

#TRENDY THURSDAY

EUROPEAN UNION

EP approves to establish two new standing and two special committees

The European Parliament has approved to upgrade the subcommittees on Security and Defence and on Public Health as full standing committees as well as to create two additional special committees according to EP priorities for the forthcoming legislature: the Special Committee on European Democracy Shield and the Special Committee on Housing Crisis in the EU. Both special committees will be composed of 33 members, while the standing committees will comprise 43 members each one. Yet, the membership of the four committees will be determined by each political group and non-attached MEPs in January 2025.

ENVIRONMENT

Council approves new measures on sustainable packaging

The European Council has approved new rules to reduce packaging waste by setting binding re-use targets for 2030 and 2040. The regulation covers the entire packaging life cycle and introduces restrictions on single-use plastics, impacting food and beverages in hotels and bars, small cosmetic products, and pre-packed fruits and vegetables. It aims to minimize packaging weight and volume, with re-use targets depending on the packaging type. According to the new rules, take-away businesses must allow customers to bring their own containers to be filled at no extra cost.

EUROPEAN UNION

Western Balkans more close to access the EU

The Council of the EU and the Western Balkans leaders have met in Brussels to deepen their partnership and discuss a possible enlargement into the union. The summit, which resulted in a text called the Brussels Declaration, concludes to enhance Western Balkans integration through a €6 billion investment Growth Plan and to strengthen cooperation in several fields for a gradual access into the single-market. The text also addresses the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine and the irregular migration flows, while advancing an eventual integration of Western Balkans into the Single Euro Payments Area.

ENVIRONMENT

"Circular imperative is a vital part of the answer" says Commissioner Roswall

The commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy introduced the three necessary pillars to reach von der Leyen's "Competitiveness Compass": boosting innovation, which involve letting businesses develop their own innovative solutions based on their expertise; promoting decarbonisation and competitiveness, with the Clean Industrial Deal to be presented in the forthcoming days, which would require circular practices from businesses; and reinforcing EU economic security by diversifying suppliers and re-using the products containing valuable and scarce materials.

AGRIFOOD

Commission allocates €132 million to vitalize agrifood products

The European Commission has adopted a 2025 promotion policy work programme that allocates €132 million to promote activities for sustainable and high-quality EU agrifood products in the EU and abroad. The programme focuses on developing new market opportunities for EU farmers and EU food industry. The adopted text will promote sustainable activities in the EU internal market and in non-EU countries with an investment of €58.6 million and €63.4 million respectively. The adopted programme is aligned with sustainability, food security and competitiveness targets outlined in the Political guidelines for the Commission 2024-2029.

ENVIRONMENT

New measures to help reduce plastic losses to the environment

The European Council has deepened into the Commission's original proposal on preventing the loss of plastic pellets by adopting a general approach which introduces new measures and obligations for both EU and non-EU carriers. These rules, if approved by the EP, will help to ensure best handling practices of the pellets at all stages of the supply chain. Measures such as informing authorities about their involvement in the transport of plastic pellets and ensuring good quality packaging while transporting them would be applied to carriers whether going by road, rail or sea.