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Council of EU Publishes ECOFIN Taxation Report

Following the Council of the European Union meetings that took place over 28 and 29 June in Brussels, the Council has now released the [ECOFIN report to the European Council on taxation issues](#), which provides a detailed background and summary of developments that occurred during the Bulgarian Presidency on tax files. Many of the summaries concerning the files, including CCTB, CCCTB, digital tax and the definitive VAT regime, state that the issues will be the subject of further work and discussions within the Council. Following the June Council meetings, the issue of digital tax in particular was [singled out](#) as a file for further discussion.

The Austrian Presidency has also recently published its [Presidency Agenda Programme](#), in which taxation of the digital economy, CCTB and the EU's definitive VAT regime proposals are set out as priorities for the focus of the taxation work of the Presidency.



OECD Launches Tax Revenue Database

At the 5th plenary meeting of the Inclusive Framework on BEPS, the OECD announced the launch of a new [database](#) which will provide detailed comparable taxation revenue information concerning 80 jurisdictions, and will increase to cover 90 jurisdictions by the end of 2018.

The database will be known as the Global Revenue Statistics Database, and will include country-specific indicators concerning tax structures and tax rates with a view to enable necessary tax policy reforms to sufficiently fund public services. A working paper compiled using information from the database sets out that tax revenues have increased since 2000.

Pascal Saint-Amans, Director of the OECD stated that the Global Revenue Statistics Database “sets the global standard for robust and comparable tax revenue data” and is a “vital foundation for tax policy reform”.



EU Council Authorises WTO Negotiations

The Council of the European Union, ahead of the United Kingdom's withdraw from the EU, has [authorised](#) the Commission to begin formal negotiations with the World Trade Organisation concerning EU tariff rate quotas, and how these should be divided between the UK and remaining 27 EU Member States after Brexit. In particular, quantitative rate quotas concerning agricultural, fishing and industrial products will require adjustment.

In addition, the European Commission has [proposed a Regulation](#) which would enable the EU to apportion the quotas unilaterally, and amend EU provisions as required on the basis of those apportionments. The proposal will follow the ordinary legislative process.



OECD's MLI Enters Into Force

The BEPS [multilateral tax treaty instrument](#) (“MLI”) entered into force on 1 July 2018 following on from 5 countries having ratified the instrument, namely Austria, the Isle of Man, Jersey, Poland and Slovenia. There are now 82 jurisdictions that are signatories to the treaty.

The multilateral tax treaty allows jurisdictions to update their existing double tax treaties and transpose measures agreed in the BEPS project without further need for bilateral negotiations. OECD Director for Tax Policy and Administration, Pascal Saint-Amans, stated that the “entry into force of this landmark agreement underlines governments’ commitment to update the international tax rules and ensure they are fit for purpose in the 21st Century”.

Last week, ahead of the treaty entering into force, Kazakhstan, Peru, the United Arab Emirates and Estonia became signatories to the BEPS Multilateral Convention, and the United Kingdom, Sweden, Serbia and New Zealand all deposited their instruments of ratification with the OECD. Further ratifications are expected in the coming months.



EU Submits Comment on US Import Investigation

The European Union has [submitted formal comments](#) to the US Department of Commerce concerning an investigation currently being carried out by the Department as to the impact of automotive imports on US national security by way of their economic impact.

The EU has stated that as with the investigation carried out concerning steel and aluminium imports which led to the imposition of new tariffs on imports to the US, this new investigation similarly lacks any proper factual basis and violates international trade rules. The EU stated that any measures imposed on the basis of national security will be strongly opposed.