

Brussels Weekly update - 27/01/2017

Over the next few months, we'll be reporting back how Brexit is playing out across the water. Deeper insights will be shared on our website and through our Seafish Round-Up' industry newsletter - contact Nick.Connelly@seafish.co.uk to subscribe.

EU INSTITUTIONS

EP questions on Brexit: European Parliament Members of the EP (MEP) can submit questions for written answer to the European Commission (among other EU Institutions). The content of questions is the sole responsibility of their author(s), and a MEP can submit a maximum of five questions per month.

- [Discriminatory measures against EU workers in the UK](#) - Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea (ALDE)

- EP study: [Brexit Implications for Employment and Social Affairs: Facts and Figures](#)

The aim of this briefing note is to provide statistical and accurate material regarding migration within Europe. The briefing note is structured as follows: Section 2 provides an overview of migration with key facts and figures pertaining to the population of EU-27 nationals living in the UK, as well as UK citizens living within the EU-27; Section 3 explores the impact of the EU-27 population on the UK social security and health care system.

- [MEP Ian Duncan: Brexit means EU must postpone new fisheries laws](#)

MEP Mr Duncan said: "Creating European fisheries law for the North Sea is pointless, as British fishermen will not be bound by it come 2019. They are eagerly awaiting the day when the Common Fisheries Policy is consigned to the dustbin of history, and fit for purpose laws can be drafted and implemented in the UK. I once again call upon the EU to abandon this nonsense upon stilts, and focus on areas where they will have jurisdiction beyond the next two years."

EU COUNTRIES

- [News Analysis: Dutch experts concerned over negative impact of Brexit](#) – Source CHINA EUROPE news.

On British Prime Minister Theresa May's plans for a "hard Brexit" Joris Larik, senior researcher at The Hague Institute for Global Justice said "This is bad news for the Netherlands for which Britain is an important trading partner, but also an unequivocal parting of ways between the UK and the remaining EU 27 member states".

- [Agriculture Committee to look at effect of Brexit on Irish fisheries](#) – Source Houses of the Oireachtas.

On 24th January the Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine held a debate on the effect of Brexit on Irish fisheries. The following representatives from the Irish Fish Producers Organisations and the Irish Fish Processors & Exporters Association explained their concerns and perspectives on the issue: Mr. Seán O'Donoghue (Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation); Mr. Francis O'Donnell, (Irish Fish Producers Organisation); Mr. Hugo Boyle, (Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation); Mr. Patrick Murphy, Mr. John D. Sullivan, and Mr. Greg Casey, (Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation Limited) and Mr. Lorcán Ó Cinnéide, (Irish Fish Processors and Exporters Association).

.MORE INFORMATION

- [Gibraltar's view on Brexit examined](#) – Source UK Parliament.

The Exiting the European Union Committee discusses Gibraltar's position following the Brexit vote, and what their future arrangement could be given their unique situation.

- [European Union \(Notification of Withdrawal\) Bill 2016-17](#) – Source UK Government.

The European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill is a public bill presented to Parliament by the UK Government. The Bill was introduced to the House of Commons and given its First Reading on Thursday 26 January 2017. MPs will next consider the Bill at Second Reading on Tuesday 31 January 2017 with conclusion of Second Reading on Wednesday 1 February 2017. The Bill is then due to be considered in Committee on Monday 6 and Tuesday 7 February 2017, concluding in Committee on Wednesday 8 February 2017 when the remaining stages are also due to take place.

- [Theresa May's Brexit Speech of 17 January 2017 – Decoding its clarity and ambiguity](#) – Source CEPS.

Theresa May's speech has given some clarity on the fundamental choice defending a Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement combined with a Strategic Partnership. However the author of this paper stresses the huge ambiguity emerge in relation to the content of a CFTA.

- [Discussion paper - How Europe sees Brexit](#) – Source European Policy Center.
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FISHERIES

- [Monitoring on mineral oil hydrocarbons](#)

The EU Commission has passed a recommendation calling on Member states to monitor the presence of the potentially carcinogenic and hepatotoxic substances in food and food contact materials in 2017–18 and supply results to EFSA.

The foods included in the Recommendation include “fish meat” and “fish products (canned fish)”, as well as food contact materials used for those products.

- [Carrefour Belgium will stop selling Pangasius fish](#) – Source Carrefour

Carrefour Belgium has decided to stop stocking Pangasius and to discontinue sales of this particular fish in both its fresh seafood and frozen foods sections. This decision affects both its own-brand products, as well as those of national brands. “We decided to stop selling the fish for environmental reasons,” spokesperson Baptiste Van Outryve said. “We saw the negative impact Pangasius farming was having in Asia, particularly on local communities.”

- [Outcome of the Council meeting “Agriculture and Fisheries” of 23 January 2017](#) – Source EU Council

Work Programme of the Maltese Presidency: the Presidency will contribute to the EC MedFish4ever strategy for the Mediterranean Sea, which will culminate in an event in Valletta on 29 and 30 March 2017. It will also work towards the adoption of a number of key legislative texts such as: the technical measures regulation, the ICCAT transposition, the regulation on sustainable management of external fishing fleets, the proposed multi-annual plans for demersal stocks in the North Sea and small pelagic species in the Adriatic Sea, and any other multi-annual plans that may be proposed by the Commission during the first half of the year.

