

Chronology 2023¹

January

- 1 January Sweden takes over the presidency of the Council of the EU
Croatia becomes the 20th member of the Eurozone and joins the Schengen area
Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is sworn in as the president of Brazil for the third time in his life
- 4 January Internet privacy regulators in Ireland fine Meta Platforms €390 million for violations of the General Data Protection Regulation on Facebook and Instagram
- 8 January China reopens its borders to foreign visitors, ending restrictions that started in March 2020
After President Lula's inauguration on 1 January, supporters of former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro assault the Brazilian National Congress, the Supreme Federal Court and the Presidential Palace of Planalto
- 19 January Mass protests and strikes break out in France after the government proposed to raise the retirement age from 62 to 64. Demonstrations will continue until the beginning of June
- 22 January Three days after the announcement by Jacinda Ardern that she would be stepping down as leader of the party and prime minister of New Zealand, the Labour Party unanimously elects Chris Hipkins, education and public service minister, to succeed her
- 26 January FEPS launches the Progressive Yearbook 2023
- 28 January Petr Pavel, retired general and former NATO Military Committee chair, is elected with 58% as president of the Czech Republic – defeating former Prime Minister Andrej Babiš in the second round

February

- 3 February Bulgaria's National Assembly is dissolved after the failure to form a government
The 24th EU-Ukraine Summit takes place in Kyiv. It is the first one since the February 2022 Russian aggression and since the European Council granted Ukraine the status of candidate country to the EU

¹ Special thanks to Marianne Polge for compiling this chronology.

- 5 February Nikos Christodoulides is elected president of Cyprus
- 6 February A series of earthquakes in Turkey and Syria kill around 59,000 people. This earthquake is among the deadliest of the 21st century, and the deadliest worldwide since the 2010 Haiti earthquake
- 11 February The president of Moldova, Maia Sandu, appoints Dorin Recean as the new prime minister
- 14 February The European Parliament approves a regulation banning the sale of new CO₂-emitting cars after 2035, to reach the goal of climate neutrality by 2050
- 15 February Nicola Sturgeon announces her resignation as the first minister of Scotland and leader of the Scottish National Party
- 16 February The Russian Duma decides in favour of the termination of Russia's participation in 21 Council of Europe conventions
- 20 February US President Joe Biden pays an unannounced visit to Kyiv to meet Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the eve of the anniversary of the Russian invasion (announcing a further \$0.5 billion aid package)
- 21 February Russian President Vladimir Putin announces the suspension of Russia's participation in the New START nuclear arms reduction treaty with the US
- 26 February Former MEP Elly Schlein is elected leader of the Italian Democratic Party (first woman in this position), defeating Stefano Bonaccini, the governor of Emilia-Romagna
- 27 February The EU and the UK announces the Windsor Framework, a comprehensive package that addresses the difficulties in the operation of the Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland following Brexit
- 28 February A train crash in Thessaly (Greece) causes 57 deaths and dozens of injuries. The accident leads to nationwide protests and strikes against the condition of Greek railways

March

- 1 March The prime minister of Romania, Nicolae Ciucă, unveils an artificial-intelligence-run 'honorary advisor' named Ion, which will synthesise submissions by Romanians relating to their "opinions and desires", and makes it the country the first in the world to have an AI advisor
- 5 March Elections are held in Estonia. The Reform Party and the Centre Party win 34 and 23, respectively, of the 101 seats in the Riigikogu. SDE comes fifth with nine MPs
- 10 March The National People's Congress unanimously re-elects Xi Jinping as president of the People's Republic of China for a third term, following the abolishment of the term limit on the presidency in 2018

- The Silicon Valley Bank, the 16th largest bank in the US, fails, creating the largest bank failure since the 2008 financial crisis
- 14 March The artificial intelligence research lab OpenAI launches GPT-4, the latest version of the system that powers Chat-GPT
- 17 March The International Criminal Court issues an arrest warrant against Russian President Vladimir Putin
- 20 March The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change releases the synthesis report of its Sixth Assessment Report on climate change. It is described as one of the most alarming reports on climate change yet
- 23 March World Athletics, the global governing body for athletics, bans trans women who have gone through male puberty from female competitions
- 26 March Large-scale protests break out in Israel after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fired the defence minister, who criticised the government's judicial reform
- 29 March Brazil and China sign an agreement to trade in their own currencies, stopping the usage of US dollars as an intermediary
- 29-30 March The second Summit for Democracy is co-hosted by President Biden and the governments of Costa Rica, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea and the Republic of Zambia
- 30 March Donald Trump is indicted by a grand jury on 31 counts of falsifying business records, making him the first current or former US president to be charged with a crime

