

# CAVENDISH

Insight. Influence. Creativity.

**Weekly Monitoring**

**Friday 17th**

**November**



## **EIA Update**

This week the EIA met with Dame Caroline Dinenage, the Chair of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee in Parliament. Dame Caroline is in charge of the committee that scrutinises the work of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and regularly meets with the Ministers and officials to scrutinise their work.

We briefed Dame Caroline on our manifesto and policy asks, and she has asked us to make a submission to the committee which will be used as part of an Inquiry session regarding promoting Britain abroad. There will be a session where Government Ministers will be questioned on how the department is performing in this area by committee members in the new year.

## **Political Update**

This week started off with a major reshuffle by the Prime Minister of his top team. Following her comments regarding protests and her unsanctioned article last week, Home Secretary Suella Braverman was sacked, in her place, former Foreign Secretary James Cleverly was appointed with former Prime Minister now Lord, David Cameron taking his place as Foreign Secretary. The return of David Cameron was very unexpected. Cavendish's summary and analysis of the reshuffle can be read by clicking [here](#).

Aside from this, the Autumn Statement taking place next on Wednesday the 22nd of November is expected against a backdrop of UK productivity having barely shifted since the financial crisis, and the UK economy having stagnated in the three months to September, according to official figures. The pressure is on the Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt – and his £13 billion of fiscal headroom to provide an Autumn

Statement that will reinvigorate the economy. Some of the rumoured measures to be included are the halving of inheritance tax to 20 percent and a raise of the stamp duty threshold. Cavendish's Pre-Briefing on the Autumn Statement can be read [here](#).

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## News

### Skills training to be transformed with innovative projects

People seeking careers in growing sectors such as green energy, digital and construction will be able to access improved skills training, helping them secure good jobs closer to home. More than £200 million has been announced by the Government to support colleges and universities to offer more training opportunities in key industries, such as the growing green sector. Investment is being targeted to address the specific skills needs of each region, which local businesses and employers have identified as priority sectors in their local skills improvement plans (LSIPs), giving them access to the skilled workforce they need to grow.

### Employment support launched for over a million people

The Chancellor Jeremy Hunt and the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Mel Stride have unveiled their Back to Work Plan – a package of employment focused support that will help people stay healthy, get off benefits and move into work – as part of the Autumn Statement.

Building on the ambitious £7 billion employment package from the Spring Budget the Chancellor is using his Autumn Statement to outline a new Back to Work Plan, which will expand the employment support and treatment available and reform the ways that people with disabilities or health conditions interact with the state.

The government is boosting four key programmes – NHS Talking Therapies, Individual Placement and Support, Restart and Universal Support – to benefit up to 1.1 million people over the next five years and help those with mental or physical health conditions stay in or find work.

## **Shadow Secretary of State for Business and Trade promises higher quality trade deals**

Shadow Business Secretary Jonathan Reynolds announced that a Labour Government would prioritise fewer but higher-quality trade deals. He criticised the current government's "scattergun" approach to trade, emphasizing the need for increased parliamentary oversight. While expressing support for a trade deal with India, Mr Reynolds questioned the simultaneous negotiations with countries like Canada and Mexico, suggesting a focus on the quality rather than quantity of deals.

Labour, currently leading in opinion polls ahead of an expected election, assured potential partners of stability and a more deliberate negotiation strategy. Mr Reynolds highlighted the importance of parliamentary involvement in trade deal ratifications and proposed pursuing standalone agreements in areas such as digital and critical minerals.

## **UK and Florida sign pact to boost trade**

Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to boost trade and investment between the UK and Florida. This MoU with Florida is the latest the UK has signed with a US state, bringing the total to seven states with a combined GDP of £3.3tn – just under the GDP of Germany

Florida has a GDP of over £1.1tn – the fourth biggest of any US state and roughly the same size as Spain. The MoU is designed to help make it quicker, easier, and cheaper for UK and Florida firms to do business and is targeted at sectors in which the UK and Florida have particular strengths such as space, fintech, AI and legal services.

