



Bulletin

September 2025 Edition

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Editors' Report

Welcome to the latest Bulletin from the European Studies Association of Australia and New Zealand (ESAANZ)!

After a brief hiatus, we are pleased to announce that the Bulletin is back—and will now be released on a consistent quarterly basis.

We are also excited to introduce our current Executive Committee:

- **President and Treasurer:** Associate Professor Gosia Klatt
 - **Vice-President:** Dr Serena Kelly
 - **Secretary:** Dr Mathew Harvey
- **ANZJES Representative:** Mathew Doidge
- **Membership Manager:** Anna Christoforou
- **Social Media Manager:** May Simpson
- **Website Manager:** Liam Kubisch
- **Newsletter Co-editors:** Paige Eder, Imogen Donnelly
and Isabela Cameron

We look forward to sharing updates, events, and insights with you in each edition.

Europe in the News

European Response to International Conflicts

Russian-Ukrainian War

While Russia continues to advance into Ukrainian territory, Ukrainian tactics allow only slow retreats which has been essential to give up minimal ground. These advances have seen approximately [68 Russian casualties per square kilometre](#) from May through to August; this being considered disproportionately high.

Ukrainian forces have shown considerable success through plans to cut off Russian fuel supply through drone attacks on their energy infrastructure with one attack halting [40% of an oil refinery's processing](#). These attacks have caused fuel and gasoline shortages with some Russian fuel station customers being [limited to 5 gallons of petrol each](#). Because Russia's economy and war effort relies so heavily on its strong oil, gas and energy production, Ukrainian tactics aim to choke off these supplies which could disrupt Russia's ability to fund its offensive attacks. (Sources below)

Zelenskyy has actively encouraged other nations to help in this approach through ending any trade with or reliance on Russia's energy exports. This would stop any cashflow going into the country which funds the war. [Most EU countries have banned imports however some are still reliant such as Hungary and Slovakia](#). However, changes may come impending the European Commission's 19th package of sanctions.

Multiple European countries such as [Poland the Czech Republic and Finland are calling for stronger bans](#) as well due to [Russian drones entering its airspace along with other countries such as Romania and Estonia](#). Russia has begun pushing boundaries into EU and NATO territory, suggesting a stronger and stricter approach against Russia may be necessary e.g. shooting down Russian fighter jets if any of them enter the NATO airspace.

Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The attack on Gaza has intensified in recent months with a current death toll of over 65,000 men, women and children since October 7, 2023. [On August 22, a famine was declared in Gaza](#) while on 16 September the United Nations [officially recognised Israel's attacks on Gaza as a genocide](#) and have found President Herzog, Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defence Minister Gallant to have incited the act of genocide.

EU countries attended the UN meeting where the recognition of Palestinian statehood was voted on. [The European Parliament voted for a resolution to ask EU Member States to recognise the State of Palestine](#). Although this was non-binding, multiple EU states have recognised the State of Palestine such as France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Malta and Portugal as of 30 September. [Around 10 EU countries already recognise its statehood](#), including Spain, Ireland, Slovenia, Sweden, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary Slovakia and Poland. Australia also recognised the State of Palestine while New Zealand's coalition government did not. This is against the views of a large number of Aotearoa's public who have engaged in widespread protests throughout the country in support of Palestine prior to the UN meeting; one of the largest being on [13 September through Auckland CBD with an estimation of 20,000 participants](#).

EU countries are split on their approach to the genocide in Gaza, some being reluctant to sanction Israel to as strong an extent as others. [The European Commission has proposed sanctions on Israeli extremist settlers and ministers and suspending trade provisions](#) in the

EU-Israel Association Agreement due to Israel's breach of Article 2 in relation to human rights principles. However, the approval of these sanctions within the Council may prove difficult as a majority vote is needed and the EU seems split about 50/50 with [some countries having strong ties to Israel such as Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic](#).

[Italy and Spain have become the first two countries to send their Navy to help the Global Sumud Flotilla](#), a nonviolent fleet which aims to break the Israeli blockade, in reaching the Gaza strip. These announcements were made after the fleet had been reportedly attacked by drones' multiple times. Many of the passengers are EU residents, perhaps enticing the member states to act in assisting the delivery of aid to Gaza and help the citizens in famine and without adequate health care.

International Trade Deals

EU–Indonesia Trade Agreement Nearing Finalisation

EU Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič has flown to Indonesia to finalise the long-anticipated EU–Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). This follows a [political agreement reached in July 2025](#) between European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto.

