



European
Commission

#SOTEU

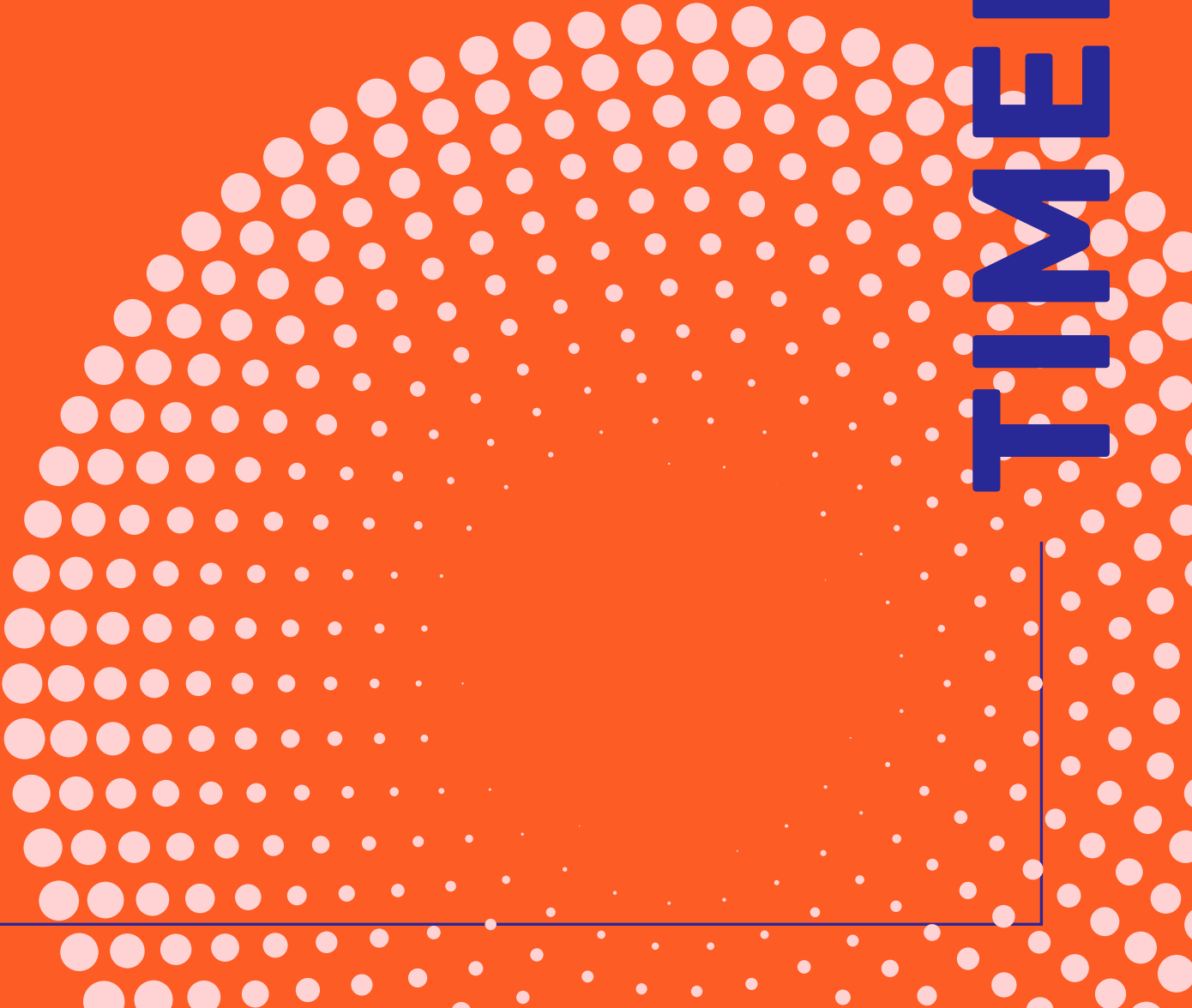
STATE OF THE UNION 2021

15 SEPTEMBER

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President of the European Commission

**STATE OF
THE UNION**

TIMELINE



SEPTEMBER

2020

18 . 9

A Union of Equality: the Commission puts forward the first ever **EU anti-racism action plan**.



24 . 9

The European Commission adopted a **digital finance package**, including a digital finance strategy and legislative proposals on crypto-assets and digital resilience, for a competitive EU financial sector that gives consumers access to innovative financial products, while ensuring consumer protection and financial stability.



23 . 9

A new **Pact on Migration and Asylum** envisages improved and faster procedures throughout the asylum and migration system and sets in balance the principles of fair sharing of responsibility and solidarity.

OCTOBER

2020

6 . 10

A **comprehensive economic and investment plan** is adopted to spur the long-term recovery of the Western Balkans and foster regional integration.

