

#TRENDY THURSDAY

SECURITY & DEFENSE

EU agency maps key cybersecurity issues on Artificial Intelligence

The European Parliament endorsed a report calling for a comprehensive approach to counter foreign interference and information manipulation, emphasizing the need to safeguard upcoming European elections. The report advocates a risk-based approach, increased resilience building, and strengthening capacities to debunk misinformation and enhance cybersecurity. Lawmakers urged improved coordination, established a Rapid Alert System, criticized online platforms' response to disinformation, and highlighted concerns about EU dependence in critical sectors. The report also cautioned against influence through academic and cultural institutions and covert foreign funding of political activities.

HEALTH

EU Commission wants better focus on mental health care

The EU Commission plans to allocate €1.23 billion from the EU budget for mental health initiatives across the bloc to address the increasing mental health challenges worsened by the pandemic. The initiative aims to break down stigma, provide access to high-quality mental healthcare, and promote reintegration into society after recovery. The Commission intends to focus on prevention, protection for children, workplace mental health, depression and suicide prevention, and research on brain health. However, there are calls for more cross-sectional and integrated policies and ensuring that initiatives reach citizens beyond EU policymakers.

CLIMATE

EU's green renovation wave faces backlash

The EU's plans to mandate renovation targets for buildings as part of its climate change efforts are facing strong resistance from several member states. The proposal aims to fully decarbonize the EU's building stock by 2050 but has been met with concerns about costs and encroachment on property rights. The negotiations on the legislation are expected to be difficult, with criticisms rooted in misunderstandings, misinformation, and populist narratives. The challenges include affordability, workforce shortage, split ownership, and protecting low-income homeowners.

HEALTH

EU pharma legislation must go further on orphan drugs, patients say.

The EU's pharmaceutical legislation, aimed at improving access to orphan drugs for rare diseases, has been welcomed by patient associations, but some proposals still need improvement. The reform seeks to establish a framework for the use of medicines and includes provisions to boost research and development in rare diseases. However, patients' associations emphasize the need for a competitive healthcare environment in Europe to attract investment and call for clearer definitions of medical conditions and significant reductions in morbidity or mortality.

ECONOMY

Security Union: Commission welcomes political agreement on providing law enforcement better and faster access to financial information

The European Commission welcomes the political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council to enhance law enforcement's access to financial information, aiding the fight against serious and organized crime. The agreement establishes direct access to bank account information across the EU, harmonizes transaction record formats, and enables faster tracing and confiscation of criminal assets. The directive must now be formally adopted by the European Parliament and the Council to become law.

ENVIRONMENT

Parliament seeks deal on EU nature law after biggest group walks out

Lawmakers in the European Parliament have reached a compromise deal on EU plans to restore damaged natural ecosystems, despite the withdrawal of the largest political group, the European People's Party (EPP). The proposal aims to address the decline in species and ecosystem health, but has faced political debate and concerns about agricultural land use. While the law's survival in a July vote remains uncertain, failure to pass it would have significant consequences for food security, climate, economy, and biodiversity, according to lead lawmaker Cesar Luena.