

#TRENDY THURSDAY

POLITICS

EU auditors criticise lack of impact, transparency in refugee funds for Turkey

An EU auditors' report criticizes the effectiveness and planning of the EU's refugee funding for Turkey, citing insufficient impact assessment and a lack of long-term planning from the Commission. While the €6 billion allocated under the EU-Turkey migration deal has met some needs, project delays and inadequate sustainability measures are highlighted. The report underscores weaknesses in cost analysis and the absence of plans for post-funding scenarios. While acknowledging benefits for refugees, auditors stress the need for improvements in demonstrating impact and ensuring sustainability.

ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

EU Parliament approves new 'ecodesign' rules to make products more sustainable

The EU Parliament recently approved new regulations aimed at enhancing the reusability, repairability, and recyclability of products sold within the EU, as part of the Circular Economy Package. Championed by Alessandra Moretti, the legislation aims to shift away from the 'take, make, throw away' model, aligning with the EU's goal of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Key features include digital product passports for transparency, prioritization of resource-intensive sectors, and prohibiting the destruction of unsold clothing. Final implementation awaits approval from national governments, with calls for swift action to enforce these rules effectively.

EUROPEAN UNION

Greens challenge socialists on commitment to climate action

As elections approach, S&D and the Greens aim to distinguish themselves from traditional allies and win over right-leaning voters. Ahead of a crucial vote on the EU's fiscal rules, the Greens criticize S&D support, arguing it would hinder public investment in the green transition. Meanwhile, the S&D emphasizes the need for a socially just transition, linking climate action with social policies. While some Green lawmakers hint at the S&D's lack of commitment to climate action, the S&D's lead candidate stresses the compatibility of climate and social policies. Both parties seek to address the climate crisis while navigating electoral challenges and potential losses in the upcoming Parliament.

EUROPEAN UNION

Portuguese socialists sack all current MEPs from June's election list

The Portuguese Socialist Party voted to replace all current MEPs with national political figures for the upcoming elections. Despite assurances that the move doesn't reflect on the quality of MEPs' work, it shows a significant change. Marta Temido, former health minister, will lead the list, followed by Francisco Assis and Ana Caterina Mendes. While some current MEPs, like Pedro Marques, are highly regarded, the reshuffle may reflect internal political dynamics following recent national election losses. Reaction from affected MEPs indicates gratitude for the opportunity to serve but acknowledges the transient nature of political positions.

HEALTH

Belgian Presidency continues push to fight medicine shortages

Europe grappled with a surge in medicine shortages last year, with Belgium reporting a 20% increase in just one year. To address this, Member States supported proposals to enhance medicine supply security. Discussions aim to address shortages without overwhelming administrative burdens. Challenges remain regarding the feasibility of proposed measures, such as six-month advance alerts, highlighting the need for transparency and solidarity among Member States. Efforts are underway to leverage existing systems like the EU Medicines Verification System and coordinate actions like the Critical Medicine Alliance to combat shortages effectively.

AGRIFOOD

Beet growers urge France to authorise pesticide already used in other European countries

The French beet industry is urging the government to approve the use of acetamiprid, a neonicotinoid insecticide banned in France but allowed in the EU, to address competition discrepancies among member states. Concerns about beet yellows disease, caused by aphids, prompt the industry's plea. France's ban on neonicotinoids, including acetamiprid, due to environmental concerns clashes with its EU counterparts' permissions, leading to disparities in pest management strategies. Amidst discussions, the French government awaits EFSA's re-evaluation of acetamiprid, which could influence regulatory decisions and industry practices moving forward.