7 . 10

The Commission adopts a new **10-year plan to support Roma in the EU**.



8 . 10

The Commission approved the contract with the pharmaceutical company Janssen Pharmaceutica NV allowing EU countries to purchase vaccines for 200 million people and the possibility to purchase vaccines for an additional 200 million people. The Commission has already reached a first agreement with the pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca on 14 August. This agreement represented the basis for the purchase of 300 million doses of the vaccine, with an option to purchase 100 million more, on behalf of EU Member States.

14 . 10

The European Green Deal: the Commission adopts a **new chemicals strategy** to work towards a toxin-free environment.

**21 . 10**

The Commission issues a **EUR 17 billion inaugural social bond** under the EU's SURE instrument to help protect jobs and keep people in work.

**27 . 10**

EUR 17 billion is disbursed to Spain, Italy and Poland as the first instalment of financial support to Member States under the SURE instrument. SURE has so far benefited up to 30 million workers and 2.5 million firms. The EU has already provided a total of around EUR 90 billion to 19 Member States.

28 . 10

The Commission proposes an EU Directive to ensure that the workers in the Union are protected by adequate minimum wages allowing for a decent living wherever they work.

NOVEMBER

2020

11 . 11

The **new consumer agenda** is launched to empower EU consumers to play an active role in the green and digital transitions.

**11 . 11**

The first steps are taken towards building the **European Health Union**, which will ensure stronger preparedness and response during the current and future health crises.

**11 . 11**

The Commission approved the contract with the pharmaceutical companies BioNTech and Pfizer, which provides for the initial purchase of 200 million doses on behalf of all EU Member States, plus an option to request up to a further 100 million doses.

**12 . 11**

The Commission presents the first-ever **EU strategy for LGBTIQ equality**.

25 . 11**25 . 11**

A **gender action plan** is put forward to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through all facets of the EU's external action.



DECEMBER

2020

2 . 12

EU–US relations: the EU proposes a new, forward-looking transatlantic agenda for global cooperation.



3 . 12

The Commission presents a **European Democracy Action Plan** to empower citizens and build more-resilient democracies across the EU.



10 . 12

The European Green Deal: a proposal is made for a **regulation on sustainable batteries** for a circular and climate-neutral economy.



15 . 12

The Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act: an ambitious reform of the digital space is proposed, along with a comprehensive set of new rules for all digital services.



17 . 12

The EU's **long-term budget for 2021– 2027**, amounting to EUR 1.211 trillion in current prices, is adopted in the Council.

21 . 12

The Commission authorises **the first safe and effective vaccine** against COVID-19.



24 . 12

After intensive negotiations, the Commission reaches an **agreement with the United Kingdom** on the terms of its future relationship with the EU.



27 . 12

The first Europeans are vaccinated against COVID-19.



JANUARY

2021

18 . 1

The Commission launches the design phase of the **'New European Bauhaus'** initiative, aiming to combine design, sustainability and investment to help deliver the European Green Deal.



6 . 1

The second safe and effective vaccine against COVID-19 is authorised.



29 . 1

The Commission authorises the third safe and effective vaccine against COVID-19.



29 . 1

The Commission puts in place a transparency and authorisation mechanism for the export of COVID-19 vaccines.

FEBRUARY

2021

9 . 2

The EU proposes a new agenda for the Mediterranean, to strengthen the strategic partnership with its Southern Neighbourhood partners.



10 . 2

The European Parliament confirms the political agreement reached on the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the key instrument at the heart of NextGenerationEU.

17.2

To prepare Europe for the threat of new variants, the Commission proposes a new bio-defence preparedness plan, the **HERA incubator**.



17.2

A new strategy is presented to strengthen the **EU's contribution to rules-based multilateralism**.

18.2

The Commission sets out an open, sustainable and assertive **EU trade policy** for the coming years.



19.2

At the G7 Summit, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announces the **doubling of the EU's contribution to COVAX**, the world's facility for universal access to vaccines, from EUR 500 million to EUR 1 billion.

MARCH

2021

3.3

A Union of equality: the Commission presents its 2021–2030 strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities, to ensure their full participation in society.



4.3

Pay transparency: the Commission presents a proposal on pay transparency to ensure that women and men in the EU get equal pay for equal work.

9.3

Europe's Digital Decade: the Commission sets course towards a digitally empowered Europe by 2030.

4.3

European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan sets out an ambition for a strong social Europe.

11.3

The **fourth safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine** is authorised for use in the EU.



10.3

European Parliament President, David Sassoli, Prime Minister of Portugal António Costa, on behalf of the Presidency of the Council, and Commission President von der Leyen sign the **Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe**.

18 . 3

The **European Innovation Council** is launched to help turn scientific ideas into breakthrough innovations.

