

23 - 27 September 2024

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I. Political and Policy Developments

1. European Parliament kicks off Commission confirmation process

The European Parliament has initiated the confirmation process for the next Commission. Documents for the Commissioners-designate are now available on a [dedicated page](#).

Parliament will assign committees and schedule hearings, with group leaders aiming to finalise the timetable by 2 October. As things stand, hearings are expected to take place in the first half of November. Before the hearings, the Legal Affairs Committee (JURI) will review the declarations of interests to check for any conflicts.

2. Calls to complete single market gain momentum

Twenty Member States, including Germany and Poland, signed a [non-paper](#) - an unofficial position paper - advocating for deeper Single Market integration ahead of an industry ministers' meeting.

The document highlights economic reports by former Italian PMs [Enrico Letta](#) and [Mario Draghi](#) as catalysts for unlocking the Single Market's potential. It urges the Commission to focus on specific areas in its upcoming Single Market Strategy, due by June 2025:

- **Facilitating trade:** Address cross-border trade barriers, particularly in the fragmented services sector.
- **Reducing red tape:** Leverage digital tools to simplify procedures and cut administrative burdens.
- **Ensuring enforcement:** Ensure Single Market rules are simple, predictable, unified, and effectively enforced, as a basis for achieving ambitious climate, cohesion, and social goals.

3. EPP discusses priorities for the new mandate

The centre-right European People's Party (EPP) gathered in Naples to discuss key policy priorities for the new mandate. Discussions focused on developing a new EU policy for the

Mediterranean, with competitiveness, defence, security and enlargement featuring prominently. Notably, Green Deal issues received little attention.

Key attendees included EPP group leader Manfred Weber, European Parliament President Roberta Metsola, Italian Foreign Affairs Minister Antonio Tajani, Commissioners-designate Henna Virkkunen (Tech Sovereignty), Christophe Hansen (Agriculture), Andrius Kubilius (Defence) and Dubravka Šuica (Mediterranean).

4. New French government to follow Macron's lead, with rightward shift on migration

French PM Michel Barnier [unveiled](#) his new government last weekend. The government features ministers from Macron's Together for the Republic (EPR) and Barnier's centre-right The Republicans (LR). European Commission President von der Leyen [welcomed](#) Barnier's appointment, citing his commitment to Europe.

Barnier is expected to maintain Macron's political course, but a shift to the right is anticipated on migration. The new government is also likely to strengthen the French pro-nuclear push, and apply a more protectionist approach to trade policy.

Barnier will deliver his inaugural policy address to the National Assembly on 1 October. The leftist New Popular Front (NFP) is expected to present a no-confidence motion. The motion is unlikely to succeed without backing from the far-right National Rally (RN), who is still on the fence. The RN is demanding stricter policies on issues such as migration in exchange for its support for the new government.

5. German coalition government increasingly shaky

Germany's coalition government looks increasingly unstable after last Sunday's Brandenburg election. While Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats (SPD) narrowly outperformed the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), coalition partners the Free Democratic Party (FDP) and the Greens fared poorly. Greens party leaders resigned, while the FDP has threatened to leave the coalition, demanding decisive action on migration, growth and financial stability by 21 December.

If the government falls, general elections could be held early next year, ahead of the scheduled September 2025 date. Current polls suggest a likely return to power for the centre-right Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU).

II. Key institutional milestones

Date	Event
4 - 12 November (exp)	European Commissioners-designate hearings
25 - 28 November (exp)	European Parliament vote on the new Commission
1 December (exp)	New European Commission takes office
1 December	New European Council President takes office