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The Letter in PDF format

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Greco-Turkish relations at their lowest ebb

Author: Alexia Kefalas



There was an incident between the Greek Prime Minister and the Turkish President at the European Political Community summit on 6 October in Prague. On the ground, tensions remain high and Athens is calling for European solidarity and strengthening its military forces. [Read more](#)

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Foundation :

Energy Crisis, European Measures



In response to rising energy prices, Member States and the European Union have taken action. On 27 October, Belgium's Chamber of Deputies approved an energy voucher for households of €135 for gas and €61 for the months of November and December 2022. In Slovenia, the government introduced a price limit for district heating fuelled by natural gas. The Foundation offers you a map to provide readers with a clear picture. It is regularly completed and updated... [Read more](#)

European Recovery Plans: figures and priorities



On 27 October, the Commission approved a first payment of €2.6 billion to Romania under the EU's NextGenerationEU programme, designed to tackle the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic. The €672.5bn recovery fund, known as the Recovery and Resilience Facility, is designed to provide grants and loans to Member States. The plans of 26 countries have been approved, and 10 countries have received disbursements. The Foundation provides an interactive map of the plans country by country, including amounts, timelines and priorities... [Read more](#)

Ukraine/Russia :

Conference regarding the reconstruction of Ukraine



On 25 October, an international conference of experts to discuss the reconstruction of Ukraine was held in Berlin under the auspices of the German G7 Presidency and the European Commission. Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz reiterated the international community's long-term support for Ukraine. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy spoke via video conference and asked the political representatives for financial support to address the \$38 billion budget deficit expected next year. The creation of a donor platform to coordinate the reconstruction process is also planned by the G7 countries... [Read more](#)

Parliamentary Summit of the International Crimea Platform



On 25 October, the first parliamentary summit of the International Crimea Platform took place in Zagreb, which aims to strengthen the international response to the Russian occupation of Crimea, address security threats and increase pressure on Russia. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy denounced the chaos created by Russia and its impunity. The President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Tiny Kox, stressed the importance of Russia's exclusion from the Council of Europe and recalled that the Russian Parliament, along with the President and the government, was partly responsible for the consequences of the war in Ukraine and the illegal annexations... [Read more](#)

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Agreement between the EIB and the UNDP for Ukrainian towns



The European Investment Bank and the United Nations Development Programme signed a €2 million agreement in Berlin on 25 October, funded by the E5P multi-donor fund. The aim is to finance energy efficiency in Ukrainian cities under a €300 million EIB framework loan, to which the EU is the main contributor. The loan will be used to renovate public buildings to improve their energy efficiency, rebuild destroyed buildings and adapt buildings to accommodate people displaced by war... [Read more](#)

Road transport agreements with Ukraine and Moldova



On 26 October, the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism voted to approve two agreements with Ukraine and Moldova, which have been provisionally in force since June. These agreements allow Ukrainian hauliers to drive in Europe without having to obtain an international permit. They will be submitted for approval at the next plenary session... [Read more](#)

Russia suspends its participation in the agreement on grain export



On 29 October, Russia decided to suspend its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative, which provided safe passage for ships exporting grain from Ukraine. The initiative was originally due to end in mid-November but could have been extended. UN Secretary General António Guterres has been in "intensive contact" with Russia to get it to reverse its decision... [Read more](#)

Visit by the German President



German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier visited Kyiv on 25 October to reiterate Germany's support for Ukraine. The aim of the trip was to encourage German cities to enter into partnerships with Ukrainian cities to finance their reconstruction and energy infrastructure... [Read more](#)

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ECB :

Rise in key rates



Christine Lagarde, President of the ECB, announced on 27 October a 75 basis point increase in key interest rates to counter inflation, which rose to almost 10% in September in the euro area. With a view to ensuring that inflation returns to its 2% target as soon as possible, the ECB also tightened the financing conditions for banks by modifying its third series of targeted long-term refinancing operations (TLTRO III)... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Publication of the Digital Services Act (DSA) in the Official Journal



The Digital Services Act (DSA) was published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 27 October. It imposes new obligations on platforms to limit illegal content and products, including a ban on targeted advertising... [Read more](#)

