



## **The News**

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*by Emma Phillips*

European wines and spirits will not escape having a 15% tax slapped on them in the United States as of tomorrow. EU officials and diplomats have confirmed that the rate will remain in effect until negotiators can reach a different agreement in talks with US authorities. Those talks are expected to resume in the autumn. The Minister of the Economy, Eric Lombard is seeking an exemption from customs duties on French wine.

A nursery school assistant in the Hérault region has been jailed for rape and sexual assault on nine children. The 59-year-old woman joined a school in Vic-La-Gardiole last October. The investigation was launched after a complaint was filed by the families of two children. A psychological support unit is to be set up at the school for when it reopens after the summer break.

Over 150 kilos of cocaine have been seized at the port of Marseille with an estimated street value of nine million euros. The seizure has now led to the dismantling of a drug ring and four arrests have been made in Spain.

The SNCF does not have to ask its customers for their gender identity. The decision has come from the council of the state following a referral by an LGBT + rights association. It states that the SNCF cannot ask ticket buyers to provide their gender to the rail operator for the purpose of tailoring the commercial relationship.

80,000 additional driving test places will be available by the end of the year as part of an emergency measure to try to reduce waiting times for budding drivers. Last year, the average wait between the theory test and the practical test was 80 days.

And finally, French swimmer Léon Marchand was crowned world champion today in the 200-metre medley at the World Championships in Singapore. This is the third time that he has won the title at this distance.