European Latitudes

Perspectives on Europe, Italy, and the world.

The press review connecting the key socio-political and economic developments shaping today’s debate.

Tuesday, 30 June 2026

Europe

Paris and Berlin push to make EU foreign policy great — somehow, *POLITICO*
France and Germany are pressing for reform of the European External Action Service, but diverge on institutional direction. Paris favours strengthening High Representative Kaja Kallas, potentially giving her clearer authority over external policy instruments, relevant commissioners and Commission directorates-general covering trade, development and foreign affairs. Berlin’s position is less settled, with some officials favouring tighter integration with, or greater powers for, the Commission. The dispute reflects a wider weakness in EU external action: the EEAS leads foreign and security policy, while the Commission controls many financial and regulatory tools. Reform options include empowering the Commission, moving the EEAS closer to the Council, or strengthening both. Ministers are expected to begin formal discussions in September.
https://www.politico.eu/article/eeas-ursula-von-der-leyen-emmanuel-macron-friederich-merz-giorgia-meloni-paris-berlin-push-eu-foreign-policy/

Ireland’s toughest mission: Getting a budget deal under the Christmas tree, *POLITICO*
Ireland inherits the EU Council presidency on 1 July with responsibility for brokering the next seven-year EU budget, covering 2028–2034 and worth nearly €2 trillion, including €166 billion in Covid-era debt repayments. Dublin must reconcile demands from 17 “Friends of Cohesion” countries seeking stronger agriculture and regional funding with wealthier net contributors

pushing for deeper cuts. Cyprus’s June negotiating box, trimming the Commission proposal by only 2 per cent, angered frugal states and raised the pressure on Ireland to present a more balanced version in October. The timetable is politically compressed, with leaders seeking agreement before 2027 elections in France, Italy, Spain and Poland. A decisive summit is scheduled for 17 December.
https://www.politico.eu/article/ireland-budget-deal-eu-presidency-christmas-tree/

Ireland prepares to play dealmaker on EU's biggest climate fight of the year, *POLITICO*
Ireland will have to mediate a divisive EU review of the Emissions Trading System, the bloc’s central carbon-pricing instrument for heavy industry. The Commission’s July review is expected to test whether the ETS can preserve its decarbonisation function while responding to pressure over energy prices, industrial competitiveness and geopolitical volatility. Ten member states, led by Poland, Italy, Czechia and Austria, have criticised the scheme as damaging to households and business, while Sweden, Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands remain strong defenders. Possible reforms include redirecting more ETS revenue to hard-to-abate sectors, revisiting free allowances and extending the emissions cap beyond 2039. With ETS revenues reaching €43 billion last year, any redistribution will face strong resistance from finance ministries.
https://www.politico.eu/article/ireland-prepares-eu-presidency-play-dealmaker-climate-change-fight-of-the-year/

Bilancio europeo: le tre posizioni a confronto, *Il Sole 24 Ore*
I negoziati sul Quadro finanziario pluriennale 2028-2034 restano segnati da distanze profonde tra Commissione, Parlamento e Stati membri. La Commissione ha proposto quasi 1.800 miliardi di euro a prezzi 2025, pari all’1,26% del reddito nazionale lordo dell’UE, includendo lo 0,11% per il rimborso del debito Next Generation EU. Il Parlamento chiede 175,1 miliardi in più, l’esclusione del rimborso NGEU dal bilancio e un livello complessivo pari all’1,38% del RNL. La negobox cipriota riduce invece la proposta della Commissione del 2%, suscitando critiche dei Paesi frugali. Lo scontro riguarda dimensione del bilancio, coesione, PAC, difesa, competitività, nuove risorse proprie e tempi di rimborso del debito comune.
https://lab24.ilsole24ore.com/bilancio-pluriennale-ue-2028-2034/

Europe rethinks how it fights war as Russian threat looms, *The Straits Times*
European militaries are reassessing war-fighting models in response to lessons from Ukraine, Middle East conflicts and the possibility that Russia could threaten NATO territory within a few years. Senior commanders argue that

