



European Latitudes

Perspectives on Europe, Italy, and the world.

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

 The non-English articles present in the Europe and International section are translated to English.

Tuesday, 14 August 2026

Europe

Scorching summer will cost France €10B to €15B, environment minister estimates, *POLITICO Europe*

France's exceptionally hot summer could impose economic losses of €10 billion to €15 billion, equivalent to as much as 0.5 per cent of GDP, according to a preliminary government estimate based on extrapolating historical data from the national statistics agency. The calculation remains highly uncertain and could rise as unusually high temperatures persist. By mid-July, 85 per cent of France was under drought warnings, while wildfires and reduced agricultural production are expected to account for much of the damage. Historical experience illustrates the potential scale: the August 2003 heatwave was associated with a 22 per cent fall in cereal output. The estimates reinforce concerns that heat and drought increasingly represent material macroeconomic and fiscal risks.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/environment-minister-monique-barbut-estimates-heatwaves-will-cost-france-10-to-15-billion-euros/>

US threatens EU over its green reporting rules, *POLITICO Europe*

Washington is threatening unspecified action unless the EU further limits the application of its corporate sustainability rules to US companies, arguing that Brussels has not fully honoured commitments made under the 2025 transatlantic trade agreement. The dispute centres on the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, covering human-rights and environmental impacts in operations and supply chains, and the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, which mandates sustainability disclosures. Although the EU has already reduced parts of both regimes, it has rejected US demands for broader exemptions. Washington has also criticised the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism as an additional burden on American exporters. The European Commission maintains that it has sought practical cooperation but insists that the EU's regulatory framework and autonomy are not negotiable, creating a potential new source of transatlantic trade friction.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/us-threatens-eu-over-transatlantic-green-rules/>

Europe's carbon mechanism is a tariff by another name (*opinion*),
Financial Times

The author argues that the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism is economically comparable to the US Section 232 tariffs that Brussels criticises, because both raise import costs to protect domestic producers from external competitive pressures. US primary steel faces a 50 per cent tariff, with comparable duties on aluminium and selected derivatives, while CBAM requires importers of covered carbon-intensive goods to surrender certificates linked to the EU carbon price, currently around €80 per tonne of CO₂. US exporters receive no domestic carbon-price credit. The argument holds that CBAM conflicts with the spirit of the 2025 US-EU trade framework, which capped most EU exports to the US at 15 per cent, particularly as Washington has reduced some derivative coverage while Brussels plans to broaden CBAM's scope.

<https://www.ft.com/content/99bbb4e9-32de-40cb-aa15-537937d70889>

How Russian attacks, European protectionism and drought are trapping Ukraine's vital grain, *POLITICO Europe*

Ukraine's grain exports are being squeezed by Russian attacks on Black Sea shipping, low Danube water levels and political resistance to overland transit through neighbouring EU states. Only 463,000 tonnes were exported in the first nine days of August, roughly one-third of the normal pace, raising the risk

of storage shortages by November. Kyiv has requested a €220 million EU grant to subsidise loans for smaller farms, but alternative rail and road routes cost an additional \$50-\$70 per tonne and are commercially unviable at current prices. Poland, Hungary and Slovakia remain wary after earlier farmer protests, although Ukraine says EU wheat quotas of 1.3 million tonnes annually prevent renewed market disruption. Prolonged constraints could raise global food prices by 25-30 per cent.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/ukraine-russia-war-grain-europe-protectionism-drought/>

Greenland blocks US oil company ready to drill, // Sole 24 Ore [translated]

The Greenlandic government has blocked the start, planned for next winter, of an exploratory drilling project by the US company Greenland Energy in the eastern region of Nunap Qeqqa, or Jameson Land, because the authorisation process cannot be completed in time. In particular, the necessary environmental and social studies are missing, a circumstance that also prevents preparatory activities from taking place. Logistical materials had already been transferred to Ittoqqortoormiit airport, in a town of about 300 inhabitants, before the permits were obtained. The authorities have asked the company to revise its planning and timetable. Greenland Energy now expects to obtain the authorisations in the winter of 2027-2028. The case takes on additional significance in the context of growing US geopolitical attention towards Greenland and local sensitivities regarding the use of Arctic resources.