[Negotiations, launched in 2016](#), have progressed significantly, with the [19th round held in July 2024](#). Talks have since continued in an ad-hoc format. The final agreement is expected to be signed by the end of September 2025, with implementation planned for 2027.

The deal will provide the EU with access to a market of 280 million people and eliminate tariffs on approximately 80% of Indonesian exports to the EU, benefiting key sectors such as palm oil, footwear, textiles, and fisheries. In [2024, bilateral trade in goods reached €27.3 billion](#).

This move comes as the EU accelerates [trade diversification efforts following the US administration's decision to impose tariffs on EU imports—15% on most goods and 50% on steel and aluminium](#). The EU is also in active negotiations with India, although progress has been slower, with Commissioner Šefčovič describing India as a "tough" negotiator. However, environmental concerns loom over the CEPA. Tensions have risen due to the EU's deforestation regulation, which [restricts imports of goods linked to post-2020 deforestation](#). While implementation has been delayed to the end of 2025, Indonesia has pushed back, citing its palm oil exports. Šefčovič has reportedly assured "special treatment" for countries signing trade agreements.

Environmental groups warn the deal could fuel further deforestation. Greenpeace Indonesia cautions that remaining forests in palm oil concessions risk being cleared to meet rising demand.

Despite these challenges, the CEPA is being hailed as a strategic win for both sides, offering new economic opportunities and reinforcing EU presence in Southeast Asia amid shifting global trade dynamics.

European Politics

France

On the 9th of September, current [President Emmanuel Macron had appointed the defence minister Sébastien Lecornu, as the new French Prime Minister, 24 hours after a vote of confidence](#) had ousted François Bayrou as head of government. Lecornu becomes the [fifth Prime Minister in less than two years](#) that France has had, making a record underscoring the drift and disenchantment making the president's second term.

Macron "has tasked" Lecornu with ["consulting the political forces represented in Parliament to adopt a budget and build on the agreements essential for decisions in the coming months"](#).

As a result of this new shift in position, there is pressure on Lecornu to rethink budget cuts and act on wages. However, it is stated that Lecornu is yet to assemble a ministerial team and has not acknowledged the withdrawal of the budget cuts and rather has discussed with opposition parties to come to an agreement.

Citizens of France have taken to the public to protest and [strike against budget cut plans](#) implemented by French President Emmanuel Macron. People from different backgrounds and professions, including workers such as nurses and [pharmacists; students and teachers](#) from high schools and universities; and [public staff transport](#) have been involved. Protests held [more than 250 demonstrations](#) all over cities in France, ranging from Paris and Marseille to Lyon and Montpellier.

These protests have exemplified themselves as disruption to public transport and blocked roads and streets. Consequently, there have been clashes with police that involve tear gas and shields to disperse the number of crowds converging. In some cases, there have been some arrests of citizens.

Protests were still aimed at the new prime minister, although most of it is still aimed towards Macron. Latest news has concluded that further protests have been organised because of a lack of response and to put pressure on Lecornu to scrap his predecessor's austerity fiscal programme

Moldova

Recent news surrounding Moldova, focuses on their recent parliamentary elections that have sparked some heavy discussion. [President Maia Sandu's pro-European Party of Action and Solidarity is defending its parliamentary majority in a critical election that will decide whether the country remains on course to join the EU.](#) There are concerns in PAS successes, as of recent, they have struggled with delivering [anti-corruption and justice-reform promises](#) making it more difficult to connect with voters. As this party is the only major pro-EU party, their struggles may disadvantage the formation of a governing coalition and allowing for Euroscepticism and pro-Russian forces to take control in Chişinău, the capital of Moldova. Overall, this may be putting Moldova at further risk.

Successes of the pro-European party have circulated concern, but even more so with the assumption of Russian interference in the elections. It was stated that there were ["unprecedented" levels of Russian interference](#) to intervene with Moldova's pro-EU involvement, including [documented evidence of disinformation and vote-buying attempts.](#) In the build-up to voting, Moldovan authorities had [accused Russia of spending hundreds of millions of euros](#) to tilt the results.

Finally, recent news has shown that the pro-European party had won the elections, [securing 50.03% of the votes.](#) Despite there still being some obstacles in joining the EU, President

Maia Sandu has ambitions to [fully join the EU by 2030](#), and with this elections win, there is hope for a lesser struggle of involvement. These results not only benefit Moldova, but as well as the EU, as the [European Commission has already pledged €1.9bn \(£1.7bn\) in grants and cheap loans](#) to Moldova to build infrastructure, including roads and hospitals, to support in improving Moldova's economy and arrival into the European single market.