Fishing opportunities in the Baltic Sea for 2017: Council adopts amendment to regulation: The amendment introduces an exemption from the seasonal closure for Western cod for vessels less than 15 metres in length, except pair trawling vessels which are equipped with a vessel monitoring system in accordance with article 9(2) of regulation 1224/2009, in areas where the water is less than 20 metres deep. The Council agreed on 2017 total allowable catches (TACs) for the 10 most commercially important fish stocks in the Baltic Sea on 10 October 2016. At that time, the following reductions in fishing opportunities were also agreed on: -25% for Eastern cod, -56% for Western cod including bag limit provisions for recreational fisheries, -11% for herring in the Gulf of Riga and -20% for salmon in the Gulf of Finland. The agreement also included an increase in catches for herring (except in the Gulf of Riga), plaice, and salmon (except in the Gulf of Finland), a smaller increase for sprat and no increase for salmon in the main basin.

Other decisions:

Generalised scheme of preferences (GSP): The Council decided not to object to a Commission regulation which amends the list of beneficiary countries of GSP by removing Ukraine and reinserting Tonga. Ukraine ceases to benefit from GSP preferences as EU-Ukraine free trade provisions have been applied provisionally since 1 January 2016. Tonga is reinserted as it has been classified by the World Bank as a lower-middle-income country.

- [New study on fisheries subsidies in major non-EU fishing nations](#) – DG MARE

The EU has proposed to relaunch negotiations within the World Trade Organisation to end harmful fisheries subsidies that contribute to unsustainable fishing, in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 14, which calls on the world to conserve and sustainably use the oceans. To this end, DG MARE has published a study which concludes that subsidies for catch fisheries play a significant role in China, Taiwan, Japan, the US and South Korea, while aquaculture subsidies are the highest in Russia and China. The biggest subsidies go towards research, infrastructure, fuel (China) and insurance (Japan).

- [Protective measures on imports of bivalve molluscs from Turkey intended for human consumption, as regards its period of application](#) – Source European Official Journal

On 25 January the EU has published an Implementing Regulation in view of the significant deficiencies in the Turkish control system for bivalve molluscs intended for export to the Union, notably in the performance of laboratories. Due to the nature of the products involved, before any lifting of measures can be considered, a follow-up audit is necessary.

- **FVO audit - [Fishery products: Panamanian reefer vessel inspection](#)** – DG SANTE

The objective of this audit carried out on 21 July 2016 was to verify if the system of inspections of vessels on the list of Panamanian registered vessels eligible for EU export is implemented in line with the procedures described in the 2014 report. The system of inspections of vessels on the list of Panamanian registered vessels eligible for EU export is generally implemented in line with the procedures described in report DG (SANCO) 2014-7143. However, on the vessel inspected, some EU requirements were not met concerning HACCP based procedures. This issue had not been fully identified in either this witnessed inspection or the previous inspections of the Panamanian inspector.

- [Commission adopts creation of new Animal Welfare Platform](#) – Source European Commission

On 24th January EC adopted the creation of a new Platform on Animal Welfare which aims to improve standards across the EU without resorting to new legislation. The Platform on Animal welfare will bring together all relevant actors in relation to animal welfare: business and professional organisations, organisations from civil society, independent experts from academic and research institutes, EU and European Economic Area Member States, the European Food Safety Authorities and relevant international intergovernmental organisations like the World Organisation for Animal Health.

EP Questions:

- [Fish auction in Boulogne-sur-Mer](#) - Sylvie Goddyn (ENF)
- [Future fishing opportunities in the United Kingdom](#) - Fernando Ruas (PPE)
- [Landing obligation in the scope of sustainable fisheries agreements](#) - Alain Cadec (PPE)

Agendas:

- [Working Party on Internal and External Fisheries Policy](#), 2 February.
- [Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed Section Novel Food and Toxicological Safety of the Food Chain](#), 8 February.

Useful links:

- [Europeche: Open Letter to the European Parliament, Member States and Council on the EU Technical Conservation Regulation](#)
- [The Trawler: EP PECH Committee Magazine. January 2017](#)
- [Information notice — Public consultation Geographical indications from Japan](#)
- [The EU's General Food Law Regulation: An introduction to the founding principles and the fitness check](#)
- [Council Regulation \(EU\) 2017/135 of 23 January 2017 amending Regulation \(EU\) 2016/1903 fixing for 2017 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea](#)
- [COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION \(EU\) .../... amending Regulation \(EC\) No 889/2008 as regards feed for certain organic aquaculture animals.](#)
- [EUMOFA Monthly Highlights n°12/2016](#)
- [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2017/86 of 20 October 2016 establishing a discard plan for certain demersal fisheries in the Mediterranean Sea.](#)
- [DG Trade: Malmström Speech: The future of EU trade policy](#)
- [Council decision to authorise the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the European Union for the conclusion of a Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and protocol with the Republic of Ghana.](#)
- [Fisheries conservation measures in the Baltic Sea and the North Sea](#)

Events:

- Nordic Food Control Conference: [New Risks/New Control Methods - Are we keeping up?.7-8](#)
February 2017. Helsinki

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