



DIGITAL

MEPs to crackdown on digital 'Wild West': The EU is committed to regulating the online space and creating a set of rules that make the big tech companies accountable. The DSA is one of those initiatives and aims at being a golden rule internationally. This act sets transparency obligations for digital companies and is based on the idea that "what is illegal offline is illegal online." Despite the EU commitment, there are some issues inside the DSA that still trigger debate among MEPs, namely tracking-based ads and data access for NGOs and researchers.

TAX REFORM

Europe's veto threatens to stall global tax reform: The introduction of a global corporate tax rate of 15% has been opposed by three European countries, namely Estonia, Hungary and Poland expressing their fear that US president Biden will not get support to implement such rules and thus the EU would be left behind in this sense. This tax rate was agreed by the OECD last fall hand in hand with another initiative for the biggest firms to pay tax where they operate. Other European countries expressed their lack of comprehension given that the terms are equal to those accepted by the OECD. Concerns on such rapid transposition of pillar two into national laws were expressed by other Member States too.

GREEN TRANSITION

Europe's EV drive comes with risks, Stellantis CEO Tavares says: The switch to Electric Vehicles is found in the frame of the EU's plan to cut down carbon emissions. However, this strategy is seen critically by the industry. Stellantis CEO, Carlos Tavares, declared there are other paths towards the reduction of carbon emissions that would be more beneficial for both, carmakers and society in general. It wouldn't pressure carmakers to transform their plants and supply chains, and society would benefit from lower cost, reducing the social risk.

ECONOMIC & FINANCE

What is the EU's Stability and Growth Pact and why is it important?: The Stability and Growth Pact was redesigned by the EU at the beginning of the pandemic and, seeing the current course of COVID-19, finance ministers are already discussing post-pandemic economic governance. In this regard, policymakers need to address the rulebook to assess what is lacking and to include post-COVID challenges. It is in this last point that opinion varies among the Member States, from softening to strengthening the SGP, and thus makes reaching consensus far from feasible, at least for now.

EU COMMISSION

EU Commission presents toolkit to tackle foreign interference in research: The EC released a toolkit aimed at tackling foreign interference in R&I containing guidelines for strategy development to prevent, identify and respond to said interference. The toolkit focuses on values, governance, partnerships and cybersecurity. It is designed to enhance collaboration under higher awareness. Thus, tackling problems such as the transversality of technologies or cyber-hygiene. It also advises on codes of conduct and committee establishment to enhance the foreign interference strategies.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

China condemns plans by Slovenia to upgrade Taiwan ties: Following Lithuania, Slovenia has decided to strengthen its ties with Taiwan. The Chinese government has not welcomed this decision and publicly declared it breaches de One-China principle. Most governments have maintained informal and commercial ties with Taiwan while keeping the diplomatic ones exclusively with Beijing. Slovenia is now allowing a representative office of Taiwan in its capital, removing the exclusiveness in the diplomatic area, an initiative appreciated and welcomed by the Taiwanese government.