Moving forwards, President Sandu will not be in search to nominate a prime minister who will form a new government. The Moldova elections are necessary in present day EU politics, as their elections determine Moldova's involvement in the European Union, which could impact relationships within Moldova.

Updates from the European Union Delegation in Australia

10 September: EU and Australia open exploratory talks on association to Horizon Europe

The European Commission and the Australian Government have launched non-binding exploratory discussions in view of Australia's possible association to Horizon Europe, the EU's €95.5 billion flagship research and innovation programme. Australia and the EU have a long history of productive research collaboration: the first treaty-level science and technology agreement signed by the EU with an industrialised country was the Agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation signed with Australia in 1994 (and amended in 1999). Under this agreement the EU and Australia set bilateral research collaboration priorities and monitor cooperation via the Australia-EU Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee (JSTCC) meetings. The last meeting took place in Brussels on 11 April 2024. Association to the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation is the closest form of international cooperation in science and technology between the Union and a non-EU country. To date, 20 non-EU countries are associated to Horizon Europe.

[Read the news article here.](#)

10 September: 2025 State of the European Union Address by President von der Leyen

On 10 September, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen delivered the annual State of the Union Address ([watch here](#)), which sets out the EU's key priorities and vision for the year ahead. Notably, she referred to Australia's pioneering regulation on social media, highlighting it as an example for Europe in efforts to ensure online safety for children. President von der Leyen announced that she will commission a panel of experts by the end of 2025 to advise on possible next steps for the EU, stressing that any approach will be guided by the need to empower parents and prioritise children's safety online over commercial interests.

Transcript to the State of the Union Address is available [here](#).

16 September: Seventh EU-Australia Joint Committee Meeting

On 16 September, the 7th EU-Australia Joint Committee meeting convened in Canberra under the 2022 Framework Agreement to review and coordinate bilateral cooperation. Building on leaders' discussions in June, both sides welcomed the growing momentum in the partnership and outlined priorities ranging from security and defence to trade, research, digital cooperation, critical minerals, renewable energy and the green transition. The EU and Australia reaffirmed their shared commitment to addressing global challenges through the rules-based multilateral system, underlining cooperation on

responses to Russia's war against Ukraine, support for a stable Indo-Pacific, and the need for WTO reform. They also agreed to deepen collaboration ahead of COP30 on climate action and clean energy, to advance sustainable development in the Pacific, and to continue joint humanitarian and disaster relief efforts. The next Joint Committee meeting will take place in Brussels in 2026.

Read the Joint Press Release [here](#).

17 September: Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships announced

The fifth call of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships under Horizon Europe closed on 10 September 2025 with a record-breaking 17,058 proposals: an increase of almost 65% compared to 2024. With an indicative budget of €404.3 million, around 1,650 projects are expected to be funded. Interest in Australia and New Zealand remains strong: 189 applicants were based in Australia and 32 in New Zealand, while 116 Global Fellowship proposals included research placements in Australia and 15 in New Zealand. These figures underline the growing role of Australian and New Zealand institutions as partners in Europe's research and innovation ecosystem.

[Read more on the EURAXESS Australia & New Zealand website.](#)

Updates from the European Union Delegation in New Zealand

19 September: Acting Managing Director for the Asia and Pacific Department of the EEAS flew to New Zealand to Co-Chair the EU/NZ Joint Committee

On Friday the 19th of September, Paula Pampaloni, Acting Managing Director for the Asia and Pacific Department of the European External Action Service (EEAS) flew to New Zealand to Co-Chair the EU/NZ Joint Committee together with Rod Harris, Divisional Manager, Europe Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This committee meets once a year in Brussels or Wellington to review the comprehensive relationship between the EU and New Zealand enabled through the PARC Agreement. The meeting built on the discussions held in Brussels in June between NZ Prime Minister Luxon, EU Commission President von der Leyen and European Council President Costa. This forum facilitated fluid exchanges on major current issues such as climate, research, engagement on security and defence issues, collaboration in international forums to protect the rules-based order and cooperation in the Pacific, as well as other technical cooperation issues. This year's Committee acknowledged the successes of cooperation between the two likeminded parties, as well as the tangible positive results of the EU/NZ Free Trade Agreement one year after its entry into force. Should you wish to read more on this Committee, please find [here](#) the link to the official full outcome of this meeting.

The EU Delegation to New Zealand hosted this month the launch of Phase II of the International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) programme.