Europe must move beyond reliance on expensive platforms with long production cycles and invest in mass-produced, low-cost systems such as drones and interceptors. Priorities include deep precision strike, electromagnetic warfare, stronger air defences and resilience against long-range threats from Russian aviation and naval forces. German army leaders stress rapid procurement of available interim capabilities rather than waiting for systems that may take a decade to deliver. Artificial intelligence is also compressing battlefield planning cycles, potentially reducing corps-level planning from 72 hours to one and sharply increasing daily target prosecution.
https://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/europe-rethinks-how-it-fights-war-as-russian-threat-looms

US will stand with European allies in defence of Baltics, US general says, *The Straits Times*
The United States has reaffirmed support for European allies defending the Baltic states as NATO creates an additional command structure for the region. US General Chris Donahue said deterrence depends on visible military readiness, while NATO's new arrangement places multinational divisions in Estonia and Latvia under the German Netherlands Corps in Münster. Until now, Baltic and northern Polish forces were commanded through a single multinational headquarters in Szczecin, Poland. A second corps-level structure is intended to increase troop allocation and enable rapid reinforcement. NATO assesses that Russia could mount a large-scale assault on allied territory as early as 2029 if rearmament continues, a claim the Kremlin denies. Germany framed the move as a demonstration of allied unity and readiness.
https://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/us-will-stand-with-european-allies-in-defence-of-baltics-us-general-says

FT: Baltic states urge EU to speed up ban on Russian oil imports, *Yahoo News*
Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are pressing the European Commission to accelerate proposals to ban Russian oil imports, arguing that remaining purchases continue to finance Moscow's war in Ukraine. The initiative had stalled after the war in Iran and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz raised fears of an energy supply crisis, but traffic through the waterway has resumed following a US-Iran ceasefire arrangement. EU dependence on Russian oil has fallen sharply since 2022, from 27 per cent of supplies at the start of that year to 2 per cent in 2025. Resistance may come from Hungary, Slovakia and states worried about energy prices, although a veto cannot block the measure.
https://www.yahoo.com/news/politics/articles/ft-baltic-states-urge-eu-112300050.html

Spain has called on the EU to postpone the ban on Russian LNG, *Logos Press*

Spanish port official Iván Jiménez has urged the EU to postpone its 2027 ban on Russian LNG, warning that a rapid phase-out could deepen dependence on US supplies. EU rules provide for a ban on Russian LNG under short-term contracts from 25 April 2026 and under long-term contracts from 1 January 2027, alongside staged restrictions on Russian pipeline gas. The author highlights price, quality and diversification concerns, but also the risk that importers front-load Russian gas purchases before the embargo takes effect.

https://logos-pres.md/en/news/spain-has-called-on-the-eu-to-postpone-the-ban-on-russian-lng/

AfD leader vows to restore German-Russian ties as she eyes chancellery, *The Straits Times*

Alice Weidel, leader of Germany's far-right Alternative for Germany, has called for an end to the boycott of Russian oil and gas, arguing that cheap Russian energy underpinned the success of German manufacturing and that its loss increased dependence on costlier US supplies. Before 2022 sanctions, Russia supplied more than one third of Germany's crude oil and over half of its natural gas, and industry has struggled since the Nord Stream pipeline explosions. The AfD sees upcoming elections in Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern as stepping stones toward national power by 2029 or later. Its pro-Russian energy position challenges Germany's Ukraine consensus and could test the mainstream parties' firewall against cooperation with the AfD, especially in eastern states where sympathy for Russia remains stronger.

https://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/afd-leader-vows-to-restore-german-russian-ties-as-she-eyes-chancellery

Italy

I dazi Usa pesano sul made in Italy, in calo i container nei porti italiani, *Il Sole 24 Ore*