<https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/la-groenlandia-blocca-compagnia-petrolifera-usa-pronta-trivellare-AJ1Lkjl>

'Much faster than originally planned': Ukraine warns of Russian rival to Musk's Starlink, POLITICO Europe

Russia is accelerating deployment of Rassvet, a low-Earth-orbit satellite communications network intended to provide capabilities comparable to Starlink and potentially restore Russian battlefield communications advantages. Bureau 1440 launched 16 satellites in March and a further package in July; Ukrainian officials estimate around 40 are already in orbit. Moscow reportedly plans a 292-satellite constellation by 2027 and 924 satellites by 2035, with partial coverage of Ukraine already available. Kyiv

warns that an operational network could enable Russian drones carrying satellite terminals to receive real-time control across Ukraine. The development is increasing Ukrainian pressure on SpaceX to activate Starlink coverage over Russia for Ukrainian forces, which Kyiv argues would improve the effectiveness of missiles and drones striking targets deep inside Russian territory.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/ukraine-warns-russia-starlink-rival/>

Hungary to sink two barges near nuclear plant to raise water level, ensure cooling, *The Straits Times*

Hungary is sinking two 80-metre barges in the Danube near the Paks nuclear power station as an emergency measure to raise water levels and preserve reactor cooling during an exceptional drought. Paks is operating at roughly 25 per cent of capacity because record-low river levels have restricted coolant availability. The submerged barges are expected to increase the local water level by about 20 centimetres, helping keep two turbines operating while a more durable riverbed sill is constructed. That submerged cross-river structure, expected to take several weeks, could raise water levels by as much as one metre. The intervention highlights growing climate-adaptation challenges for river-cooled nuclear generation. Neighbouring Romania shut its last operating reactor on 13 August as drought disrupted electricity production, shipping and public-health systems across the region.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/world/europe/hungary-to-sink-two-barges-near-nuclear-plant-to-ensure-cooling>

Magyar casts doubt on Hungary-Russia nuclear power deal, *POLITICO Europe*

Hungary is reviewing the Russian-backed Paks II nuclear expansion as record-low Danube levels expose the vulnerability of river-cooled reactors. Output at Paks, which normally supplies around one-third of Hungary's electricity, has fallen to just over 10 per cent. Prime Minister Péter Magyar has questioned the project's cooling design and Rosatom's performance, noting that Paks II was due to operate by 2024 and has already cost about 1,000 billion forints (€2.8 billion). Rosatom says Unit 5 preparation is over 80 per cent complete. The 2014 deal includes up to €10 billion in Russian financing. Romania has also shut its final operating Cernavodă reactor because of low Danube levels.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/peter-magyar-danube-hungary-russia-nuclear-deal/>

Hiding your use of AI is about to get much harder — thanks to Brussels, POLITICO Europe

EU transparency rules applying from 2 August require leading generative-AI providers to identify machine-generated content. OpenAI uses Google DeepMind's SynthID to watermark images and audio, while Anthropic embeds persistent watermarks in Claude-generated text; both also support the C2PA provenance standard. Social-media platforms will need to detect and display these markers to users. The measures reinforce the EU Artificial Intelligence Act's transparency regime and could influence online behaviour, as disclosed AI provenance may reduce engagement with synthetic content and discourage low-quality mass-generated material.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/artificial-intelligence-ai-watermark-big-tech/>

Italy

Manovra 2027: Irpef, pensioni e banche, tutti i cavalli di battaglia (e le tensioni) nella maggioranza, Il Sole 24 Ore

La preparazione della Legge di Bilancio 2027, ultima manovra della legislatura, richiede di conciliare disciplina fiscale e misure ad elevato impatto politico. Fratelli d'Italia propone di ridurre al 33% l'aliquota Irpef intermedia per redditi fino a 60.000 euro, prorogare l'imposta sostitutiva al 5% sugli aumenti derivanti dai rinnovi contrattuali e sui premi di produttività e rafforzare gli interventi per le famiglie. La Lega punta a pensionamenti anticipati a 64 anni, Quota 41, riapertura della rottamazione fiscale e un contributo del 5% per tre anni sugli utili dei dieci maggiori istituti bancari. Forza Italia propone pensioni minime verso 700-800 euro, ampliamento della flat tax incrementale e agevolazioni per autonomi e imprese, opponendosi però a nuovi prelievi straordinari sulle banche.

