

#TRENDY THURSDAY

HEALTH

Commission welcomes agreement on stronger global health security rules

Commission welcomes the agreement on the revised International Health Regulations (IHR), achieved at the World Health Assembly in Geneva. Over 190 countries, including all EU Member States, adopted amendments to the IHR after two years of negotiations, aiming to enhance public health emergency management and protect against cross-border health threats. . The revised IHR will bolster global health security by improving countries' abilities to prevent and respond to acute health risks. Commissioner Kyriakides highlighted that this agreement aligns with the EU's Global Health Strategy, emphasizing international solidarity and the necessity of multilateral solutions .

ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

Commission kick-starts work on a new pilot mechanism to boost the hydrogen market

On Monday, the European Commission took further steps to support the development of the European Hydrogen Market(EHM) by launching work on a pilot mechanism. This new mechanism was created under the recently-adopted Decarbonised Gases and Hydrogen Package, and aims to accelerate investments by providing a clearer picture of the market situation of both off-takers and suppliers and facilitating contacts between them. It will be in place for five years and will be part of the European Hydrogen Bank. The hydrogen pilot mechanism will collect, process and give access to information on demand and supply for renewable, low-carbon hydrogen and derivatives

ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

Commission approves Italian State aid scheme to support electricity production from renewable energy sources

The European Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, an Italian scheme to support a total of 4590 MW of new capacity for electricity production from renewable energy sources. The scheme contributes to the EU's strategic objectives relating to the European Green Deal, while helping to end dependence on Russian fossil fuels and fast forward the green transition. Italy notified the Commission of its intention to introduce a scheme to support the production of electricity from renewable energy sources. The measure, which will run until 31 December 2028, will be financed through a levy included in the electricity bills of final consumers.

EUROPEAN UNION

EU Elections: What the polls say

The last poll collected by Politico, a media specialized in European politics and policy-making, estimated a victory for the EPP parliamentary group, who, despite the estimated loss of up to 10 MEPs (from the current 182 to an estimated 172), would continue to be the most voted force. It seems that these votes will be transferred to the more conservative groups, who expect to increase their representation in the European Parliament. Finally, on the left side, the expected loss of votes by the socialist group (S&D) and the Greens does not seem to be an alternative to avoid this decline. For all of these reasons, this week's elections are expected to be decisive for the future of the Union.

HEALTH

French pharma lobby unveils €2 million plan to reduce medication misuse

Through a statement published this week, France's pharmaceutical lobby, Leem, unveiled a €2 million plan to combat the misuse of medicines, a significant issue responsible for thousands of deaths annually, especially among the elderly. The initiative aims to promote "drug sobriety" and reduce unnecessary medication use through a media campaign and support measures, such as online training and a prescription assistance system. Leem reports that medicine misuse leads to 200,000 hospitalizations and around 10,000 premature deaths each year, incurring substantial costs for insurance. Leem estimates that improving drug use could save the French health insurance system €300 million annually.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

European elections: EU institutions prepared to counter disinformation

The EU institutions are actively working to defend the upcoming elections against disinformation and manipulation targeting European democracy. Disinformation efforts, both internal and external, aim to undermine the electoral process and sow societal division. Authorities, including the EU Digital Media Observatory and EUvsDisinfo, have detected numerous attempts to mislead voters with false information about voting procedures and controversial issues. In response, the EU has developed a comprehensive strategy involving close collaboration with member states, media, and civil society, and has implemented measures such as the Digital Services Act to mitigate these risks.