April

- 1 April Russia assumes rotating presidency of the United Nations Security Council
- 2 April Elections are held in Bulgaria. Former Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov's party GERB wins the elections, narrowly bypassing the 'We Continue the Change' party of Kiril Petkov
- General elections are held in Finland. The centre-right National Coalition Party wins 20.7% of the votes, the Finns Party ends second with 20.1% and SDP third with 19.9%
- Jakov Milatovic from the 'Europe Now!' movement defeats incumbent Milo Dukanovic and is elected president of Montenegro with 60.1% of the votes
- 4 April Finland joins NATO
- 12 April FEPS, Das Progressive Zentrum and the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung co-host an expert meeting on a joint transatlantic vision for economic policy as part of the Progressive Economics Network, in Washington DC in the margins of the IMF Spring Meetings

- 14 April The European Space Agency launches the Jupiter Ice Moons Explorer to search for life in the Jovian system
- 15 April The last power plants close in Germany, ending nuclear power in the country after 50 years
- 24 April The Council of the EU adopts a regulation to improve and digitalise cross-border judicial cooperation
- The Council of the EU adopts the pay transparency directive to address the gender pay gap
- 25 April US incumbent President Joe Biden formally announces his re-election campaign
- The Council of the EU adopts key legislations that are part of the Fit-for-55 policy package

May

- 1 May San Francisco based First Republic Bank fails, surpassing the March collapse of the Silicon Valley Bank and becoming the second largest in US history
- 2 May The Greek Supreme Civil and Criminal Court bans the far-right National Party from participating in the upcoming general elections – considering it a continuation of the Golden Dawn
- 3 May The S&D Group in the European Parliament publishes the EU Charter of Women’s Rights
- 5 May The WHO declares the end of Covid-19 as a global health emergency
- 6 May The coronation of Charles III is held in Westminster Abbey in London
- 12 May Mass peaceful demonstrations against President Aleksandar Vučić take place in Belgrade
- 19-21 May The 49th G7 summit takes place in Hiroshima, Japan. Volodymyr Zelenskyy attends the summit as a guest
- 21 May Snap parliamentary elections are held in Greece
- 23 May FEPS launches the Open Progressive University with an inaugural lecture by Paul Magnette
- 28 May Incumbent President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan defeats Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu – leader of the Republican People’s Party (CHP), Turkey’s main opposition party – in the Turkish presidential election, starting his third term
- 31 May Edgars Rinkēvičs is elected president of Latvia

June

- 1 June The second summit of the European Political Community takes place in Bulboaca, Moldova

- 2 June The Council of the EU approves the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence
- 5 June The Social Democratic Party of Austria announces Andreas Babler as winner of the leadership contest (after wrongly announcing Hans Peter Dorkozil)
- 6 June A dam on the Dnipro River (Kakhovka) is destroyed in the Russian-controlled region of Kherson, threatening the area with devastating floodwaters
- 11 June Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni meet in Tunis with President Kais Saied to discuss a partnership between the EU and Tunisia to manage migration and stabilise the North African country
- 14 June The shipwreck of a boat carrying migrants takes place off the coast of Pylos (Greece). 82 people were killed, and 500 others are presumed dead, tragically surpassing the 2013 Lampedusa massacre
- 15 June Social Democratic leader Marcel Ciolacu takes over as prime minister of Romania
- 16 June FEPS General Assembly takes place in Brussels
- 19 June The UN General Assembly unanimously adopts the High Seas Treaty, the first-ever agreement aimed at marine conservation in international waters
- 20 June Estonia passes a bill legalising same-sex marriage and same-sex adoption by 2024, becoming the first Baltic and post-Soviet state to do so
- 23 June The Wagner Group begins a mutiny, before withdrawing the next day, after a settlement brokered by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko
- 25 June Greeks go to the polls for the second time, after the May 2023 elections did not result in any party gaining an outright majority. New Democracy leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis gains the absolute majority
- 27 June The Council of the EU adopts a legislative act that approves the creation of a European Union Drugs Agency
- 28 June The European Parliament celebrates its 70th anniversary
- 30 June The UN Security Council unanimously votes to end the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali

July

- 1 July Spain takes over the rotating presidency of the EU
The European Space Agency successfully launches the Euclid space telescope to study dark matter and dark energy

