

# #TRENDY THURSDAY

## EUROPEAN UNION

### European Parliament gets ready to shake up internal committee structure

The Parliament secretariat has proposed a 'reflection paper' with plans to reshape its committees, reducing the number of committees from 20 to 15 and eliminating sub-committees. This move seeks to streamline the legislative process, but some are concerned it may concentrate power in administrative bodies. The restructuring would merge competencies in various areas. Additionally, it suggests the creation of new committees for topics like health and technology, as well as horizontal committees for legal and procedural matters.

## DEFENSE

### Breton confirms delay of EU defence strategy proposal to 2024

The European Commission will postpone the presentation of its European Defence Industry Strategy (EDIS) to early 2024 due to budgetary and regulatory concerns. Questions arose about the strategy's effectiveness without substantial funding and incentives for joint procurement, order expediting, and VAT exemptions among EU member states. The Commission also aims to establish a regulatory framework to ensure the security of defense equipment supply, which includes regulatory waivers and information sharing. No formal consultations have taken place yet, but the strategy is crucial for enhancing defense readiness in light of new security challenges.

## EUROPEAN UNION

### Catalan separatist in next year's EU election race

Raül Romeva and Maylis Roßberg, representing the European Free Alliance (EFA), emerged as 'Spitzenkandidaten' for the 2024 EU elections during a congress held in Strasbourg. The European Free Alliance (EFA), focused on self-determination, emphasized being a voice for stateless nations and minority communities in Europe. Romeva, who served prison time for his role in Catalonia's illegal referendum, was chosen to symbolize stateless nations. Roßberg represents minority communities, including the Hungarian community in Romania

## ENVIRONMENT

### EU countries seek to scrap national pesticide reduction targets

A coalition of 11 EU countries is proposing the elimination of national targets in the EU's plan to reduce pesticide use and risk by 50% by 2030. The new proposal suggests that member states should describe actions in their national action plans to contribute to the EU-wide reduction targets, without specifying national targets. The proposal allows for adjustments in case of changing circumstances such as increased need for hazardous pesticides due to lack of alternatives or climate change effects. While there is limited support for binding reduction targets, stakeholders argue that this change weakens the proposal's effectiveness, going against public and scientific concerns about pesticide use's environmental and health impacts.

## ENERGY

### Breakthrough as EU countries agree position on electricity market reform

EU countries have reached an agreement on reforming the European electricity market after a prolonged deadlock. The reform aims to enhance price stability, promote renewable energy production, and reduce dependency on fossil fuels. The deadlock was resolved with optional contracts for differences in existing infrastructure and the Commission overseeing to prevent unfair competition. However, concerns were raised about the inclusion of coal as a backup power source sending the wrong signal for COP28 climate conference.

## DEFENSE

### UN cybercrime treaty: A menace in the making

Governments are convening in Vienna to negotiate a global cybercrime treaty. The closed-door UN negotiations aim to reconcile differences on the treaty's scope and the role of human rights in its formulation and enforcement. However, the proposed treaty extends investigative powers to nearly all criminal offenses, not necessarily involving technology, potentially promoting cross-border repression and hindering true cybercrime investigations.