New rules for the quality of air and water



The Commission proposed on 26 October a revision of the Ambient Air Quality Directives (Zero Pollution Plan) which will introduce, among other things, compensation for people whose health is affected by air pollution, as well as a revision of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, and the updating of the lists of pollutants to be monitored more strictly in surface water and groundwater... [Read more](#)

Proposal for instant payments



On 27 October, the Commission adopted a legislative proposal to roll out affordable and secure "10-second" instant payments across the EU. The aim is to make these payments available to citizens and businesses, with the aim of eliminating any associated fees, which vary greatly from one Member State to another... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Revision of CO2 emission rules for motor vehicles



The Council and Parliament reached a provisional agreement on 27 October tightening CO2 emission standards for cars and vans. The target is a 55% reduction in emissions for new cars and a 50% reduction for new vans by 2030, with a view to achieving the end of internal combustion engines by 2035. The agreement must now be formally adopted by the Council and Parliament... [Read more](#)

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Council :

Meeting of Energy Ministers



On 25 October, Energy Ministers discussed the Commission's proposals to combat rising prices. They recalled the need for rapid and coordinated efforts and agreed to meet again on 24 November. They discussed the development of an efficient internal market in renewable energy and decided on the revision of the directive on the energy performance of buildings... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Environment Ministers



On 24 October, Environment Ministers adopted common EU positions for several summits. For COP27, they agreed on the need to set a target of a 1.5°C temperature increase and climate neutrality by 2050, in accordance with the Paris Agreement. They called for the adoption of an ambitious post-2020 global framework for biodiversity at the upcoming UN biodiversity summit in Montreal. At the same time, they debated a revision of the directive on industrial emissions and mandated the Commission to conclude an international agreement in Uruguay to stop plastic pollution... [Read more](#)

Adoption of regulations regarding the management of health crises



On 24 October, the Council adopted new rules regarding cross-border health threats, including legislation providing for a European cooperation plan, a regulation strengthening the mandate of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and a regulation that aims to ensure access to and facilitate the purchase of medicines, vaccines and raw materials in the event of a health emergency... [Read more](#)

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Adoption of the European Single Window for Customs

On 24 October, the Council adopted the EU Single Window for Customs to facilitate and automate customs clearance and reduce the risk of fraud. The regulation establishes a framework for digital collaboration between customs and competent



authorities that will allow them to check directly whether goods comply with EU standards. The text must now be adopted by the Parliament... [Read more](#)

Adoption of the directive regarding the universal charger



On 24 October, the Council gave its final approval to the directive requiring the use of the universal charger for all electronic devices such as mobile phones, tablets and headphones from 2024. The common USB-C charging port will also apply to laptops from 2026... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Meeting with the countries of Latin America



Meeting in Buenos Aires on 17 October, the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) announced the relaunch of their cooperation. Latin America can "do more" to provide food and energy, in a context of food and energy shortages caused by war... [Read more](#)

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Cooperatin with Central Asia



At a meeting in Astana on 27 October, Central Asian heads of state and European Council President Charles Michel welcomed the rapprochement between Central Asia and the European Union. They expressed their wish to deepen their cooperation in the field of energy... [Read more](#)

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Meeting of the Military Committee



The Chiefs of Defence Staff, meeting on 24-25 October, declared that they wanted to build a strong and militarily capable Europe as part of the achievement of the Strategic Compass objectives. These include the implementation of the European Union's rapid deployment capability in order to achieve full autonomous security projection capability by 2025. This will involve developing robust and advanced military capabilities with a view to ensuring the strategic autonomy of the European Union... [Read more](#)

Preparation of the Summit with the Western Balkans



Ahead of the EU-Western Balkans summit in December, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen visited Northern Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Kosovo and Serbia. On 26 October, she announced that the whole region will receive €500 million in grants. This financial assistance will be in addition to the individual grants for each country. It will be used to invest in energy connections, efficiency and renewables... [Read more](#)

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Court of Justice :

Data processing: respect of the withdrawal of consent



The Court of Justice of the European Union ruled on 27 October that any data controller is obliged to inform internet search engines of a subscriber's request to delete their personal data. Furthermore, under the GDPR, the Court clarified that before publishing a subscriber's details in a public directory, the subscriber's consent is required at all stages of the processing of their personal data... [Read more](#)

