



Brussels, 5 April 2019

MAY REQUESTS BREXIT EXTENSION AHEAD OF SPECIAL EUROPEAN COUNCIL SUMMIT

Ahead of next week's special European Council summit on Brexit, UK Prime Minister Theresa May formally requested the EU27 leaders grant a further extension until 30 June 2019. This extension could be terminated at any time if the Withdrawal Agreement were to be ratified before this date. The UK would "continue to make responsible preparations" to hold EU parliamentary elections if it is still a Member State on 23 May. During a debate with MEPs, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker stated that the EU should not grant a short extension that goes just beyond election day. The final decision will be taken by the European Council on 10 April, just two days before the new Brexit date.

PARLIAMENT ADOPTS POSITIONS ON THE SOCIAL MOBILITY PACKAGE

The European Parliament adopted its first reading positions on the three social and market pillar proposals of the first Mobility Package from May 2017. Hereby concluding a protracted and contentious procedure in the Parliament, which saw many MEPs call for a postponement of the vote until the next term at a debate on 27 March after 1224 plenary amendments were tabled to the three reports. The files, address the driving times and rest periods, posting of drivers and adapting development in the international road haulage market, are now expected to move into the next phase of negotiations; interinstitutional trilogues next term.

GREEN LIGHT TO PAN-EUROPEAN PERSONAL PENSION PRODUCT FROM PARLIAMENT

The European Parliament adopted the final agreement on the Pan-European Personal Pension Product (PEPP), by 338 votes in favour, 143 against and 139 abstentions. The PEPP is a voluntary personal pension scheme that will offer consumers a new pan-European option to save for retirement. It will be a simple, flexible and cost-effective product, accompanied by strong consumer protection rules. The final agreement will now have to be adopted by the Council before the text is published in the Official Journal and enter into force 20 days later. The Regulation is expected to become applicable in 2021.

NEW RULES FOR SHARING PUBLIC SECTOR DATA APPROVED BY PARLIAMENT

The European Parliament approved the Open Data and Public Sector Information Directive, which aims to improve the availability and innovative use of public and publicly-funded data. The new rules replace the Public Sector Information Directive and will foster the development of data-intensive technologies such as artificial intelligence. Following the Parliament's adoption, the Council of the EU is now expected to formally approve the text. Member States will then have two years to implement the revised rules. The Commission will start working with Member States on the identification of the high-value datasets, which will be set out in an Implementing Act.

CO-LEGISLATORS AGREE BROAD MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN CONSUMER PROTECTION

The European Parliament and the Council reached a provisional agreement on stronger and better enforced consumer protection rules. The new framework introduces i) greater transparency and strengthens consumer rights when buying online; ii) penalties for violations of EU consumer law; and iii) clear rules to tackle the issue of dual quality of products in the EU. The so-called new deal for

consumers package was proposed by the Commission in April 2018 and comprises two Directives. The European Parliament and the Council will now need to formally adopt the provisional agreement before the new rules enter into force.

COMING UP NEXT WEEK:

- **8 April: Foreign Affairs Council.** On the agenda: current affairs, Afghanistan, Eastern Partnership, Venezuela.
- **9 April: EU-China summit.** On the agenda: trade and investment, global governance, connectivity, foreign security and human rights.
- **10 April: Special European Council (Art. 50).** On the agenda: Brexit.
- **10-11 April: Informal meeting of employment and social policy ministers.**
- **11-12 April: Informal meeting of cohesion policy ministers.**
- **14-15 April: Informal meeting of health ministers.**

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