

## **The European Union's preventive diplomacy: the exercise does not (yet) make the master**

[Željana Zovko - 17 Oct 2023](#)

Ten years after the creation of the European External Action Service, discussions continue regarding the lack of a single voice for the European Union's external policy and its role on the world stage.



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### ■ Elections :



#### **The opposition forces led by Donald Tusk should be able to form the next government in Poland**

The three coalitions of opposition parties - Donald Tusk's Citizens' Coalition (KO), Third Way (Trzecia Droga) and The Left - won the parliamentary elections in Poland on 15 October. They are expected to win 248 of the 460 seats in the Sejm. The United Right coalition, led by the ruling Law and Justice party, and the Freedom and Independence Confederation, meanwhile, are set to win a combined 212 seats. [Read more](#)

### ■ Foundation :



## Presentation of the Valéry Giscard d'Estaing 2023 Prize

The Valéry Giscard d'Estaing 2023 Prize, which is awarded each year to students for their commitment to Europe and of which the Foundation is a partner, was presented to the winners at a ceremony at the Senate in Paris on 9 October, in the presence of Alain Lamassoure, former minister and chairman of the Foundation's Scientific Committee. [Read more](#)



## Developing and promoting Robert Schuman's legacy

Jean-Dominique Giuliani, Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation, and Emmanuel Petit, Rector of the Institut Catholique de Paris (ICP), signed a partnership agreement on 6th October. The two institutions are thus strengthening their collaboration in the field of European studies. [Read more](#)

## ■ Commission :



## Letters to internet platforms calling for compliance with European legislation

Internal Market Commissioner Thierry Breton has called on the companies that run the social media platforms X (formerly Twitter), Facebook and TikTok, as well as the video platform YouTube, to comply with their obligations under digital services legislation (DSA), and to take the necessary measures against illegal content and misinformation shared on these networks about the attacks in Israel and the situation in Palestine. On 12 October, the Commission formally opened an investigation against X. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



## Measures to manage demographic change

On 11 October, the Commission presented measures to tackle demographic change, at a time when an ageing population is threatening the dynamism of the Member States. It stressed the need for action at European level, while taking account of geographical disparities and legal immigration. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Parliament :



## Finalists for the 2023 Sakharov Prize

On 12 October, MEPs chose the three finalists for the 2023 Sakharov Prize, which honours individuals or groups active in the defence of human rights and fundamental freedoms: Mahsa Amini and the "Women, Life, Freedom" movement in Iran, Vilma Núñez de Escorcía and Bishop Rolando José Álvarez Lagos of Nicaragua, and three activists in favour of abortion rights in Poland, El Salvador and the United States. The winner will be announced on 19 October and the award presented on 13 December. [Read more](#)

## ■ Council :



### Meeting of Ministers for Labour and Social Affairs

On 9 October, the Labour and Social Affairs ministers debated the impact of new technologies on work, reached agreement on a framework for employment in the social economy, and approved conclusions on mental health in the workplace. They also discussed access to housing for Roma communities, European social protection systems and self-employed workers. [Read more](#)



### Clean fuel and renewable energy

On 9 October, the Council definitively adopted the new directive on renewable energies (RED II), which sets a target of 45% renewable energies in final energy consumption - the EU's objective for 2030. It also definitively adopted the ReFuelEU regulation on the greening of aviation fuels. These are the last two texts making up the Fit for 55 package for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



### Adoption of the fund for joint defence procurement

On 9 October, the Council definitively adopted the European defence industry reinforcement through common procurement act (EDIRPA). This new legislation creates a €300 million fund to partially reimburse joint defence purchases made from European companies by a consortium of at least three Member States. [Read more](#)



## Protected Appellations of Origin of Crafts

On 9 October, the Council definitively adopted a regulation creating a system of geographical indications for certain industrial and craft products with a reputation for quality linked to a place of production, such as Limoges porcelain. Protection of these geographical indications at European level will be delegated to the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), in order to protect against counterfeiting and promote innovation and know-how in the areas concerned. [Read more](#)



## Consumer Credit Directive

On 9 October, the Council definitively adopted the directive on consumer credit, which sets out rules for the advertising and contractual presentation of consumer credit, particularly when taken out digitally, in order to protect consumers. [Read more](#)

