



AGRICULTURE

EU farm lawmakers want to have their say on the land-use emissions framework: Under the “Fit for 55” package, the European Union is reviewing the land-use emissions directive. It is in the hands of the environmental ministers to carry out the drafting of this revision. Both agriculture ministers and Agriculture committee members of the European Parliament have expressed their opinions on the revision and stated the need to take into account farm and forestry needs. Opinions among the Member States on the issue are divergent. Some support the creation of a new directive chapter dedicated to Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use to give more coherence to the legislation. Others are rather sceptical about the idea and made different alternative proposals.

ENERGY

Energy Security: Commission hosts first meeting of EU Energy Purchase Platform to secure supply of gas, LNG and hydrogen: The current energy situation has made the European Commission create a platform for the common purchase of gas, LNG and hydrogen. As explained by the EC, the mechanism will be voluntary and looks to make the most out of the political and market weight of the EU. The main objectives are to secure gas storage for next winter, optimise gas storage and enhance cooperation with key stakeholders. The areas of action are as follows; demand pooling, efficient use of gas infrastructure and international outreach. The commission has also explained that this platform will be built on existing policies and structures with the support of the Member States and key stakeholders.

EUROPEAN UNION

Future of Europe: Conference nears finalisation of policy recommendations: The Future of Europe Conference plenary took place on the 8 and 9 April. Working groups presented the finished proposals, including ideas from the digital platform, citizens' and national panels. MEPs assured that initiatives brought up by citizens all along the conference were to be taken into account and what is more, some of them agreed to the treaty change request. Other ideas highlighted by MEPs include strengthening the European Parliament's powers to increase citizens' involvement. Policy-wise, MEPs call for stronger health systems and wider access to digitalisation.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Putin says peace talks with Ukraine are at dead end, goads the West: Russia's president, Putin, has made a public statement regarding the peace talks with Ukraine. He confirmed that the talks had arrived at a dead-end, assured that Russia's noble interest in Ukraine will no doubt be accomplished and celebrated the clash of the post-war US-built unipolar world. During his appearance, he also dismissed claims of war crimes and the chemical weapons accusations made by both the USA and Ukraine. He ultimately blamed the US for the ongoing situation of having stepped into Ukraine, which he considers to be the same people and referred to as his backyard.

Eyeing Russia, Finland and Sweden edge closer to a NATO future: The ongoing situation with Russia has risen alarms in the whole world security-wise. The latest example can be found in the Nordic regions of Finland and Sweden and their serious considerations of joining NATO. Both countries had been in the past militarily neutral, but due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine social support for NATO and their accession to it have risen significantly. Moreover, both of them had been cooperating partners of the alliance for a long time and are to be very welcomed if they make the decision, which can be expected in the next few months. However, according to Finnish papers and the foreign minister, they are also considering a joint alliance backed by the USA as a third option.

MEMBER STATES

France election: How Macron and Le Pen offer very different visions of the EU: France has gone through the first round of its national elections which has left Macron and Le Pen on for the second round. It is evident that the two of them have very divergent views on many things, it is on the European Union that their points differ the most. On the one hand, current president macron aims for a stronger union, especially in terms of defence and strategic autonomy. Le Pen, on the other hand, is more except the Union and even if she has left aside the “Frexit” idea, still pushes for national sovereignty over the EU membership.