



Brussels Info Flash

2 October 2026

H/Advisors' Analysis

Commission proposes EU Critical Communication System to strengthen crisis response

Brussels wants to give first responders secure, resilient and cross-border communication tools, while reducing reliance on foreign technologies.

The **European Commission** has proposed a new **EU Critical Communication System** to provide police, firefighters, medical services and civil protection teams with secure communication channels during crises. The system would address current fragmentation, allowing emergency services to communicate across borders and remain connected when national or terrestrial networks are disrupted.

The proposal would enable first responders to share **real-time** data, video, messages and geolocation through secure devices, relying on **5G**, EU satellites and deployable communication units. It would also include monitoring centres to strengthen cybersecurity and resilience against hybrid threats, blackouts, natural disasters or terrorist attacks.

Politically, the initiative fits into the EU's wider agenda on **preparedness**, internal security and strategic autonomy. By using components developed by **European companies**, the Commission aims to reduce dependence on foreign technologies. The proposal will now be negotiated by the **European Parliament** and the **Council**, with a gradual launch planned from **2030**.

Highlights of the week

- **Health and pharma resilience.** Health remained high on the EU agenda, with action on cancer, cardiovascular screening, life sciences and access to financial services for cancer survivors.
- **Banking and financial services.** Key developments included the ECON monetary dialogue with ECB President Christine Lagarde, major RRF disbursements and new work on financial access for cancer survivors.
- **Defence and security.** The week focused on Ukraine support, hybrid threats, defence procurement, new European defence projects and the EU Critical Communication System.
- **Energy, environment and climate.** EU institutions addressed energy security, water resilience, ocean and climate monitoring, COP31 priorities and support linked to higher fuel and fertiliser prices.

Main Issues in the EU

The Council

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- **Justice and Home Affairs Council.** Home affairs ministers discussed the state of the Schengen area, migration returns and implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, as well as migration early-warning capabilities, the EU drugs strategy, the security threat landscape and hybrid pressures at the EU's external borders.
- **Health ministers.** EU health ministers met informally in Dublin to discuss population health, innovation, life sciences and health competitiveness, with a focus on resilient health systems, access to medicines and medical technology, biotechnology, digital transformation and more equitable access to care.

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- **Health ministers.**

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- **Agriculture and Fisheries Council.** Ministers reached a partial negotiating position on future EU support for fisheries, aquaculture and maritime policy for 2028-2034, discussed EMFAF simplification and shared fish stocks with the UK, Norway and coastal states, and reviewed progress on the post-2027 CAP, agricultural market pressures, drought impacts and fertiliser resilience.
- **Energy ministers.** EU energy ministers met informally in Dublin to exchange views on energy affordability, innovation and market disruption, and European energy security ahead of the formal TTE Energy Council meetings in October and December.

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- **Energy ministers.**
- **Foreign Affairs Council (Defence).** Defence ministers discussed EU military support to Ukraine, focusing on air defence, the European Peace Facility, EUMAM Ukraine and Russia's shadow fleet, while also addressing Middle East security, freedom of navigation, hybrid threats, defence procurement, space security and new Russia-related sanctions.
- **Agriculture and Fisheries Council.**

The Commission

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- **Ukraine Facility.** The Commission disbursed €2.9 billion to Ukraine under the Ukraine Facility, including €800 million from the Ukraine Support Loan, to support financial stability, public administration and reforms linked to Ukraine's recovery and EU accession path.
- **EU KIDS Act.** The Commission opened a feedback period on the proposed EU KIDS Act, which aims to strengthen children's online safety through a social media delay, safety-by-design rules, privacy-preserving age assurance and stronger enforcement.
- **Bulgarian State aid.** The Commission approved a €170 million Bulgarian State aid scheme to support farmers facing increased fuel and fertiliser prices linked to the Middle East crisis.

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- **EU infringement procedures.** The Commission adopted its October infringement package, including 30 letters of formal notice, 66 reasoned opinions, 9 referrals to the Court of Justice of the EU and the closure of 87 cases. Pasted text
- **NextGenerationEU.** The Commission disbursed more than €9.8 billion to Poland, Sweden, Belgium, Estonia and Cyprus under the Recovery and Resilience Facility, while all Member States submitted their final RRF payment requests by the 30 September deadline. Pasted text Pasted text
- **Research and innovation.** The Commission announced over €210 million in additional MSCA funding to support more than 700 researchers in Europe and published its 2026 research and innovation performance report, warning that Europe must better translate scientific strength into strategic technologies and productivity growth. Pasted text Pasted text

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- **Democratic resilience.** The European Centre for Democratic Resilience launched the first phase of its Stakeholder Platform, bringing in EDMO and the European Fact-Checking Standards Network to support EU work on disinformation and foreign information manipulation.
- **Consumer protection and gaming.** The Consumer Protection Cooperation Network launched coordinated EU-level actions targeting nine video game companies to strengthen gamers' rights and ensure transparency and fairness in the use of in-game virtual currencies.

