EUROPE EXPLAINED

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Vol. 1 • No. 18 • Friday, November 20, 2026 • London, UK • 2 Pages

TOP STORY • UK AND THE EU

Britain and the EU Strike a Deal That Opens Doors for Young People

About 100,000 young Britons a year could live, work or study in Europe for up to three years.

Written and fact-checked by AI · News Pebbles

Ten years after 52% of British voters chose to leave the European Union, Britain has agreed to move closer again. On Friday, Prime Minister Andy Burnham met EU leaders in Brussels, where the 27-member bloc has its headquarters, and agreed a package of deals.

For teenagers, the key part is a Youth Experience Scheme. Each year about 100,000 young Britons will be able to spend up to three years in EU countries travelling, working or studying, and about 100,000 young Europeans can do the same in Britain. "Brexit did take away opportunity from young people," Burnham said. Talks on cutting tuition fees for European students at UK universities are still to come. Under an earlier agreement, the UK is also due to rejoin the Erasmus+ student exchange programme in 2027.

The deal also reaches the shopping basket. From March 2028 the UK will follow EU food standards rules, which ministers say will cut paperwork; Treasury analysis suggests this could add about 0.5% to the UK economy. Britain will also join the EU's carbon market for electricity, and the two sides promised closer cooperation on defence.

Not everyone approves: Oliver Lewis of the Stay Out campaign called it "a humiliating spectacle for the Prime Minister." Burnham is still bound by Keir Starmer's promise not to rejoin the EU's single market or customs union, and a bill to put the deal into law is due next week.

A SUMMIT WITH THE NEIGHBOURS



Burnham went to Brussels, home of the EU's headquarters, to agree the deal with the bloc's leaders.

WHY THIS MATTERS

For anyone at secondary school now, this could decide how easy it is to live, work or study in an EU country after school, and it shows Britain rebuilding ties with its neighbours without rejoining.

WORLD • SHENZHEN SUMMIT

Big Three Leave Ukraine Off Their List, and Berlin Answers Back

Trump, Xi and Putin agreed on oil, the UN and nuclear risk. Europe says it will not be carved up again.

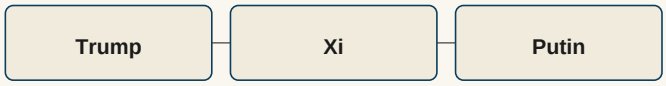
On Thursday, US President Donald Trump, China's President Xi Jinping and Russia's President Vladimir Putin held their first-ever three-way meeting, at Kylin Villa in Shenzhen, China, on the sidelines of the APEC summit. They talked for about an hour and a half, then issued a short joint statement. It promised to reform the United Nations, to increase oil and gas production "for the benefit of all countries," to stop the International Criminal Court abusing its powers, and to avoid nuclear war.

What the statement left out mattered most to Europe. It did not mention Russia's war in Ukraine, now in its fifth year, and neither Ukraine's government nor any European official was in the room. Putin ruled out talks with Ukraine after a Ukrainian strike on the bridge linking Russia to Crimea, and said Ukraine and Europe were "not yet ready" to compromise. Trump, by contrast, rated the meeting a 12 on a scale of 0 to 10.

Europe answered from Berlin on the same day. Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz hosted Ukraine's backers, known as the Coalition of the Willing, including Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, France's Emmanuel Macron and the UK's Andy Burnham. Merz called Shenzhen a "photo op" and recalled the Yalta Conference of 1945, when, he said, Europe was "parcelled up." He promised: "we won't allow anything like that to happen again."

A seat at the table may still be possible. Merz said new peace talks involving Europe, Ukraine, Russia and the US could happen soon, naming the UAE as a possible venue, and Trump's envoy Jared Kushner said Russia had agreed to talks that include Europe. Putin made a different offer: he proposed that European envoys come to Moscow.

WHO'S INVOLVED?



Trilateral means three parties

THREE LEADERS, ONE TABLE *Shenzhen, 19 November*

The three leaders met for about an hour and a half; neither Ukraine nor any European official was there.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Connect the dots: In February 1945, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin met at Yalta, and Merz says Europe's future was divided up there. That is why he reached for Yalta this week, and why he handed leaders pieces of the Berlin Wall, which he said brought "oppression, insecurity and a lack of peace."

*New to this story? Catch up with **The story so far** on Read & Play.*

UNITED KINGDOM • PRICES

Record Diesel Price Pushes UK Inflation Up to 3.6%

Fuel costs climb with the Middle East conflict, while food price rises slow to their gentlest since 2021.