- 8 July In the Netherlands, Prime Minister Mark Rutte announces his resignation following the collapse of his government over disagreements over asylum policy
- 9 July The EU and New Zealand sign a free trade agreement, increasing bilateral trade
- 10 July The European Commission announces a new data transfer pact with the US aimed at resolving legal uncertainties that companies face when transferring personal data
- 12 July At the NATO summit in Vilnius, G7 officials announce an international framework for Ukraine's long-term security to deter Russia from future aggression
The European Parliament votes on the Nature Restoration Law
- 13 July The International Olympic Committee says that athletes from Russia and Belarus will not receive invitations to the Summer Olympic Games in Paris and will only be able to compete as neutral athletes
- 14 July SAG-AFTRA, the US actors' union, announces the beginning of a strike against major film and TV studios in protest against the use of generative AI and ownership of work, among others
- 16 July The president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and the prime ministers of Italy and the Netherlands, Giorgia Meloni and Mark Rutte, fly to Tunis again to sign the EU-Tunisia memorandum of understanding with President Saied. The deal will raise controversy due to the decline of democracy and the sharp criticism over human rights abuses and racism towards migrants in the North African country
- 17-18 July The EU-CELAC Summit takes place in Brussels
- 23 July Thousands of tourists evacuate Rhodes (Greece) due to wildfires and a major heatwave
After a general election, the conservative People's Party becomes the largest party in the Spanish Congress of Deputies but fails to reach a majority, and the vote results in a hung parliament
- 25 July The Council of the EU adopts the regulation known as the Chips Act to strengthen Europe's semi-conductor ecosystem
The EU Council adopts the energy-efficiency directive to reduce final energy consumption by 11.7% by 2030
The EU Council adopts the FuelEU maritime initiative, a regulation part of the Fit-for-55 package, which seeks to reduce the carbon footprint of the maritime sector

August

- 1 August The world's oceans reach a new record high temperature of 20.96 °C, exceeding the previous record in 2016. July is the hottest recorded month for global average surface air temperature
- 18 August The USA, Japan and South Korea agree to sign a security pact
- 20 August Spain's women's football team wins its first Women's World Cup
- 22-24 August The 15th annual BRICS summit takes place in South Africa. It decides to admit six new members in 2024: Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates
- 23 August India's Chandrayaan-3 is the first spacecraft to land near the South Pole of the Moon
Yevgeny Viktorovich Prigozhin, leader of the Wagner Group, is killed in a plane crash in Russia
- 28-29 August The Strategic Forum is held in Bled (Slovenia). Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama cracks a joke about the likely involvement of Putin in the death of Prigozhin

September

- 1 September Sanna Marin is replaced by Antti Lindtman as Social Democratic leader in Finland, after suffering electoral defeat in April
- 8 September A powerful earthquake of magnitude 6.8 strikes Morocco
- 9-10 September The 18th G20 summit takes place in New Delhi. The African Union becomes the 21st permanent member
- 12-30 September The 78th session of the UN General Assembly is held in New York. The theme of the year is "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its sustainable development goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability for all"
- 13 September President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen delivers her State of the Union address and announces that Mario Draghi will work on European economic competitiveness
- 14 September The European Central Bank raises eurozone interest rates to an all-time high of 4%
- 17-20 September FEPS Annual Autumn Academy takes place in Brussels
- 19-20 September Azerbaijan launches a large-scale military offensive against the self-declared state of Artsakh. The move is seen as a violation of the 2020 ceasefire agreement
- 19-25 September The High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly runs in New York

- 20 September The High Seas Treaty, also known as the Agreement on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction or 'BBNJ', is signed in New York, during the United Nations High-Level Week
- 22 September Ukrainian President Zelensky visits the Parliament of Canada. During the visit, House Speaker Anthony Rota introduces 98-year-old Yaroslav Hunka, who fought for a Nazi military unit, as a Canadian-Ukrainian war hero. Rota will step down four days later and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will offer an unreserved apology
- 30 September Robert Fico's SMER party wins the elections in Slovakia. Peter Pellegrini's HLAS party comes third