European Agencies :

Survey regarding Roma living conditions



On 25 October the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights published a report on the living conditions and inclusion of Roma in the territories of the Member States. It reveals that 80% of Roma are at risk of poverty, compared to an EU average of 17%. According to the survey, due to discrimination against them, Roma face persistent problems in exercising their fundamental rights to employment, education, health care and housing... [Read more](#)

France :

Interview with the German Chancellor



On 26 October, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron met in Paris for lunch at the Élysée Palace, with a view to reviving Franco-German cooperation. The two leaders exchanged views on European energy supply, rising energy prices and joint defence projects... [Read more](#)

Visit by Catherine Colonna to Estonia



French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna visited Estonia on 24 and 25 October. She discussed the consequences of the conflict in Ukraine, particularly on energy, with her Estonian counterpart, Urmas Reinsalu, and Prime Minister Kaja Kallas. Finally, military cooperation between France and Estonia was discussed... [Read more](#)

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Greece :

Visit by the German Chancellor



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz visited Athens on 27 October to meet Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. The two leaders discussed the war in Ukraine and the need to continue supporting the country, as well as the energy crisis. They said they would support the accession of the Western Balkan countries to the European Union. Olaf Scholz expressed his support for Greece in the face of Turkey's aggressive rhetoric and manoeuvres... [Read more](#)

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Italy :

Presentation of the government programme



The new President of the Italian Council, Giorgia Meloni presented her government's programme to MPs on 25 October and to the Senate on 26 October. She stressed her country's establishment in the European Union and NATO, stating that "Italy is a full member of Europe and the Western world." The head of the Italian government will make her first official trip outside of Italy on 3 November when she comes to Brussels... [Read more](#)

UK :

New Government



The new leader of the British Conservative Party, Rishi Sunak, was appointed Prime Minister by King Charles III on 25 October. He said he wanted to correct the mistakes of his predecessor Liz Truss, and focus his policy agenda on economic "stability and confidence". His government includes returning ministers such as Jeremy Hunt in Finance, James Cleverly in Foreign Affairs, Ben Wallace in Defence, Suella Braverman in Home Affairs, and Chris Heaton-Harris in the Northern Ireland Department... [Read more](#)

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New elections in Northern Ireland?



The British Minister for Northern Ireland, Chris Heaton-Harris, noted on 28 October that Northern Ireland is still without a government six months after the last elections, after which time new elections must be held. The date of the election will be set at a later date... [Read more](#)

Moldova :

Entry into force of the Customs Agreement with the European Union



A new agreement to improve trade flows between the EU and Moldova enters into force on 1 November. The aim is to simplify customs arrangements and, in particular, to reduce customs controls and to give priority to customs clearance. The agreement is part of an enhanced cooperation framework, as EU exports to Moldova amounted to €3.8 billion in 2021... [Read more](#)

Council of Europe :

Report on Human Trafficking in Belarus

The Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) published a report on Belarus on 27 October. It considers that the



Belarusian authorities, by encouraging migratory movements, have indirectly participated in human trafficking. GRETA is concerned that the widespread and systematic repression of civil society organisations creates a significant risk that human rights violations will not be recognised as such... [Read more](#)

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43rd Session of the Local and Regional Authorities' Congress



The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe took place from 25 to 27 October in Strasbourg. The members had the opportunity to exchange views with the Mayor of Kiev, Vitali Klitschko, and the Ukrainian Minister for Local and Regional Development, Oleksiy Chernyshov. They reiterated their support for Ukraine and recalled the existence of a correspondence platform for Ukrainian and European cities, Cities4cities, supported by the Congress. Frenchman Mathieu Mori was elected Secretary General of the Congress for a 5-year term. The Congress also discussed a renewal of the European Charter of Local Self-Government and called for the adoption of an additional protocol guaranteeing the consideration of local and regional authorities in environmental matters... [Read more](#)

OECD :

International Migration Outlook



In its annual International Migration Outlook for 2022, the OECD notes that the Russian invasion of Ukraine has generated unprecedented migration flows into Europe, in contrast to the slowdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. By mid-September 2022, nearly 5 million Ukrainian refugees had crossed the borders of the European Union and other OECD countries... [Read more](#)