**17 . 3**

The Commission proposes the creation of a **digital certificate** to facilitate safe and free movement within the EU during the COVID-19 pandemic.

25 . 3

The **European Green Deal**: the Commission presents measures to **boost organic production**.

**24 . 3**

The EU sets out a new comprehensive policy framework to ensure that **all children's rights are protected** and proposes to establish a **European Child Guarantee**.

APRIL

2021

14 . 4

To disrupt the cross-border business models of criminal organisations, the Commission presents an **EU strategy to tackle organised crime**, together with a new **strategy on combating trafficking in human beings**, intended to help prevent crime, bring traffickers to justice and empower victims.

**15 . 4**

The new partnership agreement between the EU and members of the **Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States** sets out the framework for political, economic and sectorial cooperation for the next 20 years.

21 . 4

The Commission proposes new rules and actions for **excellence and trust in artificial intelligence**, aiming to turn the EU into the global hub for trustworthy artificial intelligence.

**21 . 4**

Sustainable finance and EU taxonomy: the Commission takes further steps to channel money towards sustainable activities.

MAY

2021

5.5

The EU's industrial strategy is updated to ensure that Europe's industrial ambition takes full account of the new circumstances following the COVID-19 crisis and helps drive the transformation to a more sustainable, digital, resilient and globally competitive economy.



8.5

At the EU–India Leaders' Meeting in Porto, and via videoconference, the EU and India conclude a comprehensive connectivity partnership, confirming their commitment to collaborate on supporting resilient and sustainable connectivity both in India and in third countries and regions.



7-8.5

The EU institutions, the European social partners and civil-society organisations pledge to do their utmost to build a more inclusive, more social Europe at the Social Summit in Porto.

9.5

On Europe Day 2021, the inaugural event of the Conference on the Future of Europe takes place in Strasbourg.

12.5

To steer the EU towards the 2050 goal of a healthy planet for healthy people, the Commission adopts the EU action plan 'Towards zero pollution for air, water and soil'.



15.5

At the Summit on Financing African Economies, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announces a Team Europe initiative in support of Africa's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

17.5

The European Green Deal: the Commission proposes a sustainable blue economy in the EU for industries and sectors connected to oceans, seas and coasts.



18.5

A communication on business taxation for the 21st century is adopted to promote a robust, efficient and fair business tax system in the EU.

20.5

The Commission signs a **third contract with the pharmaceutical companies BioNTech and Pfizer**, reserving an additional 1.8 billion doses of their vaccine on behalf of all EU Member States between the end of 2021 and 2023.



20.5

EU Member States agree to **reopen to vaccinated travellers from outside the EU**.

21.5

Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announces a **EUR 1 billion Team Europe initiative** on manufacturing and access to vaccines, medicines and health technologies in Africa.



21.5

At the **Global Health Summit** co-hosted by Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi, G20 leaders commit to a series of actions to accelerate the end of the COVID-19 crisis everywhere and to better prepare for future pandemics.

25.5

EUR 14.1 billion is disbursed to 12 Member States as the seventh instalment of **financial support under the SURE instrument**.



26.5

The Commission presents guidance to strengthen the **Code of Practice on Disinformation**, the first such tool worldwide.

28.5

The EU outlines a EUR 3 billion economic support package for a future democratic **Belarus**.



31.5

The **own-resources decision** is ratified by all Member States, enabling the Commission to start borrowing to finance the recovery under NextGenerationEU.

JUNE

2021

1.6

The launch of the **European Public Prosecutor's Office**, a new chapter in fighting cross-border crime.



2.6

The Commission presents a new strategy to make the largest free travel area in the world – the **Schengen area** – stronger and more resilient.



3.6

The Commission proposes a framework for a **trusted and secure European digital identity** that will be available to all EU citizens, residents and businesses.



15.6

At the Summit in Brussels, **the EU and US leaders** commit to ending the COVID-19 pandemic and driving forward the global recovery.



JULY

2021

6.7

To increase its level of ambition on sustainable finance, the Commission adopts the **European Green Bond Standard** proposal creating a high-quality voluntary standard for bonds financing sustainable investment.

14.7

The Commission adopts a package of proposals to make the EU's climate, energy, land use, transport and taxation policies fit for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions **by at least 55% by 2030**, compared to 1990 levels.



16.7

The new **EU forest strategy** aims to ensure healthy and resilient forests that contribute significantly to biodiversity and climate goals.

20.7

2021 Rule of Law: EU report shows positive developments in Member States but also points to serious concerns.



20.7

Beating financial crime: the Commission overhauls anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism rules.

AUGUST

2021

25.8

522.4 million vaccine doses have been administered in the EU since December 2020, and more than 250 million EU citizens are fully vaccinated.