## **UK attends first CPTPP meeting since signing up to the massive Indo-Pacific trade bloc in July**

Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch visited California for her first in-person meeting with CPTPP countries since she was in New Zealand to sign the deal in July. British business have welcomed the membership that will lead to jobs, boosting sales and bringing economic growth to the UK. This coincides with the Bill implementing the CPTPP starting its passage through Parliament and

British businesses gear up to take advantage of opportunities the UK's membership presents.

### **Scottish Secretary responds to Labour Market stats for November 2023**

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack reacted to the latest labour market statistics for November 2023 saying that the measures to remove barriers to work are effective, with a near record number of people on company payrolls in Scotland.

Measures from the UK Government's £3.5 billion investment in removing barriers to work are making a difference - including the mid-life MOT for over-50s and increasing the amount that can be claimed for childcare by those on Universal Credit. The ONS has published a regional breakdown on payrolled employees. The estimates for Scotland show that the number of payrolled employees rose by 0.9% compared with October 2022, a rise of 22,654 employees to 2,456,355. The number of payrolled employees in Scotland was up 3.7%- since February 2020, a rise of 87,660 employees.

### **Culture Secretary celebrates northern creativity in Manchester**

The Culture Secretary, Lucy Frazer, convened the WeCreate conference in Manchester to foster collaboration with creative industry entities, aiming to boost the creative industries' growth by £50 billion by 2030. As part of this initiative, six regions in England will share £10.9 million to bolster support for numerous creative industry businesses, facilitating access to private financing and business guidance. Additionally, a £5 million investment opportunity is open for grassroots music venues, promoters, and festivals to expand audience reach and revenue prospects. This financial backing, totaling over £10 million, aims to aid hundreds of creative businesses in securing investments and generating employment, aligning with the Government's ambition to elevate the creative industries significantly. The WeCreate conference gathered over 140 cultural and creative businesses, emphasizing collaboration and potential maximization between the Government and these sectors, particularly in the North of England.

### **UK and Taiwan's Enhanced Trade Partnership Arrangement Published**

The ETP aims to strengthen bilateral trade and investment relations between Taiwan and the UK by prioritising the following areas for future discussion, focus, and cooperation (the "Pillars"):

- Investment.
- Digital trade.

- Renewable energy and net zero.

### **Department for Transport signs agreement for Liverpool transport system**

Transport Secretary, Mark Harper and Liverpool Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram have inked an agreement aiming to revamp Liverpool's transportation system, whilst enhancing accessibility and affordability for passengers. This memorandum of understanding involves close collaboration between the Government, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Network Rail, and the Great British Railways Transition Team. The plan intends to streamline journeys as well as foster connectivity to key areas.

The agreement comes as part of the previously announced £12 billion Network North plan to enhance national connectivity. The signing occurred at the opening of Headbolt Lane station, funded by £80 million, now serving as a key hub for Merseyrail and Northern services, where innovative battery-powered trains were introduced as part of a broader effort to enhance network sustainability.

On the agreement, Transport Secretary Mark Harper stated:

*"Today's agreement demonstrates this government's commitment to transforming public transport across the country and empowering elected leaders to make decisions based on the priorities of local people."*

*"This agreement follows over £1 billion of funding committed to the city through our Network North plans and will kickstart transport improvements for people across the city, making journeys affordable and accessible for all."*

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## **Parliament**

House of Commons

### **Written questions to the Treasury on Off-payroll Working**

Shadow SNP Spokesperson for EFRA, Patricia Gibson asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, "whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of not applying IR35 rules for domestic contractors where a contract is forecast to end within a two week period."

Then Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Victoria Atkins replied:

*“The off-payroll working rules are designed to ensure that individuals working like employees but through their own company pay broadly the same income tax and National Insurance contributions (NICs) as those who are directly employed. The government considered the suggestion of an exemption based on the length of a contract when consulting on the reforms to the off-payroll working rules, but concluded that it was not appropriate. HMRC’s employment status manual ([ESM0548](#)) explains the role of the length of engagement in determining employment status.”*

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