

THE POL ICY PRIS M

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INTRO

The Policy Prism is a quarterly newsletter providing the latest transatlantic legislative news to policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic.

In this edition of The Policy Prism, we'll provide the latest update on President Zelenskyy's speeches around Europe and the U.S., a brief snapshot of the 118th Congress, and Europe's response to the Biden Administration's Inflation Reduction Act, before finishing with a quick fact on NORAD.

Happy reading!

SECTION I: U.S.-EU



WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS: THE POWER OF SPEECH

KEY POINTS

- Zelenskyy has mastered the art of communication, carefully tailoring his speeches to the audiences he addresses.
- In front of the European Parliament, he extensively discussed protecting a “European way of life.”
- The speeches are an efficient tool in rallying support from allies.

Rallying a nation in a time of war requires a leader who knows how to evoke powerful emotions from their own people. Franklin Roosevelt’s address to Congress following the attack on Pearl Harbor and Winston Churchill’s June 1940 speech in the House of Commons (“We shall never surrender...”) are examples that may readily come to mind. Aside from being powerful moments in history, these two orations have also become references for another statesman: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Yet he must go beyond stirring the passions of his own people and also muster continued, strong international support.

Zelenskyy has mastered this art of communication. Every speech he delivers is infused with the power of allusion. He taps into national traumas and historical memories that rouse emotions. He always has a target audience and aims his words directly at them.

His speeches benefit from the assistance of Dmytro Lytvyn, a former television journalist and political analyst for the president’s political party. As another

of Zelenskyy’s advisors revealed, Lytvyn “collects the president’s ideas each day. He works as a mind or sense collector.” Many of Zelenskyy’s advisors come from his days in television, and presidential speeches reflect the nexus of entertainment and politics. They successfully rally national and international listeners.

On February 9, Zelenskyy delivered another incredibly powerful speech to the European Parliament, his first in-person address to a Brussels audience. Interestingly, Zelenskyy’s use of the phrase “European way of life” captured the attention of the legislators. This was perhaps a bold approach since the words were hotly contested when European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen first spoke them when announcing, in 2019, plans for a portfolio to “protect the European way of life”. The move ignited hefty debate, with some viewing it as anti-migrant. Zelenskyy still deployed the phrase four years later, the context having vastly changed as the Kremlin assaults European values. Zelenskyy championed in his speech the European way of life as being “a way home” for a nation fighting for those values and fervently defending itself against “anti-European” forces.

In a subsequent address to the British parliament Zelenskyy pivoted from values to a battle cry. He opened with “I have come here and stand before you on behalf of the Brave” and ended with a call for “Combat aircrafts—for Ukraine! Wings—for freedom!” Zelenskyy emphasized resilience and repeatedly invoked Churchill. The address was tailor-made for his audience, and he made reference to moments at which Britain fought for its own survival.

On the first anniversary of the war, Zelenskyy's first call was to U.S. President Joe Biden, though they had met just days earlier during [the first visit to Kyiv by a U.S. president in 15 years](#). At that gathering, Zelenskyy stated that preserving "the international order" and the "democratic world" rests on a Ukrainian victory. The phrases are key buzzwords to a Washington audience who continues to view the conflict in autocracy-versus-democracy terms.

Zelenskyy captivates each of his audiences because he understands the power of the right words to spark action. And his speeches are effective: Ukraine is on track to EU membership, and the United Kingdom is the second-largest donor to Ukraine. Only the United States has done more. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen recently visited Zelenskyy to discuss a [\\$10 billion aid package](#) for Ukraine.

International support for Ukraine may dwindle as the fighting continues, and Zelenskyy may well have to continue his powerful appeals to different audiences if cracks in the Western alliance begin to emerge. Winning hearts and minds remains a critical component of defeating Russia and ensuring "Slava Ukraini".



SECTION II: HAPPENING ON THE HILL



THE 118TH CONGRESS: WHO'S ON THE ROSTER?

KEY POINTS

- The 118th Congress is the most diverse in terms of race, ethnicity and gender.
- The “freshman” class of Congress is the youngest to date, with many faces that might be worth following as Congress tackles different issues.

After a drawn-out election fight for House Speaker, the 118th Congress is ready to get down to business. But just because it's ready to, doesn't mean it will. Many predict a turbulent two years for the legislature.

So, [who comprises Congress now?](#)

The 118th Congress is the most diverse in terms of [race](#), [ethnicity](#) and [gender](#). Members of ethnic minorities occupy 121 out of 435 House seats, and about 80% of them are Democrats. In the Senate it's just 12 of 100. Women comprise 28% of the new Congress, a record high for Congress. The “freshman” class, or newcomers, of the 118th Congress is the youngest ever. Their average age is between 46 and 50.

In the House, Republicans now hold 222 seats and Democrats 213. Seventy-six are freshmen. Here are some who may merit watching:

Congresswoman Becca Balint (Democrat-Vermont) is the [first woman to represent Vermont in Congress and the state's first openly gay elected](#)

[representative](#). Vermont is the last state to elect a congresswoman.

Congressman Maxwell Frost (Democrat-Florida), aged 25, makes history as Congress' first member of [Generation Z](#). Frost ran on a platform largely focused [on combatting gun violence](#), which has emerged as a top priority of his generation.