Le tensioni geopolitiche e i dazi statunitensi stanno incidendo su export italiano, rotte marittime e costi logistici. Secondo il Fedespedi economic outlook, nel primo trimestre 2026 il traffico container mondiale è cresciuto del 4,4%, ma i porti italiani hanno registrato un calo del 4,6%, con Trieste a -23,6%, Savona a -14,1% e Genova a -4,9%, mentre Venezia è salita del 5,8%. Il cargo aereo italiano ha movimentato 385.100 tonnellate nei primi quattro mesi, in flessione dell'1%, con Malpensa a -5%. Verso gli Stati Uniti, le esportazioni restano pari a 18,79 miliardi di euro, ma alimentari e automotive soffrono: oli e grassi -33%, carni lavorate -25%, bevande -24,2% e autoveicoli -21,8%.

https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/i-dazi-usa-pesano-made-italy-calo-container-porti-italiani-AISbbawD

Data center, tre richieste sfidano i paletti regionali in Lombardia, *Il Sole 24 Ore*
La normativa sui data center in Lombardia è già messa sotto pressione dal decreto Bollette, che consente al Governo di qualificare alcuni progetti come di preminente interesse strategico nazionale, superando varianti urbanistiche locali e sostituendo gli altri provvedimenti autorizzativi. La Regione aveva appena introdotto regole per disincentivare insediamenti in aree rurali e parchi, aumentando del 200% i canoni di costruzione. Tre progetti sono già in fase autorizzativa: un campus da circa 240 megawatt nell'ex area Novaceta a Magenta, il progetto Microsoft nell'ex Postalmarket di Peschiera Borromeo e un intervento a Bollate con compensazioni ambientali. Il caso evidenzia incoerenze tra livelli istituzionali, mentre restano critici impatto energetico, disponibilità idrica, reti elettriche e prevedibilità regolatoria.
https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/data-center-tre-richieste-sfidano-paletti-regionali-lombardia-AICIZ0kD

Come la crisi climatica sta ridisegnando l'agricoltura italiana, *Zanichelli Aula di Scienze (5 giugno 2026)*
La crisi climatica sta trasformando l'agricoltura italiana attraverso temperature più elevate, siccità, precipitazioni concentrate, gelate primaverili e nuovi parassiti. Il settore, particolarmente vulnerabile nell'area mediterranea, deve aumentare la capacità di adattamento per proteggere rese, redditività e filiere territoriali. Negli ultimi quattro anni i danni stimati da Coldiretti hanno superato i 20 miliardi di euro, mentre nel 2023 cali produttivi hanno colpito grano, ciliegie, pere, miele, pomodoro, vino e olio. Nel 2025 gelate e siccità hanno ridotto fortemente ciliegie pugliesi, mandorle e nocciole, alimentando l'inflazione. Parallelamente crescono colture tropicali come mango e avocado, soprattutto in Sicilia. Le priorità politiche riguardano gestione idrica, varietà resistenti, infrastrutture agricole e centralità delle comunità rurali.
https://aulascienze.scuola.zanichelli.it/crisi-climatica-agricoltura-italiana/

Accise, verso la fine degli sconti. Urso convoca le compagnie: «Adeguate i prezzi al mercato», *Il Sole 24 Ore*
Il Governo si prepara a chiudere la lunga fase di sconti sulle accise sui carburanti, mentre il ministro Adolfo Urso convoca Api-Ip, Eni, Q8 e Tamoil per verificare che il calo dei prezzi petroliferi si trasmetta rapidamente ai listini. Il primo intervento, entrato in vigore il 19 marzo, aveva ridotto le imposte su benzina e gasolio di 24,4 centesimi al litro; dopo proroghe e riduzioni progressive, lo sconto residuo è sceso a 6,1 centesimi, valido fino al 3 luglio incluso. Secondo l'Osservatorio Mimit, la benzina costa in media 1,809 euro al

litro e il gasolio 1,892. Senza proroghe, da sabato la verde salirà a circa 1,87 euro e il gasolio oltre 1,95.
https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/accise-la-fine-sconti-urso-convoca-compagnie-adeguate-prezzi-mercato-AIAvAxvD

