



Brussels Info Flash

4 September 2026

H/Advisors' Analysis

EU and NATO tighten security coordination after alleged Russian attack attempt on EU soil

Brussels frames the Leipzig/Halle Airport incident as a direct security threat to the Union, reinforcing the need for stronger preparedness, resilience and coordination with NATO

The **European Commission** and **NATO** have stepped up their security messaging following what Germany has identified as a Russian-backed attempt to attack cargo planes at **Leipzig/Halle Airport**. Speaking alongside NATO Secretary-General **Mark Rutte**, Commission President **Ursula von der Leyen** described the incident as an attack using military-grade material carried out by Russian operatives on **EU soil**, warning that it could have caused major damage and potential loss of life had it succeeded. The statement marks a further escalation in the EU's framing of Russian hybrid activity as a direct threat to European internal security.

The incident reinforces Brussels' focus on **preparedness**, critical infrastructure protection and closer EU-NATO cooperation. It also comes against the backdrop of Russia's continued war against Ukraine and a broader pattern of sabotage, cyberattacks, disinformation and interference attributed to Moscow. By presenting the Leipzig case as more than an isolated national security incident, von der Leyen sought to underline that hybrid threats against one Member State are part of a wider challenge for the Union as a whole.

The statement points to a more security-driven agenda in Brussels, with the EU increasingly linking support for Ukraine abroad with resilience at home. Coordination with **NATO** is likely to remain central, particularly on intelligence-sharing, infrastructure protection and deterrence against hybrid operations. Politically, the incident strengthens the case for a tougher EU response to Russian hostile activity and for further investment in **European security**, crisis response and defence preparedness.

Main Issues in the EU

The Council

4 September 2026

- **Informal General Affairs Council.** Ministers met informally in Dublin under the Irish Presidency to discuss general affairs priorities and institutional issues.

3 September 2026

- **Informal General Affairs Council.**
- **EU long-term budget.** European Council President António Costa met the Prime Ministers of Croatia and Luxembourg, calling for an agreement on the 2028-2034 EU budget by the end of 2026 and stressing the need to balance new priorities such as defence, competitiveness and strategic resilience with cohesion and agricultural policy.

2 September 2026

- **EU long-term budget.**
- **Informal Gymnich meeting.** Foreign affairs ministers met informally in Dublin under the Irish Presidency to discuss foreign policy priorities and key international developments.

1 September 2026

- **Informal Gymnich meeting.**
- **Informal meeting of Defence Ministers.** Defence ministers met informally in Dublin under the Irish Presidency to discuss defence-related priorities and ongoing EU security challenges.

31 August 2026

- **Informal meeting of Defence Ministers.**

The Commission

3 September 2026

- **Food and veterinary audits.** The Commission published its 2027 food and veterinary audits programme, planning 144 audits and 8 fact-finding visits, with a stronger focus on third-country trade-related audits and EU border control posts.
- **Research funding.** The European Research Council awarded €705 million in Starting Grants to 421 early-career researchers, including 21 researchers currently based outside Europe who will relocate to the EU or Horizon Europe associated countries.

- **Competition rules.** The Commission adopted new Guidelines on exclusionary abuses of dominance under Article 102 TFEU, clarifying how it will assess conduct by dominant companies that may exclude competitors from the market.

2 September 2026

- **Maritime industrial strategy.** The Commission launched the EU Industrial Maritime Value Chains Alliance to strengthen Europe's maritime manufacturing capacity, technological sovereignty and industrial cooperation.
- **German capacity mechanism.** The Commission approved a German capacity mechanism worth up to €35 billion to secure electricity supply from 2031 and support the transition to a decarbonised power system.
- **Portuguese State aid.** The Commission approved a €30 million Portuguese scheme to support agricultural, fishery and aquaculture companies facing higher fuel and fertiliser prices.
- **Merger control.** The Commission cleared Mutares' acquisition of Synthomer and Charterhouse's acquisition of Batibig under the simplified merger review procedure.
- **Russia and EU security.** President von der Leyen met NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte and condemned Russia's alleged attempted attack on cargo planes at Leipzig/Halle Airport, describing it as part of a broader pattern of hostile activity on EU soil.

1 September 2026

- **Education investment.** The Commission published its Investing in Education 2026 report, highlighting education spending trends and the need to improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession.
- **Cross-border civil and commercial disputes.** The Commission launched a consultation on the possible revision of the Brussels Ia Regulation, covering jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments.
- **Merger control.** The Commission cleared acquisitions involving Caiba and Nosoplas, AERIAN, and VTS under the EU Merger Regulation.

31 August 2026

- **Digital Services Act.** The Commission designated ChatGPT as a Very Large Online Search Engine, and Reddit and Roblox as Very Large Online Platforms, bringing them under enhanced DSA supervision.
- **NextGenerationEU.** The Recovery and Resilience Facility reached its final implementation deadline, with Member States required to submit final payment

requests by 30 September 2026, while the Commission positively assessed Sweden's final €332.8 million request.

- **Steel imports.** The Commission adopted an implementing act clarifying the evidence EU steel importers must provide to prove the country of “melt and pour” under the EU Steel Regulation.

The European Parliament

2 September 2026

- **Mental health at work.** The Employment and Social Affairs Committee voted on a report calling for EU legislation to protect workers' mental and physical health and address work-related psychosocial risks.
- **Childhood cancer.** MEPs in the Public Health Committee discussed paediatric cancer with a young survivor and sectoral experts, focusing on innovation, public investment and policy recommendations.
- **Greenland.** The Development and Foreign Affairs committees hosted Greenland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Business and Minerals, Múte Bourup Egede, to discuss EU-Greenland relations and future financial support under the next EU long-term budget.

1 September 2026

- **Wildfires and EU preparedness.** MEPs from the ENVI Committee questioned Commissioner Hadja Lahbib on the EU's response to the summer wildfires across Europe and discussed lessons learnt.
- **Irish Presidency priorities.** Ireland's ministers continued to present the Presidency's priorities in meetings with the relevant parliamentary committees.

H/Advisors, strategic communications experts dedicated to enhancing reputation and building trust to fulfil ambitions. Founded in 2001, H/Advisors employ 1,500+ multi-disciplinary experts in 40+ offices across Europe, America, APAC and the Middle East. Driven by deep industry expertise and a problem-solving ethos, core specialisms include Crisis & Reputation Management, Corporate Communications, Digital, Data & Creative, Investor Relations & Financial Communications, Litigation, Capital Markets, Public Affairs & Policy Advisory, Sustainability & ESG, and Transformation & Change. H/Advisors is part of Havas, one of the world's largest creative, media and entertainment groups. For further information, please visit www.h-advisors.global or contact brusselsPA@h-advisors.global

General enquiries

info@h-advisors.global

H-advisors.global