## ■ Diplomacy :



## Declaration by the members of the European Council on the situation in the Middle East

On 15 October, the Heads of State and Government condemned "in the strongest possible terms Hamas and its atrocious and indiscriminate terrorist attacks", and "firmly insist on Israel's right to defend itself in accordance with humanitarian and international law". They called for the protection of civilians and the release of hostages held by Hamas. On 13 October, the Presidents of the Commission and Parliament, Ursula von der Leyen and Roberta Metsola, visited Israel. On 14 October, the Commission announced a tripling of humanitarian aid to Gaza, to more than €75 million. On 10 October, the foreign affairs ministers also discussed the situation in the region. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



## Ministerial Meeting with the Gulf Cooperation Council

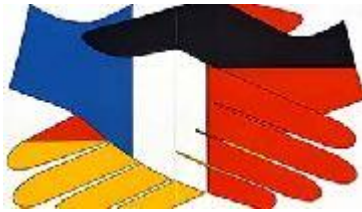
The foreign affairs ministers of the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council, meeting in Oman on 10 October, discussed the strategic partnership currently being prepared and cooperation between the European Union and the Gulf States, before turning their attention to global issues, in particular climate change. [Read more](#)



## Strategic dialogue with China

On 13 October, High Representative for Foreign Policy Josep Borrell met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi as part of the 12th EU-China Strategic Dialogue in Beijing. They discussed Sino-European relations, cooperation in global affairs and current international issues such as the situation in the Middle East. [Read more](#)

## ■ Germany :



## Franco-German Council of Ministers in Hamburg

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, French President Emmanuel Macron and the governments of the two countries met in Hamburg on 9 and 10 October for the first Franco-German government seminar. They announced that they wanted to reach an agreement on the electricity market and develop Europe's technological sovereignty, particularly in the areas of artificial intelligence and industrial competitiveness. They also unanimously condemned the Hamas attack in Israel, which they described as a "terrorist act". [Read more](#)

## ■ Finland :



## Sabotage of a gas pipeline and cable under the Baltic Sea

On 8 October, an undersea telecommunications cable and the Baltic Connector gas pipeline linking Estonia and Finland were damaged in the Baltic Sea in Finland's exclusive economic zone. Both countries suspect sabotage. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Slovakia :



## Agreement to form a coalition

On 11 October, the Smer-SD, Hlas and the National Party (SNS) reached an agreement on the formation of a coalition government following the elections on 30 September. Smer-SD leader Robert Fico is set to become prime minister for the third time. Hlas obtained seven ministries, Smer-SD six and SNS three. On 12 October, the Party of European Socialists and the S&D Group in the European Parliament decided to suspend Smer-SD and Hlas because of "clear differences on values" and their alliance with the far-right SNS. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Albania :



### Berlin Process Summit

European and Western Balkan leaders met in Tirana on 16 October for a Berlin Process Summit, the aim of which is to promote the integration of the region into the European Union. They discussed the tensions between Serbia and Kosovo and called for an agreement between the two countries. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Ukraine :



### Volodymyr Zelensky visits Brussels and Bucharest

On 11 October, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky visited Brussels. At NATO, he insisted on strengthening air defence to "survive the coming winter". He also met Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo, who announced the supply of F-16 aircraft from 2025, and a €1.7 billion fund. The day before, he had met his Romanian counterpart Klaus Iohannis. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



### Fourth ministerial round table regarding support to Ukraine

On 11 October, the fourth ministerial round table in support of Ukraine was held in Marrakech. Its main objective was to continue to support Ukraine financially and to address the difficulties of the global economy. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



### Delivery of arms before winter

On 11 October, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg welcomed the Allies' new pledges of support for Ukraine as Russia "once again prepares to use winter as a weapon of war". [Read more](#)

## ■ Council of Europe :



## Autumn session of the Parliamentary Assembly

From 9 to 13 October, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe held its autumn session. The parliamentarians voted in favour of two resolutions linked to the war in Ukraine. The first condemned Russian aggression, recommended action by member states, and recognised the great famine of the 1930s (Holodomor) as an act of genocide. The second calls on the international community not to recognise Vladimir Putin as the legitimate President of the Russian Federation after 2024, and to limit contacts with him to humanitarian and peace-building needs. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



## Vaclav Havel Prize awarded to Osman Kavala

On 9 October, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) awarded the Vaclav Havel Prize, which is presented each year to human rights defenders, to Osman Kavala, who has been imprisoned in Turkey since 2017 for his participation in demonstrations in 2013. The prize and the accompanying sum of €60,000 were presented to his family. On 13 October, PACE called on Turkey to respect the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights and release Osman Kavala. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ NATO :