- **Cybersecurity.** A new Commission Eurobarometer found that three in four EU employees have faced cyber threats at work, with phishing, data theft, malware and AI-generated scams among the most common risks.
- **Ocean and climate monitoring.** The Commission published the latest Copernicus report on the state of the ocean, warning of major Arctic shifts, record marine heatwaves and rising sea levels.
- **Supply chain resilience.** The Commission launched a call for evidence on supply chain diversification challenges for EU businesses, ahead of a planned diversification package to reduce strategic dependencies in critical sectors.
- **EU critical communication system.** The Commission proposed a new EU Critical Communication System to provide Europe's first responders with secure and resilient communication channels in crisis situations.

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- **EU external borders.** The Commission proposed a five-point plan to strengthen the resilience and security of EU external borders, aiming to prevent, anticipate and respond to sudden mass arrivals following recent pressure at Ceuta.
- **Research and innovation.** The Commission allocated an additional €500 million to Horizon Europe for 2026 and 2027, bringing the programme's two-year budget to around €14.8 billion and adding new calls on AI-driven energy platforms, SME skills, biodiversity and clean and digital industries.
- **Copyright and artificial intelligence.** The Commission launched a targeted consultation on future copyright measures, covering the use of protected content in AI, online piracy of live events, performers' remuneration and copyright in scientific research.
- **Water resilience.** The Commission welcomed the second Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Declaration on Water and the launch of the Rome Initiative on Water, aimed at strengthening regional cooperation on water scarcity, climate pressure and sustainable water management.
- **Cancer survivors and financial services.** The Commission launched a targeted consultation on fair access to financial services for cancer survivors, focusing on the Right to be Forgotten in insurance, mortgages and other financial products. Pasted text
- **French State aid for fisheries.** The Commission approved a €25 million French State aid scheme to support fishing companies facing higher fuel prices under the Middle East Crisis Temporary State Aid Framework.

- **NextGenerationEU.** The Commission positively assessed Austria's final €306 million and France's final €6.1 billion payment requests under the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

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- **Humanitarian aid to Ethiopia.** The Commission announced €61 million in humanitarian funding for Ethiopia to support people affected by conflict, displacement, disease outbreaks and climate-related hazards, including emergency food, healthcare, water, protection and shelter.
- **European defence projects.** The Commission welcomed Member States' endorsement of the first five European Defence Projects of Common Interest, supported by €325 million under EDIP and focused on drones, maritime and seabed defence, space, air and missile defence, and the EU's Eastern Flank.
- **EU trade policy.** The Commission published its annual report on the implementation and enforcement of EU trade and economic security policy, highlighting the role of EU trade agreements in strengthening market access, resilience and competitiveness for European businesses.
- **Agri-food trade.** The Commission reported that the EU agri-food trade surplus reached €30.1 billion in the first seven months of 2026, €2.9 billion higher than in the same period last year.
- **Cardiovascular health checks.** The Commission launched the first EU Screening Week and adopted a proposal for a Council Recommendation on cardiovascular health checks, aiming to improve early detection and reduce premature deaths from cardiovascular diseases.

The European Parliament

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- **Civil protection funds.** MEPs from the ENVI and SANT committees voted on a new seven-year EU civil protection mechanism, with proposals for more funding, stronger monitoring and crisis anticipation measures.
- **COP31.** The ENVI Committee adopted its priorities for the 2026 UN Climate Change Conference in Antalya, with a focus on EU climate ambition, fossil fuel phase-out and climate finance.

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- **Erasmus+.** Culture and Education MEPs voted on the 2028-2034 Erasmus+ programme, with proposals to expand the programme to volunteering and increase its financial envelope.

- **Democratic resilience.** MEPs, national parliamentarians, civil society representatives and academics gathered for the EU Parliamentary Democracy Forum to discuss democratic resilience and citizens' trust in institutions.

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- **Monetary dialogue.** MEPs from the ECON Committee held their regular debate with ECB President Christine Lagarde, focusing on the ECB's recent actions, artificial intelligence and inflation dynamics in monetary policy.
- **Fighting cancer.** Public Health MEPs evaluated the rollout of the EU's cancer plan, including proposals on tobacco labelling, online alcohol advertising and measures to discourage alcohol abuse.

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