



ECONOMY

NextGenerationEU: European Commission raises an additional €5 billion in support for Europe's recovery: The European Commission has presented its first bond of syndication of 2022 which adds €5 billion to the NextGenerationEU fund. This addition looks to contribute to Europe's COVID recovery plan and turn the raised financing to €78.5 billion. With this deal, the EU will continue its support to the Member States of efforts for economic recovery in a more digital and sustainable way. The Commission expects to close four more syndicated transactions in the months to come and hopes to reach the €50 billion funding target during the first six months of 2022.

EU to withhold funds from Poland over unpaid fine: For the first time ever, the European Commission is withdrawing money from the funds allocated to Poland. This decision comes after the country defied the Court of Justices ruling over the suspension of lignite mining near the border with the Czech Republic. The disobedience of Poland has resulted in a daily fine that to this day amounts to €70m. The Commission's withdrawal, however, stands at €15m, not ruling out similar future actions. The Polish government has announced its willingness to pursue every possible legal action to appeal this decision.

ENVIRONMENT

Lawmakers, stakeholders mull over food production impact of EU green goals: The EU Farm to Fork strategy is raising concerns among lawmakers who say it lacks to address the whole picture of the agricultural situation. The strategy is very much focused on sustainability but fails in connecting it with food security. MEPs and agri-food stakeholders agree on the fact that this new strategy would decline production and increase prices, something that must be explained to customers and that innovation in the sector might be key for maintaining stability. They also argued that this innovation needs to come with proper legislative and financial support from the Union.

Macron looks to score green points at global ocean conference: The upcoming One Ocean summit will gather political leaders, civil society and the private sector to discuss ocean protection and governance. French President Macron will use his presence at the summit to show his commitment to green and sustainable transition in view of the approaching French elections. Macron is also representing the EU at the summit when negotiating an international agreement regarding maritime protection and wants to be portrayed as a green leader compromised with the important role of maritime ecosystems in fighting climate change and pursuing a green transition.

TECHNOLOGY

Europe to launch multi-billion-euro tech fund - France: The European Union announced the creation of a new fund to boost tech start-ups in Europe for them to be able to compete with American and Asian tech giants. This fund should include 10 to 20 funds up to one billion euros and aims at reducing dependency on foreign companies. The main goal, as announced by Le Maire, is to have 10 tech companies worth more than 100 billion euros by 2030. The German counterpart has also announced that Berlin will add 1 billion euros to the fund.

DEMOCRACY

Eurobarometer: defending democracy is top priority for the European Parliament: The Autumn 2021 Eurobarometer, carried out between the 1st November and the 2nd December, has now been published. Results show that the main concern for Europeans is the defence of democracy, followed by freedom of speech and thought and human rights protection. Public health is still the key topic for Europeans in terms of parliamentary work together with social exclusion and climate change. The survey has also shown the positive image of the EU institutions among citizens and an optimistic view for the future of the union.