<https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/manovra-2027-irpef-pensioni-e-banche-tutti-cavalli-battaglia-e-tensioni-maggioranza-AJyen4l>

Bankitalia: debito sale a nuovo record, a giugno sfonda 3.200 miliardi, Il Sole 24 Ore

A giugno 2026 il debito delle amministrazioni pubbliche italiane ha raggiunto il nuovo record di 3.207,2 miliardi di euro, con un aumento mensile di 26,2 miliardi. La crescita riflette per 13,3 miliardi il fabbisogno delle amministrazioni pubbliche, per 9,8 miliardi l'incremento delle disponibilità liquide del Tesoro, salite a 61,7 miliardi, e per 3,1 miliardi altri fattori, tra cui rivalutazioni dei titoli indicizzati e variazioni dei cambi. La quota di debito detenuta dalla Banca d'Italia è scesa al 16,7% dal 17,2%, mentre quella in mano ai non residenti è salita al 35,9%. Le entrate tributarie hanno raggiunto 43,2 miliardi a giugno, in calo dell'1,3% annuo, ma sono cresciute dell'1,4% nel primo semestre, a 261 miliardi.

<https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/bankitalia-debito-sale-nuovo-record-giugno-sfonda-3200-miliardi-AJRW1Om>

Un distretto industriale su tre in Italia in balia degli shock energetici, // Sole 24 Ore

Un'analisi di Civiqa e OpenEconomics individua 52 sistemi locali del lavoro, sui 515 censiti dall'Istat, tra quelli maggiormente esposti agli shock energetici. Di questi, 31 appartengono ai 111 distretti italiani dell'industria pesante, pari a quasi uno su tre. Nei territori più vulnerabili vivono 13,1 milioni di persone, il 22,2% della popolazione nazionale, con un'incidenza che sale al 33,6% nel Mezzogiorno e nelle isole. L'indice considera consumi energetici diretti, dipendenza da filiere a rischio e peso demografico, mentre la diffusione delle rinnovabili riduce l'esposizione. Le politiche di mitigazione devono quindi essere differenziate: efficienza, elettrificazione e autoproduzione per i rischi diretti; diversificazione dei fornitori, logistica e stoccaggi strategici per quelli trasmessi lungo le filiere.

<https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/un-distretto-industriale-tre-italia-balia-shock-energetici-AJICA2I>

Minacce cyber, Italia e Germania aggiornano l'assetto per rispondere alla sfida. Ecco come, // Sole 24 Ore

Italia e Germania stanno rafforzando gli assetti istituzionali di cybersicurezza, riconoscendo la minaccia digitale come componente centrale della difesa nazionale. Il disegno di legge approvato dal Governo italiano il 5 agosto attribuisce al Capo di Stato maggiore della Difesa il ruolo di autorità cyber della Difesa e la responsabilità unitaria dei dati ministeriali, nel rispetto delle competenze delle altre autorità nazionali. Il Reparto informazioni e sicurezza

diventa Comando interforze Cyber Intel e viene istituito un Centro interforze per l'addestramento al combattimento e al contrasto delle minacce ibride. In Germania, la riforma dei servizi segreti amplia invece i poteri del BND, consentendo interventi attivi contro infrastrutture informatiche straniere durante attacchi cyber o campagne di disinformazione, anche con possibili "mezzi cinetici", la cui portata resta giuridicamente poco definita.

<https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/minacce-cyber-italia-e-germania-aggiornano-l-assetto-rispondere-sfida-ecco-come-AJnsjrk>

International

The government is recruiting tech companies to help fight its cyber battles, *POLITICO*

A new US presidential memorandum would create a legal framework allowing vetted technology and cybersecurity companies to conduct government-authorised offensive operations against foreign cybercriminal groups, following reported US cybercrime losses of \$20.8 billion in 2025. Participating firms would contract with the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security and operate under a National Coordination Center, with detailed approval and oversight procedures due within 60 days. Operations could include surveillance or disruptive actions against criminal infrastructure, provided targets are not institutional components of foreign governments. Firms must meet technical and personnel standards and report operations that could cause loss of life or constitute force under international law. Attribution remains a major challenge, particularly where criminal groups overlap with Russian, Chinese or Iranian state activity.

<https://www.politico.com/news/2026/08/13/white-house-memo-cybercrime-01036176>

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