



**Brussels, 16 November 2018**

### **BREXIT DEAL REACHED – COMING WEEKS KEY FOR RATIFICATION**

After weeks of intensive discussions, EU and UK negotiators reached a deal on the final Withdrawal Agreement and an outline of the political declaration on the future relationship. The technical deal confirms most aspects previously agreed upon and introduces a new possibility to extend the transition period with no precise end date. An extraordinary European Council summit to sign off the deal is set to be held on 25 November. UK PM Theresa May will subsequently seek to secure a majority in the UK Parliament to back her deal in a ‘meaningful vote’ to be held in the coming weeks.

### **COUNCIL AND PARLIAMENT CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS ON LONG-TERM BUDGET**

Talks on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) continued this week at the General Affairs Council, in preparation for December’s European Council Summit, when political negotiations could start at Leaders’ level. Ministers agreed on the need to compromise, but significant divisions on agriculture and cohesion policy remain. Separately, the European Parliament held a plenary debate on its interim report on the MFF 2021-2027, which it subsequently adopted. Many MEPs criticised the Commission and the Council for their lack of ambition in the proposed budget ceiling. MFF discussions will now continue, with a view to reaching an agreement by the end of 2019.

### **NEW EU TELECOMS RULES ENDORSED BY PARLIAMENT**

The Parliament voted in favour of establishing a European Electronic Communications Code and a body of European regulators for electronic communications during this week’s plenary in Strasbourg. The new rules will boost super-fast 5G networks and cap prices for calls between EU countries. The Council will now formally adopt the Directive, which is part of the Digital Single Market strategy, before the file is published as law in the EU Official Journal.

### **PARLIAMENT ADOPT CLEAN ENERGY FILES**

The Parliament adopted three key files within the Clean Energy Package: Energy Efficiency, Governance of the Energy Union and a revised Renewable Energy Directive during this week’s plenary. The files will aim to ensure the EU meets its energy and climate targets for 2030. The Council will now formally approve the three laws before the legislation enters into force by the end of the year. Furthermore, the plenary also approved a report on CO2 emission performance standards for new heavy-duty vehicles, which includes an emission reduction target of at least 35% by 2030, plus benchmarks for zero and low emission vehicles. The Parliament now awaits the Council to reach an agreement in December before commencing with trilogues.

### **COUNCIL ADOPTS NEW RULES ON FREE FLOW OF DATA AND AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA SERVICES**

As part of the Digital Single Market strategy, the Council adopted the Regulation on free flow on non-personal data and the Directive on audiovisual media services. The former is designed to bring down unjustified restrictions on geographical location for storing or processing data, with a focus on machine-to-machine data exchange. The latter paves the way for a fairer regulatory environment for the entire audiovisual sector, including video-sharing platforms. Both pieces of legislation will enter

into force by year-end. Member States will have two years to transpose the Directive into their national law. The Regulation will apply six months after entry into force.

#### **COMING UP NEXT WEEK**

- **19 November: Eurogroup.** On the agenda: EMU deepening.
- **19 November: Agriculture and Fisheries Council.** On the agenda: deep-sea stocks, future of the CAP post 2020, plant protection.
- **19 November: General Affairs Council (Art. 50).** On the agenda: preparation for the 25 November European Council.
- **19 November: Foreign Affairs Council.** On the agenda: Central Asia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Yemen.
- **19-20 November: Foreign Affairs Council (Defence).** On the agenda: EU Global Strategy, EU-NATO Cooperation, CSDP missions and operations.
- **20 November: European Economic Area Council.** On the agenda: functioning of EEA agreement, European Pillar of Social Rights.
- **25 November: Special meeting of the European Council (Art. 50).**

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