Inflation measures how fast prices are rising. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) said on Wednesday that prices in October were 3.6% higher than a year earlier, up from 3.5% in September: the fourth monthly rise in a row.

Fuel did most of the pushing. The average litre of diesel rose 7p in a month to 199.5p, the highest since ONS records began in 1996. The rise is linked to the conflict in the Middle East, which has pushed up energy prices around the world.

Food tells a different story: its price rises slowed to 0.9%, the slowest since September 2021. Earlier this month the Bank of England raised interest rates to 4%, and it warns inflation could reach around 5% by the middle of next year.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When inflation stays high, the Bank of England may raise interest rates, which changes what families pay on mortgages and earn on savings.

Also in United Kingdom

• Energy bills: a forecast says the typical price cap could rise 26% to about £2,166 in January.

• Youth jobs: 981,000 people aged 16 to 24 in England and Wales are out of work, school or training.

ONE-LINE BRIEFS

• Spain: Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez and opposition leader Alberto Núñez Feijóo clashed over housing, immigration and corruption in their only TV debate before the 29 November election.

• Space: The European Space Agency has chosen Plasma Observatory, seven spacecraft flying together to study how the Sun's energy meets Earth's magnetic shield, with launch foreseen for the late 2030s.

VOCABULARY BUILDER

Words that unlock today's news

Inflation
The rate at which prices rise over time. Today: UK inflation rose to 3.6% in October.

Bloc
A group of countries that act together. Today: Burnham agreed a deal with the 27-member bloc in Brussels.

Provocation
An action meant to stir up an angry response. Today: Donald Tusk called the missiles that fell in Poland a Russian provocation.

Airspace
The sky above a country, which that country controls. Today: NATO's Mark Rutte condemned grave violations of Polish airspace.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Erasmus exchange scheme, which the UK is due to rejoin in 2027, is named after Erasmus of Rotterdam, a Renaissance scholar who travelled across Europe to teach and study at a number of universities.

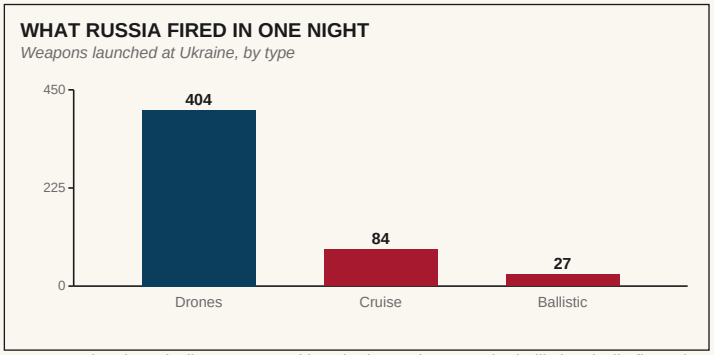
EUROPE • POLAND AND UKRAINE

Russian Missiles Fall in Poland During a Huge Night Attack on Ukraine

Nobody in Poland was hurt, but its prime minister called it a Russian "provocation."

Overnight into Friday, Russia launched a massive attack on Ukraine. Ukraine's Air Force counted 84 cruise missiles and 404 attack drones, and President Volodymyr Zelensky said 27 ballistic missiles were also fired. At least nine people were killed, and three of Kyiv's bridges were damaged.

Some of the weapons crossed into Poland, a member of both the EU and NATO. A Kh-101 cruise missile came down about 60 km from the Ukrainian border, and another missile and a drone fell elsewhere. Nobody was hurt. Prime Minister Donald Tusk called it a Russian "provocation," and NATO chief Mark Rutte condemned "grave violations" of Polish airspace.



Drones and cruise missiles as counted by Ukraine's Air Force; the ballistic missile figure is from President Zelensky.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When Russian weapons land in a NATO country, Europe fears the war could spread.

THINK LIKE AN ANALYST

Why might Poland call this a "provocation" rather than an accident? What evidence would you need to decide whether stray missiles are a mistake or a message?

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SPORTS CORNER

HOCKEY: INDIA COME FROM BEHIND

India 4 Malaysia 1. The defending champions began the Women's Asian Champions Trophy in Bhopal, the city's first international hockey tournament, by going a goal down and then scoring four. Debutant Puja Sahoo scored and was named Player of the Match.

WHAT TO WATCH NEXT

• Westminster, next week: a bill to put the UK-EU deal into law is due in Parliament.

• Ofgem, 25 November: the official energy price cap for January, after a forecast 26% rise.

"A door closed by one vote can be reopened, one deal at a time."

You are not just reading the news — you are learning to think about it. See you next week.