Eurobarometer :

Survey regarding the Competition Policy



A Eurobarometer survey published on 25 October reveals that 89% of SMEs surveyed consider that competition policy encourages innovation, 84% that it improves supply and 81% that it improves price. The survey also gathered responses from citizens who believe (72%) that competition policy helps European companies to become more competitive on world markets. In addition, 73% support the Commission's priorities in the field of competition which would support the digital transformation of the economy and society... [Read more](#)

Survey regarding air quality



According to a Eurobarometer survey published on 24 October, almost one in two Europeans believe that air quality has deteriorated over the last 10 years. Of those surveyed, 89% believe that respiratory diseases are caused by air pollution. Furthermore, the survey reveals that 65% believe that the problem needs to be tackled on a global scale and 67% believe that European protection standards should be tightened... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Death of Pierre Soulages



French painter Pierre Soulages, famous for his work with black and the invention of "outrenoir", died on 26 October at the age of 102. The Soulages Museum, opened in his home town of Rodez in 2014, houses 500 of his works... [Read more](#)

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Inauguration of the sculpture in tribute to Simone Veil



On 29 October, the city of Lisbon inaugurated a ceramic sculpture by Maria Ana Vasco Costa in tribute to Simone Veil in Praça Europa. The inauguration was organised as part of the closing ceremony of the France-Portugal 2022 Season and took place in the presence of the French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne and her Portuguese counterpart Antonio Costa... [Read more](#)

Jazz Festival in Berlin



The city of Berlin will host the 59th edition of its jazz festival from 3 to 6 November, with a programme alternating between trend-setting jazz icons and young talent from a wide variety of styles... [Read more](#)

Personal diaries of Janina Turek on show in Krakow



Until 19 February 2023, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow is presenting the exhibition "Life recorded in 745 notebooks", which brings together 745 volumes of Janina Turek's (1921-2000) diaries, in which the author, over a period of 57 years from 1943, painstakingly described everyday life and the simplest of human activities.. [Read more](#)

Picasso and Abstraction in Brussels



The Royal Museums of Fine Arts in Brussels are exhibiting 140 works by Pablo Picasso until 12 February 2023. This exhibition, in partnership with the Musée national Picasso-Paris, aims to shed light on the painter's relationship with abstract art, starting with "Les Femmes d'Alger" in 1907. Conferences and meetings are being organised in parallel with the exhibition... [Read more](#)

Bernat Klein in Edinburgh



The National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh is presenting an exhibition of the work by Bernat Klein, a Serbian-born textile designer who moved to Scotland after the Second World War, from 5 November to 23 April 2023... [Read more](#)

Sketches by Giorgio Vasari in Stockholm



The National Museum in Stockholm is presenting Giorgio Vasari's drawings until 8 January 2023. Co-produced with the Louvre in Paris, the exhibition focuses on Giorgio Vasari's fabulous collection of drawings by Italian artists from the 14th to the late 16th century... [Read more](#)

Alice in Wonderland



The Canal Foundation in Madrid is hosting the "Alice in Wonderland" exhibition until 8 January 2023, based on Lewis Carroll's book and featuring works by Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst and Marie Laurencin, as well as stamps from the original illustrations that John Tenniel made for the first edition of the novel in 1865... [Read more](#)

Louis XV in Versailles



To celebrate the 300th anniversary of the coronation of Louis XV, the Château de Versailles is dedicating an exhibition to him until 19 February 2023. 400 works present his life, his passions and his influence on art. The exhibition is organised in partnership with the National Museum of Natural History... [Read more](#)

Byblos Exhibition in Leiden



The Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden is hosting the exhibition Byblos, the oldest port in the world until 12 March 2023. The exhibition features more than 500 works in partnership with the National Museum of Beirut, the Louvre Museum, the British Museum and the Archaeological Museum of the American University of Beirut. Byblos, a city on the coast of present-day Lebanon, played an extraordinary role in the Mediterranean and the Middle East from 3000 BC onwards, thanks to the trade in cedar wood... [Read more](#)



1 November 2022
Denmark
General Election



7 November 2022
Brussels
Eurogroup Meeting

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