

# #TRENDY THURSDAY

## POLITICS

### EU activates crisis response corps to fight Russian interference

EU leaders decided on Wednesday to launch a temporary crisis task force to centralise the monitoring and sharing of information on Russia's attempts to interfere in June's elections. Czech and Polish authorities uncovered a pro-Russian influence operation in Europe involving MEPs and EU election candidates. In response, EU leaders agreed to set up a temporary crisis taskforce to coordinate actions, with Belgium taking the lead. Belgian PM emphasized close monitoring of the situation and urged reassessment of the mandates of OLAF and EPPO. The Czech Republic imposed sanctions on implicated actors.

## ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

### 'A huge, huge, huge mistake' Teresa Ribera warns against rejecting Nature Restoration Law

Spanish Vice-President and Ecological Transition Minister Ribera urged EU countries to save Nature Restoration Law,. Spanish minister Ribera underscores the economic importance of a biodiversity law amid debates on EU's future direction; rebuffs Hungary's resistance, emphasizing the need for common rules. While open to supporting farmers in transition, Ribera urges civil society to advocate for climate action amidst concerns over declining trust in institutions. Despite scientific backing, resistance to the Nature Restoration Law persists among some EU governments, with no apparent shift in Council's position despite grassroots support.

## TECHNOLOGY

### European space industry needs a single market approach, recommends Letta report

The EU space market should be integrated, because the European space industry is no longer adequate to compete in the current global space economy, Italian MP Enrico Letta writes in his draft full report as seen by Euractiv. Former Italian prime minister advocates for a revamped EU single market strategy for the space sector, emphasizing the need to enhance competitiveness and strategic autonomy against US dominance. Letta calls for clarifying roles between ESA and EUSPA, urging coherent EU Space Law and a departure from geo-return practices to foster a more integrated and competitive European space industry.

## DEFENSE

### Europe needs more funds for defence as wider war 'no longer a fantasy', Borrell warns

A full-scale conflict in Europe is "no longer a fantasy" and Europeans must find new ways to financially prepare for a potentially wider war on the continent, the EU's chief diplomat Josep Borrell warned on Tuesday in a speech at an economic forum in Brussels, stating that a high-intensity conventional conflict is no longer a far-off possibility. He highlighted Russia's aggressive actions in Ukraine and hybrid attacks on EU member states as significant concerns. Borrell emphasized the need for increased defense spending and bolstering European defense capabilities.

## POLITICS

### Spain to oblige regions accept a 'fair distribution' of migrant children

Spain will soon implement a mandatory distribution of immigrant minors to all the country's regions to relieve the great migratory pressure, with hundreds of people arriving every year from Africa. Spain faces a surge in migrant arrivals, particularly in the Canary Islands, where over 7,000 migrants arrived in January alone. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez aims to reform migration laws to address this challenge, proposing compulsory distribution of immigrant minors among autonomous communities. The goal is to alleviate strain on resources in migrant arrival areas, such as the Canary Islands, where nearly 5,500 migrant children and young people currently await assistance.

## AGRIFOOD

### Wave of farmer discontent not over as far-right sets the stage for EU elections

The backlash against EU green policies is set to continue, with plans to revive farmers' protests ahead of elections and an expected surge in support for the far-right in rural areas. Farmers protest new rules, demanding relief from economic and environmental burdens; conservative leaders vie for their support. Ahead of the elections, radical farmer groups plan mass protest in Brussels against green policies, aiming to sway votes and defy EU's agricultural agenda. Far-right leaders capitalize on farmers' protests, rallying rural support by framing regulations as existential threats. Rural discontent fuels far-right momentum, as seen in forecasts of a rightward shift in upcoming elections.