Movers and Shakers | 4 October 2019

Written by Mia Bartoloni and Megan MacDougall on 4 October 2019 in News

Keep track of developments in the European institutions and public affairs with our Movers and Shakers column.

Today's Movers & Shakers are about: Commissioner-delegate hearings update, appointment of president to the General Court, Austrian snap election results, Portuguese voters head to the polls, public affairs appointments and more!

European Parliament

Committees and Delegations

Japan Delegation (D-JP)
Roberts ZīLE (ECR, LV) joins as a substitute.
European Commission

Commissioner-designate hearings

On Monday, the Legal Affairs Committee voted against the appointments of the Commissioner-designate for Hungary and Romania. In two secret ballots, the committee voted with 13 to 7 against Romania’s Rovana PLUMB who had been pinned for the Transport portfolio, and 12 to 9 against Hungary’s László TRÓCSÁNY, Commissioner-designate for Enlargement. The committee cited conflicts of interest in both cases related to their financial declarations.

On Monday evening, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor ORBÁN confirmed that he would propose diplomat Oliver VARHELYI to replace TRÓCSÁNYI. Bucharest then proposed MEP Dan NICA (S&D) as their new candidate, however also put forward the name of secretary of state at the foreign ministry, Melania-Gabriela CIOT, as a female candidate. At the time of this publication it is still to be confirmed whether Von der Leyen will accept either of these as candidate, and if so, which portfolio she will assign to them.

France’s Sylvie GOULARD is on shaky ground following her hearing. The Commissioner-designate for the internal market faced a tense grilling from members of the Internal Market, Industry, Legal Affairs and Cultural Affairs committees on Wednesday and ultimately failed to convince them that she was clear of number of legal and ethical issues. She will have to answer further written questions from MEPs at a later date. Similarly, Polish agriculture Commissioner-designate, Janusz WOJCIECHOWSKI, looks set to face a second round of questions from the Parliament after failing to convince MEPs with a series of vague answers on topics such as big land investments, glyphosate and his own financial affairs.

For a complete overview of all Commissioner-designate hearings, sign-up to Dods EU Monitoring alerts.

Directorates-General

Trade
Rupert SCHLEGELMILCH has been appointed as the new director of Directorate E (Neighbouring countries, USA and Canada), replacing Ignacio GARCIA BERCERO.

Energy
Christian ZINGLERSEN replaces Alberto POTOTSCHNIG as director of The EU Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators on the 1 January 2020.
Committee of the Regions

Tanya HRISTOVA (EPP, BG) has been elected as the new chair of Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture Commission

Dimitrios BIRMPA (PES, EL) joins as a member, replacing Georgios KAMINIS.

Eva BORCHORST MEJNERTZ (NI, DK) joins as an alternate, replacing Karen MELCHIOR.

Court of Justice of the European Union

General Court

Marc VAN DER WOUDE has been appointed as the EU General Court’s president for a three-year term. VAN DER WOUDE, who had been vice-president since 2016, succeeds Marc JAEGGER. Cypriot judge Savvas PAPASAVVAS has been elected vice-president.

Public Affairs

Union of European Soft Drinks Associations (UNESDA)
Nicholas HODAC has been appointed as Director General. HODAC will take up the role on 14 October.

European Community Shipowners’ Associations (ECSA)
Former vice-president Claes BERGLUND has been elected president for the next two years while Philipppos PHILIS has been elected vice-president, replacing Panos LASKARIDIS.

BCW Brussels (formerly Burson-Marsteller)
Dennis ABBOTT leaves as Managing Director for communications and media relations.

Got a new appointment you would like us to include in our next newsletter? Click here to let us know about it!

National News

Austria
Following Sundays snap election, The Austrian People’s Party (EPP) led by Sebastian KURZ came
out on top with 38% of the vote; the Green party fared well in the results with 14% of the vote. KURZ does not have a majority and will be looking to create a coalition. His three possible coalition partners are the Freedom Party, Social Democrats or a three-way alliance with the Greens and the pro-business Neo party.

Former Freedom Party leader Heinz-Christian STRACHE announced his resignation on Tuesday, following a tumultuous period following national scandals and the Freedom Party’s poor results in the snap election.

Belgium
After a grueling 21-hour negotiation process it was announced on Monday that Flanders has a new regional government. It will be headed by a three-party legislature; the Flemish nationalist party N-VA, the liberals Open VLD and the Christian Democrats CD&V. Out of the parliament's 124 seats, the coalition will hold 70.

Brexit
This week saw Boris JOHNSON set out his proposals for a Brexit deal which would see Northern Ireland remain in the European single market for goods, however it would leave the customs union. The European Commission welcomed the “advances” but noted problems remained. The EU have given JOHNSON a week to revise the plan.

Portugal
Portuguese voters will head to the polls on Sunday for a general election. Opinion polls indicate that Prime Minister Antonio COSTA’s Socialist Party (PS) is expected to win but will fall short of a majority.

Romania
A vote of no confidence has been initiated by the opposition against Prime Minister Viorica DANCILI’s government. The process has not yet been formalised but the opposition are hoping for the vote to take place next week.

Sweden
Ardalan SHEKARABI takes up the post as Minister for Social Security, leaving his post as Minister for Public Administration. This comes after Annika STRANDHALL announced her resignation on Monday as Minister for Social Security, following the death of her partner. Lena MICKO will replace SHEKARABI as Minister for Public Administration.
Dods events

Westminster
Briefing
Digital
Health & Care
Scotland
MEP
Awards
The Skills
Summit
Scottish
Public Service
Awards
Public Sector
Procurement
Summit
Public Sector ICT
Summit
Cyber Security
Summit
Cyber Security
2017
Training
Journal Awards

Partnership events

The Health and Care Innovation Expo
Civil Service Live
Civil Service Awards
Chief Nursing Officer for England’s Summit
Women into Leadership
The Youth Justice Convention
Socitm Spring Conference
NHSCC Annual Members’ Event
Dods at Party Conference

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