## Meeting of Defence Ministers

On 11 and 12 October, the Alliance's defence ministers met in Brussels to discuss deterrence against Russia's threats, as well as the situation in the Balkans and the Middle East. They held talks with their Israeli counterparts and expressed their support for Israel following the Hamas attack. They received Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Defence Minister Rustem Umerov as part of the Defence Contact Group for Ukraine and the first NATO-Ukraine Council. The ministers gave assurances that they would maintain and deepen their military aid to Ukraine. [Read more](#)

## ■ IMF :



## World Economic Outlook

In its latest forecasts, published on October 10, the IMF estimates that global growth will slow from 3% in 2023 to 2.9% in 2024, while global inflation will fall from 6.9% in 2023 to 5.8% in 2024. It notes that "the tightening of monetary policy to reduce inflation should cool economic activity". [Read more](#)



## IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank held their annual meetings from 9 to 15 October in Marrakech. On this occasion, the G7 finance ministers and central bank presidents reiterated their support for Ukraine and promised to help emerging markets and support the G20 discussions on debt. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Culture :



## The Kyiv Biennial in several European cities

Several European cities, including Vienna, Warsaw, Berlin and Antwerp, are providing venues for Ukrainian artists to exhibit their work as part of the Kyiv Biennial. The main exhibition will be held in Vienna at the Augarten Contemporary studio until 17 December. The theme of the 2023 edition is war and displacement. [Read more](#)



## Frankfurt Book Fair

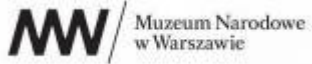
The Frankfurt Book Fair will be held from 18 to 22 October. The world's largest book fair is an opportunity for authors, booksellers and publishers from all over the world to meet in the historic birthplace of printing. This year, the country of honour is Slovenia. [Read more](#)



## Irish Festival in Liverpool

Until 29 October, the British city of Liverpool is paying tribute to its Irish cultural heritage. Irish history and identity are explored through theatre, music, art, literature and traditional Irish performances. [Read more](#)





## Picasso in Warsaw

Until 14 January 2024, the National Museum in Warsaw is exhibiting works by Pablo Picasso, on loan from the museum in the painter's birthplace. Picasso's artistic development will be retraced through engravings, book illustrations and ceramics. [Read more](#)



## Sorolla travelling to paint

To commemorate the centenary of the death of Joaquín Sorolla Bastida (1863-1923), the Sorolla Museum in Madrid is holding an exhibition entitled "Sorolla, travelling to paint. Another vision of Spain" until 31 March 2024. The exhibition takes a fascinating look at the work of this painter, whose work is inextricably linked to the notion of travel. [Read more](#)



## Chagall and Rothko in Paris

The Centre Pompidou is presenting an exhibition entitled "Chagall à l'oeuvre" until 26 February 2024. The exhibition features the painter's drawings for the costumes in Igor Stravinsky's ballet "The Firebird", his sketches for the ceiling of the Opéra Garnier, and several sculptures and ceramics. The Fondation Louis Vuitton is presenting an exhibition on Mark Rothko until 2 April 2024. The exhibition retraces the career of the American artist and exponent of Abstract Expressionism. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



## Bruegel, Rubens and Rembrandt in Antwerpen

Until 21 January 2024, the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp (KMSKA) is hosting an exhibition entitled "Drôles de têtes" (Funny Faces), featuring paintings of faces by the Flemish masters of the 17th century. [Read more](#)



## Art Basel in Paris

Art Basel is organising the 2nd edition of the "Paris+" modern and contemporary art fair at the Grand Palais Éphémère, from 20 to 22 October. More than 150 galleries from 33 countries will be presenting their works. [Read more](#)

## ■ Agenda :

 17 October 2023

**Economic and Financial Affairs Council** (Luxembourg)

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 17 October 2023

**Energy Council** (Luxembourg)

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 19-20 October 2023

**Informal meeting of trade ministers** (Valencia)

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 19-20 October 2023

**Justice and Home Affairs Council** (Luxembourg)

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 20 October 2023

**EU-USA Summit** (Washington)

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 21-24 October 2023

**European Parliament Plenary Session** (Strasbourg)

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 23-24 October 2023

**Agriculture and Fisheries Council** (Luxembourg)

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 23 October 2023

**Foreign Affairs Council** (Luxembourg)

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 23 October 2023

**EU-Kazakhstan Cooperation Council Meeting** (Luxembourg)



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