



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Biden arrives in Europe for triple summits on Ukraine: US president Joe Biden arrived yesterday in Brussels to attend NATO, G7 and European summits on the ongoing war in Ukraine. The meeting is expected to agree on enhancing support to Ukraine and the increase of NATO's presence in Eastern Europe. The G7 will discuss sanction implementation and plan to issue a statement in the matter. The European leaders will meet Biden to discuss further the energy-related problems that have arisen due to the conflict and European dependency on Russian gas.

DIGITAL & TECHNOLOGY

Big Tech boosts lobbying spending in Brussels: Europe's plans in the digital world have given place to considerable increases in lobby investments coming from big tech companies. This comes as a reaction to the recent Digital Markets Act (DMA) or the Digital Services Act (DSA). Digital giants almost doubled their spending, going from \$3.7M to \$7M. This is a clear sign that Silicon Valley's companies are aware of the effects that this new legislation being debated in Brussels might have in their sector and, thus, their will to influence the EU's decisions which aim at reigning their power in the digital sphere.

DSA: European Commission pitches crisis management mechanism, supervisory fees: This Tuesday, the Commission sent to the Member States two proposals concerning a Crisis Management Mechanism and a supervisory fee for giant tech companies, both to be included in the DSA. The proposed mechanism will oblige large online platforms to carry out a risk assessment, mitigation measures and audits every year. The proposal also includes access to data to identify potential societal risks. Regarding the supervisory fee, the Commission stated that it is already common in other sectors such as telecommunications. It aims to cover the Institution's supervisory tasks and data research to assess compliance regarding the DSA.

AGRIFOOD

More EU action needed for secure food supply: Given the Russian invasion of Ukraine, MEPs adopted this Tuesday an action plan to ensure food security that aims to send immediate food supplies to Ukraine and to restart the EU's food production strategy. The EU wants to provide Ukraine with long-term food aid, food corridors in and out of the country and supply of seeds, fuels and fertilisers for farmers. For the EU food production strategy, MEPs call for reducing dependency, increasing diversification on third-country suppliers and enhancing agricultural innovation to reduce fertiliser imports in the longer term. Additionally, the EU wants to increase domestic production by allowing the use of fallow lands and giving out European and estatal aid to the agriculture operators.

ENERGY

Commission outlines options to mitigate high energy prices with common gas purchases and minimum gas storage obligations: The European Commission (EC) has set out plans for collectively addressing the causes of the gas market problems and ensuring the security of supply at reasonable prices. The legislative proposal includes an obligation of 80% gas storage level by 1st November 2022, which should be monitored by the Member States and reported to the EC every month. Regarding emergency measures to tackle energy prices, and with several options tabled by the Member States, the Institution has concluded there is no single answer to the problem and has set out pros and cons of the different considerations and stating that the solution needs to tackle symptoms and causes of the energy problem. The detailed REPowerEU plan will be tabled and debated this May.