October

- 5-6 October The European Political Community and EU summits take place in Granada, Spain
- 6 October The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to Narges Mohammadi "for her fight against the oppression of women in Iran and her fight to promote human rights and freedom for all"
- 7 October Hamas launches its biggest attacks against Israel and takes around 240 Israeli citizens hostage, carrying them across the Gaza border
- 8 October The Israeli Security Cabinet formally declares the country at war, for the first time since the Yom Kippur war in 1973
- 9 October The Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences is awarded to Claudia Goldin "for having advanced our understanding of women's labour market outcomes"
- The Council of the EU adopts a new regulation to reduce the carbon footprint of the aviation sector, the RefuelEU initiative, which is part of the Fit-for-55 package
- 11 October The Silver Rose Award is presented in Brussels to Justiça Ambiental JA! and Margot Wallström
- 14 October In the New Zealand general election, the National Party wins the elections, while the Labour Party receives the worst results for an incumbent ruling party in modern New Zealand history
- Bernie Sanders appears in the Dutch campaign alongside GroenLinks/PvdA candidate Frans Timmermans
- 15 October General elections take place in Poland. The opposition wins the majority in Sejm (460 MPs) and in the Senate (100 senators), putting an end to the authoritarian regime of Law and Justice (PiS)
- 17 October The Council of the EU adopts a directive to enhance cooperation between national taxation authorities, amending the rules on administrative cooperation in the area of taxation

- An explosion occurs at the Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza, resulting in the deaths of displaced Palestinians who were seeking shelter there
- 20-21 October The Young European Socialists Congress takes place in Barcelona
- 22 October At the Swiss federal election, the Swiss People's Party retains its majority in the National Council

November

- 1 November The first AI Safety Summit takes place in the UK. 28 countries sign an agreement on how to manage the riskiest forms of artificial intelligence
- 6 November The death toll in Gaza surpasses 10,000
- 7 November Portuguese Prime Minister António Costa announces his resignation amid a corruption probe
- 9 November The European Parliament adopted the text of the European Data Act
- 10-11 November The Party of the European Socialists (PES) Congress takes place in Málaga, Spain, on the topic "Europe in the lead: Progressive solutions to global challenges"
- 14-17 November Chinese President Xi Jinping visits the US for the first time since 2017. China and the US agree to reopen their suspended military communications and to cooperate against the increasing climate crisis
- 17 November The global average temperature temporarily exceeds 2°C above the pre-industrial average for the first time in recorded history
Pedro Sanchez is sworn in as prime minister in a brief ceremony with King Felipe VI of Spain
- 19 November Javier Milei wins the presidential elections in Argentina
- 22 November Israel and Hamas agree to a four-day ceasefire, the first one since the 7 October attack. Israeli and Palestinian hostages will be released in exchange for each other
At the Dutch general election, Geert Wilders' far-right Party for Freedom (PVV) wins the most seats
- 27 November The Council of the EU adopts the Data Act
- 30 November
- 12 December COP28 takes place in Dubai

December

- 7 December The 24th EU-China Summit takes place in Beijing. It is the first in-person summit since 2019
- 8 December The US vetoes a UN Security Council draft resolution, which called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza

- After months of intensive trilogue negotiations, the European Parliament and Council reach political agreement on the Artificial Intelligence Act
- 12 December The German government coalition led by Olaf Scholz overcomes budgetary deadlock and disarray created by a court decision
Donald Tusk wins a confidence vote in the Polish parliament and forms a coalition with the participation of the Polish Left Party
At the COP28 climate summit in Dubai, participants reach a consensus to “transition away” from fossil fuels
The European Parliament 2023 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought is awarded to Jina Mahsa Amini and the Woman, Life, Freedom movement in Iran
- 13 December The European Commission allows Hungary to access €10 billion, recognising progress in judicial reforms
- 14 December The European Council grants Georgia candidate status and decides to open access negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova (overcoming opposition from Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán)
- 17 December Parliamentary elections are held in Serbia. The Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) claims victory, while the opposition complains that there were a lot of irregularities
- 20 December After three years of negotiations, political agreement on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum is found, opening the door for formal adoption in 2024
- 21 December 15 people are killed and 25 injured in a mass shooting by a postgraduate history student at the school at Charles University in Prague. It is the deadliest mass shooting in the Czech Republic
- 26 December Wolfgang Schäuble, German politician, member of the CDU, former finance minister and Bundestag speaker, dies at 81
- 27 December Jacques Delors, French Socialist and former president of the European Commission and one of the most important architects of the Single Market and the euro, dies at 98
- 31 December In his New Year’s speech, Chinese President Xi Jinping says that China-Taiwan reunification is inevitable
Queen Margrethe II of Denmark announces her abdication