Msc acquista il 49% del porto di Vizhinjam in India, *Il Sole 24 Ore*
Msc acquisirà il 49% del porto di trasbordo container di Vizhinjam, nel Kerala, da Adani Group per circa 1,4 miliardi di dollari, lasciando ad Adani il restante 51%. L'operazione, realizzata attraverso la controllata Til, viene presentata come il maggiore investimento privato estero nelle infrastrutture portuali indiane. Vizhinjam è il primo porto indiano di trasbordo ad alto pescaggio progettato per accogliere grandi portacontainer e si inserisce nella strategia di Nuova Delhi volta a ridurre la dipendenza da hub regionali come Singapore e Colombo. La partnership dovrebbe aumentare i volumi, intercettare traffici da e verso il Bangladesh e rafforzare l'accesso dell'India ai mercati globali, migliorando efficienza e resilienza delle catene logistiche.
https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/msc-acquista-49percento-porto-vizhinjam-india-AIStHdwD

International

EU and China seek to head off trade war with new dialogue, *POLITICO*
The EU and China have agreed to create a high-level Trade and Investment Consultation Mechanism to contain escalating commercial tensions and address the EU's widening trade deficit with Beijing, estimated by Brussels at about €1 billion a day. The mechanism will focus on trade and investment balancing, export controls, intellectual property rights and World Trade Organization reform. A dedicated working group will immediately monitor trade flows using mutually agreed data, enabling political consultations if destabilising import surges occur. The initiative follows EU concern that Chinese industrial overcapacity is harming European producers. China also reassured the EU that controls on rare earths and permanent magnets would not disrupt supply chains. Initial progress will be assessed in September.
https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-china-dialogue-trade-war/

World Bank Drops Climate Finance Target Under U.S. Pressure, *ESG Today*
The World Bank Group will extend its Climate Change Action Plan but retire its target requiring 45 per cent of financing to carry climate co-benefits, following pressure from the Trump administration. The United States, the Bank's largest shareholder, argued that the target distorted decision-making and diverted attention from poverty reduction and economic growth. The Bank first set a 35

per cent climate-finance target in 2020, raised it to 45 per cent in 2023, and exceeded it in 2025, when climate finance reached more than $39 billion, including $16.6 billion for adaptation and $22.6 billion for mitigation. The decision signals a policy retreat from quantified climate-finance benchmarks, although the Bank says climate work will remain client-driven and aligned with national plans and NDCs.
https://www.esgtoday.com/world-bank-drops-climate-finance-target-under-u-s-pressure/

Is the tide turning against Russia in Ukraine?, *The Japan Times*
The author argues that Russia's strategic position in Ukraine is weakening as battlefield momentum stalls, Ukraine expands drone production and strikes reach deep into Russian territory. Russia's occupied share of Ukraine has barely changed, rising only from 19.3 per cent at the start of 2026 to 19.4 per cent in June, while Ukraine's drone capabilities have helped offset Moscow's manpower advantage and target energy infrastructure near Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Russia also faces worsening economic constraints: GDP fell 0.2 per cent year on year in the first quarter, despite a temporary oil-price boost, and official 2026 growth is expected at only 0.4 per cent. The central risk is that authoritarian information failures may prevent Putin from recognising the war's deteriorating costs.
https://www.japantimes.co.jp/commentary/2026/06/30/world/war-tide-turning-against-russia/

Newly Russian-flagged LNG tanker starts operations at US-sanctioned project, data shows, *Reuters*
A newly Russian-flagged LNG carrier, Arctic Express, has loaded gas from the Saam storage facility near Murmansk, used to trans-ship LNG from the US-sanctioned Arctic LNG 2 project. Formerly Queen Cassiopeia under the Sierra Leone flag, it was reflagged after 1 May and left on 28 June for an unclear destination. Arctic LNG 2, planned for 19.8 million tonnes a year, continues operating despite sanctions, with China its main buyer. Russia is expanding its reflagged LNG fleet as EU restrictions tighten, including a short-term contract ban from 25 April and a long-term ban from 1 January 2027.
https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/newly-russianflagged-lng-tanker-starts-operations-us-sanctioned-project-data-2026-06-29/

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