of compulsory licenses in crisis times like this pandemic (note a difference with the US-backed proposal to waive vaccine patents);
- supporting the expansion of production;
- trade facilitation and limiting export restrictions.

Spread the news about the first EU podcast "Europe Calling": Tune in [here](#) to the first Europe Calling podcast and listen to Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Stella Kyriakides talking about the EU response to the health crisis and the lessons learnt from Covid-19.



Conference on the Future of Europe

In this edition of the Weekly Guidelines we turn to all of you with a **call to reporting**. While the reporting is a central task of the **hub EUROPE DIRECT**, the rest of EUROPE DIRECT might also find it useful to share their achievements. The more you share, the more the Commission gets to know your added value. All your reports will be shared with DG COMM senior management and beyond, so let us hear from you ... In terms of the practicalities, we find it important to get **your reports in English twice a month**. All you need to do is to fill in the **.Excel table appended to the e-mail** with the Weekly Guidelines and send it to your Network correspondent. The first deadline is 31 May and the second one is 15 June.



European Union 2019, Source: EC Audiovisual Service, 11/01/19, ID-P-039364/00-03, Photographer: Mauro Bottaro