This programme is funded by the EU to promote city-to-city and region-to-region cooperation on sustainable urban development and regional innovation by building partnerships between EU and non-EU subnational entities at global scale. It provides a platform connecting cities and regions worldwide to tackle pressing issues together. The programme contributes to the delivery of EU international commitments under the Indo-Pacific and Global Gateway strategies, the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). IURC topics include inter-alia energy

transition, mobility, smart city, circular economy, climate adaptation, start-up ecosystems, open innovation, digitalisation and foodtech. Christchurch and New Plymouth (Taranaki), already active in Phase I, are now joined by Palmerston North (Manawātū) in this new phase. Representatives from the cities and regions met with Ambassador Lawrence Meredith and held discussions with the national IURC coordinator to launch this second Phase which will extend over the duration 2025-2027 and to share prior experience from Phase I. They will soon meet online with other participating cities and regions to facilitate the match-making process between EU and non-EU cities and regions. If you would like to find more information about the programme and its Phase II, you can find some [here](#).

In 2023, New Zealand became an associated country to Horizon Europe, the EU's flagship funding programme for research and innovation with a budget of €95.5 billion for 2021–2027.

This association allows New Zealand researchers, innovators, universities, companies, and other organisations to participate in Horizon Europe projects on an equal footing with their EU counterparts. New Zealand is associated to Pillar 2 (Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness) of Horizon Europe, which supports collaborative cutting-edge research and technological development across a wide range of fields, from health and digitalisation to climate action and sustainable food systems. By joining Horizon Europe, New Zealand is strengthening its scientific and innovation ties with Europe, opening new opportunities for collaboration to address global challenges while fostering competitiveness, sustainability, and resilience in both regions. You can find the successful Horizon Europe Pillar 2 projects with New Zealand partners [here](#).

The Delegation will be hosting on Friday 24 October 2025 a **European Union - New Zealand Business Summit in Auckland**. This Summit builds on the momentum of the EU-NZ Free Trade Agreement (in force since May 2024) and will focus on trade, technology, clean tech, infrastructure and aerospace. You can visit our website [here](#) to learn more about the Summit, the Panels and the other participants.

News from ANZJES

Australian and New Zealand Journal of European Studies (ANZJES) has just published its latest issue [here](#). In this issue we also continue to present student work from our region. This selection of non-peer reviewed policy briefs are the work of students at the University of Melbourne's Faculty of Education.

This latest issue includes:

- An examination of the legal and political frameworks shaping the digitisation of bordering in Australia and the European Union;
- An exploration of the impact of the European Union Deforestation Regulation on the New Zealand forestry sector;
- And a consideration of Kosovo's perspectives on, and challenges to, integration into the European Union.

Upcoming ESAANZ Events

ESAANZ Annual Conference 2025

The European Studies Association of Australia and New Zealand (ESAANZ) invites panel and paper proposals for the 2025 conference in a hybrid format at the University of Melbourne, Australia on 21 November 2025.

This year's theme is: **Continuity and change: Europe in time of heightened geopolitical uncertainty.**

For more information follow the [link](#).

Call for papers

The [Australian and New Zealand Journal of European Studies \(ANZJES\)](#) invites general submissions for forthcoming issues in 2025 and 2026. *ANZJES* welcomes original empirical, theoretical and methodological research examining post-war Europe and European issues particularly from the social sciences, history, law, cultural studies and the humanities. Submissions may be in the form of original **articles** (6–8000 words) or **research notes** (2–3000 words). The journal also welcomes relevant **review essays**.

Recent publications and achievements by ESAANZ members and colleagues

Author	Article
Gosia Klatt	Skura, M., Klatt, G., & Dobkowska, J. (2024). Pedagogy as a political action – discussing controversial issues in Polish schools. <i>Teachers and Teaching</i> . Doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2024.2447794
Serena Kelly	Doidge, M., & Kelly, S. (2024). Between tides: examining China discourses in Pacific Island news media. <i>The Pacific Review</i> , 38(3), 534-563.
And	Doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2024.2412010
Mathew Doidge	Doidge, M., & Kelly, S. (2025). War of words; China's role in the Pacific. <i>New Zealand International Review</i> , 50(3), 11-14. Link: here

Jean Monnet Erasmus Module – A/Prof. Gosia Klatt, the University of Melbourne

Received the Erasmus module grant from the European Commission for years 2025-2028 titled: European Education Systems and Policies (EESaP). The JM module EESaP will be available to all students at the Faculty of Education (FoE) will provide a comprehensive overview of the European Union, introducing and exploring policy and practice innovations, advancements and challenges in European education through a 2-week study tour. [See here.](#)

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