

#TRENDY THURSDAY

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EU adopts new programs in support to refugees and border management in Turkey

The Commission has adopted a €220m package to improve border control at Turkey's eastern border. This brings to €1.235bn the total EU assistance adopted in 2022 to continue support to refugees in Turkey. The funds are part of the additional €3bn, announced in 2021 to continue EU assistance to refugees in Turkey until 2023. This year's €1.2bn assistance package is composed of four programs, which focus on ensuring the basic needs of refugees, providing economic support to the most vulnerable refugees, and implementing of the Turkish employment strategy and border control measures.

ENVIRONMENT

EU seals agreement on world's first carbon tariff

EU negotiators have reached an agreement on the world's first carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM), which will be launched in October 2023. The CBAM will apply to imports including iron and steel, cement, aluminum, fertilizers, and electricity, as well as hydrogen, in an effort to encourage non-EU countries to join the EU's climate efforts. The levy will be introduced in a test period that will impose only reporting obligations on the imports of goods covered by the scheme, with a full levy coming into effect at a later date to be decided during negotiations. It is intended to shield European industry from cheaper, more-polluting imports from abroad.

EUROPEAN UNION

EU Parliament 'under attack' as Qatar corruption scandal grows

The European Parliament has been the subject of a "fresh wave" of raids by Belgian police on political figures in Brussels over alleged corruption involving Qatari interests. Six people have been arrested and 19 private homes searched. "The European Parliament is under attack," said its president, Roberta Metsola. MEP Eva Kaili, who is currently in a jail cell awaiting a court appearance, had her parliamentary office raided. She has been expelled from the Parliament's Socialists and Democrats group and is set to be stripped of her vice president title.

ENERGY

Batteries: deal on new EU rules for design, production and waste treatment

EU rules on batteries will be overhauled to take into account technological developments and future challenges, according to an agreement reached by Parliament and the Council. The new rules will apply to all types of batteries sold in the EU, including including those designed for portable, industrial or in-vehicle use. The changes include stronger requirements to make batteries more sustainable, performant and durable, as well as carbon footprint declarations. The agreement also includes the introduction of due diligence policies for the battery industry.

GREEN DEAL

REPowerEU: deal on energy measures in national recovery plans

The Parliament and the Council have reached an agreement on the inclusion of REPowerEU measures in national recovery plans. Parliament's negotiators successfully achieved an increased pre-financing of 20% of the funds to help member states to quickly implement reforms and investments. MEPs ensured that EU countries will be able to use up to 7.5% of their unspent allocations from the cohesion policy under the 2021-2027 programming period to attain their REPowerEU objectives. No agriculture funds will be transferred to the RRF.

AGRICULTURE

State aid: Commission adopts new rules for agriculture, forestry and fishery and aquaculture sectors

The European Commission has adopted revised state aid rules for the agricultural, forestry, fishery, and aquaculture sectors. The revised rules align state aid with EU strategic priorities, such as the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy, as well as the European Green Deal. The rules include revised Agricultural and Fishery Block Exemption Regulations, which declare certain categories of aid as compatible with EU state aid rules and exempt them from prior notification and approval. The new rules will apply as of 1 January 2023.