

CAVENDISH

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Weekly Monitoring
Friday 4th October



EIA Update

This week the EIA continued with planned engagement and preparation for our roundtable event in October with the Department of Media Culture and Sport. We have also been preparing to re-engage with Parliament following their return from recess on 7th October.

Political Update

The main political focus of this week has been the Conservative Party Conference. The ongoing party leadership contest dominated this year's conference with Fringe events tending to address two themes: where the party went wrong and what it needs to do to return to Government.

All four remaining leadership candidates, Kemi Badenoch, James Cleverly, Robert Jenrick, and Tom Tugendhat, delivered speeches at conference where they set out their cases for leadership. Jenrick and Cleverly have emerged as the bookies favourite to win, whilst Kemi Badenoch remains a strong rival owing to her popularity amongst the membership. The next ballot will reduce the race down to two runners by 9th October who will then go out to the party membership.

Following the 'freebies row' Kier Starmer elected to pay back £6,000 worth of gifts and hospitality, saying it was 'right' to repay these and has committed to introducing new principles for donations to ensure better transparency in the future.

The Government also used this week to pledge £22bn for carbon capture projects across the UK. This news has come in the same week that the last coal-fired power station in the UK closed.

News

The Prime Minister visits Brussels for the first time

Keir Starmer has made his first visit to Brussels since his election. The purpose of the visit was part of his wider goal of rebuilding ties with the EU post Brexit. Despite the rain, the visit was significant, with Union Jack and EU flags displayed together. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen warmly welcomed the PM. Starmer's agenda included closer cooperation on defence, security, climate change, and economic growth. He emphasised sensible leadership and ruled out reversing Brexit. Feedback from the event claimed that, while the EU remains cautious, both sides aim to improve relations, especially on security and defence.

UK Defence and Security Exports events and exhibitions support

UK Defence and Security Exports have published a list of the events that they will support business both at home and overseas in attending, stating that they recognise the importance of events and exhibitions in delivering export success in defence and physical and cyber security. The support includes exhibition pods, 'Soldier on stand' demonstrations, equipment showcases, Defence and Security Industry Days, supply chain events, and trade missions. The full list of events and support offered can be found [here](#).

Chair appointed to the Shadow Great British Railways

Laura Shoaf has been appointed as Chair of Shadow Great British Railways (SGBR) to lead major rail reforms in the UK. Her role will involve unifying the rail system and improving services for passengers. Shoaf, previously the Chief Executive of West Midlands Combined Authority, brings "extensive experience in transport management and policy". The appointment comes ahead of new rail reform legislation and nationalisation of the railways.

The Bank of England warns that interest rates could fall quickly

The Bank of England may cut interest rates more quickly if inflation remains under control, according to the Governor of the Bank of England, Andrew Bailey. The Bank recently reduced rates from 5.25% to 5%, the first cut in over four years. Bailey highlighted the importance of monitoring Middle East developments, particularly oil prices. With inflation near the Bank's 2% target, further rate cuts are expected. The next interest rate decisions are scheduled for November and December.

Confidence in UK business has dropped

UK business confidence has dropped to its lowest level since the General Election, with firms growing more pessimistic about the economic outlook. The Lloyds Bank Business Barometer found that business optimism weakened to its lowest level since June, falling three points to 47%, a three-month low but still above the long-term average of 29%. Concerns about the economy caused a nine-point fall in economic optimism to 38%, the lowest since March. Despite this, businesses remain positive about their own trading prospects. The upcoming October budget, expected to include difficult decisions on tax and spending, is also contributing to the uncertainty.

Changes to be made to Euston Station

The giant overhead advertising boards at Euston station will be shut down immediately as part of a major review into overcrowding. Transport Secretary Louise Haigh has ordered Network Rail to declutter the concourse and improve train announcements.

This follows a call from London TravelWatch for a safety review due to overcrowding risks. Network Rail and the Department for Transport announced a five-point plan to enhance passenger experience, including better information, more space, and improved reliability. Long-term redevelopment plans are also being explored to address the station's outdated infrastructure.

[Oasis opt-out of Dynamic Ticket Pricing for the rest of their tour](#)

Following the backlash from UK fans over dynamic ticket pricing Oasis have opted out of it for their new dates in the US, Canada and Mexico. The group's managers said that they wanted to 'avoid a repeat of the issues' that fans faced in the UK and Ireland.

Parliament

House of Commons

[Question on the visas to work in the EU](#)

Lord Naseby, Conservative asked: "*His Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the European Union to increase the allowance under its visa-waiver policy to allow UK citizens working for UK-based hauliers to remain in the Schengen Area for more than 90 days in any 180-day period.*"

Baroness Twycross, Minister for Gambling, responded:

"Both the UK and the EU allow for visa-free short-term travel in line with their arrangements for Third Country Nationals. The Schengen Borders Code allows for third country nationals to travel within the Schengen Area for up to 90 days in any 180-day period; this is standard for third countries travelling to the EU. While we recognise that extending the 90-180 day period is a matter for Member States and the EU, the Government will continue to listen to and advocate for UK nationals. In November 2023, officials raised the challenges the 90 days in 180-day limit presents for UK national hauliers and coach drivers through the UK-EU Specialised Committee on Road Transport; the EU Co-Chair noted that there are no plans to change the rules on the conditions of entry of third country nationals to the EU, including for visa-free travel for short-term visits."

**For any queries regarding this round-up
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