Elected to the House and running on a [“common sense”](#) platform, **Congressman George Santos (Republican-New York)** has been marred by a series of scandals since his victory. Revelations that Santos fabricated large parts of his resume and financial background have led 66% of his district's voters, [including 58% of Republicans](#), to call for his resignation. Given the slim Republican majority in the House, Santos' seat, previously held by a Democrat, is key to his party's leadership.

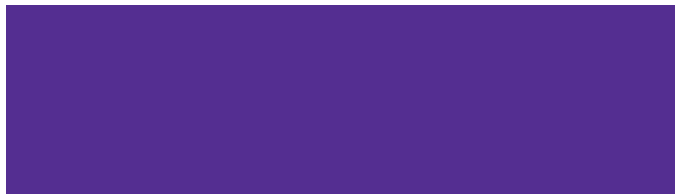
In the Senate, Democrats now hold 51 seats (including independents who caucus with the Democrats). Republicans hold 49. Seven are new senators. Here are some freshmen who may merit watching:

Senator John Fetterman (Democrat-Pennsylvania) made headlines after suffering a stroke during the campaign, leading some to question his fitness for office. Fetterman recently checked into a hospital for clinical depression. The length of his absence from the Senate is unclear, but it may be [several weeks](#). Fetterman sits on several committees on which Democrats have a one-seat majority, and his absence could delay legislative

initiatives. If Fetterman were to resign, recently elected Democratic Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro would select a successor. Fetterman's health status has [added fuel to a debate](#) about the need to test politicians for mental competency.

Senator Markwayne Mullin (Republican-Oklahoma), as a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, became the first Native American senator in nearly two decades. While a fresh face to the Senate, Mullin is not new to Congress. He served in the House of Representatives and was active in the Congressional Native American Caucus. Oklahoma is home to the [third-largest Native American population in the U.S.](#)

Senator Katie Britt (Republican-Alabama) is Alabama's [first female senator. She is also the youngest-ever Republican woman in the chamber.](#) She has named agriculture, most notably food insecurity, as a top priority. Food insecurity has recently increased in Alabama, affecting 24.1% of the population in 2020, up from [14.2% in 2018](#). Almost [2 million people](#) in the state live in a food desert.



SECTION III: SPOTLIGHT ON STRASBOURG



SINGLE MARKET SAGA

KEY POINTS

- The Inflation Reduction Act has prompted internal debate in the European Union on how to respond within their own single market.
- Solutions offered include a European Sovereignty Fund under the auspices of a European Green Deal Industrial Plan.

Europe is in the throes of responding to the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Brussels believes the U.S. legislation, which allows subsidies for the production of electric vehicles and other clean technologies, disadvantages European companies, creates a less competitive international market and violates World Trade Organization rules. Officials have [travelled across the Atlantic](#) and created an [EU-U.S. task force](#) to discuss the issue, but the EU must determine the IRA's impact on its single market. Competition law is a sensitive political issue in Europe as the size of French and German industries are often seen as having an unfair competitive advantage.

The European single market has been stressed lately. The COVID-19 pandemic led to challenges to single-market rules on the basis of extraordinary circumstances. National governments also loosened state aid policies and provided significant financial assistance to domestic initiatives. French President Emmanuel Macron has called for [reforming the single market and modernizing its competition rules](#). He, with then-German Chancellor Angela Merkel, argued that the single market should be structured to build ["European champions"](#).

The IRA has exacerbated the stress and widened the divide between France and Germany and other EU member states. The two countries [initially advocated an EU subsidies package](#) as a response, but the others argued that this would benefit German industry. The proposed package would have loosened state aid rules, which are meant to ensure a level playing field.

The European Commission suggested a solution to the dispute by proposing a European Sovereignty Fund to ensure, according to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, that ["the future of industry is made in Europe"](#). The fund would also encourage collective financing for areas of strategic interest to the bloc. The proposal [has divided member states](#) into three groups. One rejects relaxing state aid rules and common financing. A second supports relaxing state aid rules but not common borrowing. The third supports both provisions wholeheartedly.

The European single market turned 30 years old at the beginning of the year. It now covers [447 million consumers and 23 million companies](#). Brussels' ultimate response to the IRA may still be unknown, but it is likely to have significant ramifications.

Readers with additional interest in European concerns about the IRA should review the [previous issue of Policy Prism](#).

SECTION IV: HISTORY IN THE PRESENT



NORAD: UFOS AND SANTA WATCH

The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) made news most recently for shooting down unidentified objects in American and Canadian airspace. NORAD is a [“bi-national United States and Canadian organization charged with the missions of aerospace warning and aerospace control for North America”](#).

NORAD is a familiar name to many families, millions of whom turn to the agency every holiday season for its Santa tracker. [More than 11 million visitors from more than 200 countries](#) turned to the system on Christmas Eve 2020 to follow Santa as he traveled around the world.

How did NORAD start tracking Santa? Entirely by accident. In 1955, a local newspaper in Colorado misprinted the number “to call Santa”. The published number was actually that of the NORAD (at the time known as the Continental Air Defense Command Operations Center) call center. Local children quickly dialed in to know Santa’s whereabouts. NORAD soon provided the information, starting a tradition that continues to the “present” day.