



Brussels, 7 September 2018

Welcome back to the first EU Insight after the break, we hope you enjoyed your summer!

BREXIT NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE

The UK's Brexit Secretary Dominic Raab has met with Michel Barnier, following reports that the EU's Chief Negotiator for Brexit branded the UK's so-called Chequers Plan "dead". Despite this, the Commission confirmed the plan, a blueprint for future trade relations, does contain positive aspects on protecting rights for citizens. Meanwhile, a top-level business alliance called on the UK and EU to ensure climate and energy is covered in a future deal. A letter signed by industry including Unilever and EDF Energy calls on both parties to continue working together to implement the Paris Climate Agreement.

MACRON PROMISES NEW POLITICAL ALLIANCE FOR 2019 ELECTIONS

French President Emmanuel Macron plans to build a progressive alliance of politicians by the end of the year, ready for the upcoming 2019 European Parliament elections. In plans that could shake the EU's current political system, the French leader would like to build a loose, pan-European coalition of like-minded politicians to fight the threat of anti-immigrant nationalists. Elsewhere, German MEP Manfred Weber announced his candidacy for nomination as the European People's Party's (EPP) lead candidate to take over as president of the European Commission.

MEPS TO VOTE ON SANCTIONS AGAINST HUNGARY

The European Parliament will give its view next week whether to trigger a sanctions procedure against Hungary's Government. MEPs will vote in plenary on a report that accuses Hungary of serious violations of EU values, including a direct attack on human rights and civil liberties, and advocates the introduction of the so-called Article 7 procedure. Invoked for the first time against Poland last year, this procedure foresees a temporary loss of EU Council voting rights. However, the outcome of the vote is uncertain. Despite several MEPs openly supporting the measures, the EPP, the biggest party in the Parliament, has previously opposed disciplinary moves against Hungary.

EU PREPARES FOR ADOPTION OF PERSONAL DATA ADEQUACY DECISION ON JAPAN

Following the conclusion of the EU-Japan talks on personal data protection in July, the Commission launched the procedure for the adoption of its adequacy decision. The decision establishes safeguards that Japan will apply to EU personal data transferred to Japan, as well as commitments regarding access to personal data by Japanese public authorities. Both the EU and Japan are now in the process of ratifying their reciprocal adequacy finding. For the EU, this involves an opinion from the European Data Protection Board and the approval from a committee of Member States' representatives. Subsequently, the Commission will adopt the adequacy decision on Japan.

COMMISSION TO PROPOSE END TO CLOCK CHANGE AFTER POPULAR CONSULTATION

84 per cent of the respondents want to put an end to the bi-annual clock change, according to the preliminary results of a public consultation on clock change arrangements organised by the European Commission. Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said millions "believe that in future, summer

time should be year-round, and that's what will happen". Some 4.6 million people sent responses, the highest number ever received for a Commission public consultation. The final results will be published in the coming weeks. Subsequently, the Commission is expected to make a legislative proposal with a view of changing the current clock change arrangements.

COMING UP NEXT WEEK

- **9 September: Sweden General Election**
- **10-11 September: Informal meeting of health ministers.** On the agenda: securing supply of centrally authorised medicines, regulatory challenges, digital health.
- **10-13 September: European Parliament plenary.** On the agenda: Situation in Hungary, Copyright in the Digital Single Market, Common system of VAT for small enterprises.
- **12 September: State of the Union address 2018**

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