

# #TRENDY THURSDAY

## SECURITY & DEFENSE

### EU lawmakers back report calling for action on foreign interference

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.

## DIGITAL

### ChatGPT boss wants HQ in Europe

OpenAI's CEO toured European countries, including Spain, France, Poland, Germany, and the UK, discussing AI regulation with national leaders and scouting locations for an OpenAI European office. The upcoming European Union's Artificial Intelligence Act necessitates companies with EU-based users to have a presence in the bloc, with the choice of headquarters determining the overseeing member country for enforcing the AI Act. OpenAI's ChatGPT has generated both optimism and concern about the future of AI, with politicians vying to host OpenAI's office while addressing potential risks and compliance with regulations.

## DIGITAL

### EU Council advances on source protection, fund transparency in media law

EU defense ministers adopted conclusions on cyber defense, prioritizing skills development and voluntary coordination while aiming to avoid duplications in institutional architecture. The document recognizes the primary threat to EU networks as Russia and mentions China. It emphasizes the importance of coordination with EU institutions like ENISA and CERT-EU, calls for non-legally binding voluntary recommendations for increased cybersecurity in the defense community, and supports the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre as a crucial pillar for operational effectiveness.

## AGRICULTURE

### EU farmers' network: Pesticides can be reduced without impacting profits

European farmers from the IPMWORKS network showcased successful examples of reducing pesticide use while maintaining profitability in a public hearing with MEPs. IPM (Integrated Pest Management) strategies, which prioritize minimizing chemical use, were presented as a viable approach. Challenges remain, such as market demands and the need for crop and pest management overhaul, but the project aims to provide precise results on pesticide reduction by early 2024.

## RESEARCH & INNOVATION

### EU Cohesion Policy: €120 million call for urban innovation projects

The European Urban Initiative (EUI) has launched a second call for proposals worth €120 million to fund innovative projects that address urban challenges. The projects should focus on greening cities, sustainable tourism, or harnessing talent in shrinking cities. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) will finance 80% of the project cost, with each project eligible to receive up to €5 million. The deadline for applications is 5 October 2023, and the selected projects will also have the opportunity to transfer their innovative solutions to other cities in Europe.

## EUROPEAN UNION

### MEPs pile on pressure for EU to delay Hungary's presidency

MEPs have adopted a non-binding resolution questioning Hungary's suitability to hold the EU presidency in the second half of 2024 due to concerns about democratic backsliding. The resolution highlights Hungary's non-compliance with EU rules and values, including issues related to the rule of law and corruption. The European Parliament has called on EU governments to find a solution, and if no action is taken, the assembly has threatened to take appropriate measures. While there is little the parliament can do to prevent Hungary's presidency, some MEPs have suggested reducing the glitz and glamour associated with the role and giving a platform to silenced voices within Hungary, such as NGOs and independent media.