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**NEWSLETTER**  
Spring 2024

President von der Leyen has been re-elected by the European Council to be President of the European Commission for a second term, alongside Kaja Kallas as High Representative and António Costa as President of the European Council. Over the summer months, President von der Leyen has been busy interviewing candidates and on 17 September [unveiled her new team](#) that will make up the College of Commissioners.

On 18 July, President von der Leyen issued her [Political Guidelines](#), which set out her vision for the next five year mandate. The Guidelines focus on advancing a new economic foreign policy by improving competitiveness at home while continuing to deepen free and fair trade links with growth centres and partners around the world. To this end, the EU Guidelines commit to pursuing a reformed and strengthened World Trade Organization, the Indo-Pacific Strategy, and partnerships with Japan, Korea, New Zealand and Australia to face common challenges in cyber, space and in the secure supply of critical minerals technologies. The Political Guidelines, together with Mario Draghi's [new report](#) emphasise the importance of boosting the European Union's competitiveness over the next mandate.

## Welcome from the Ambassador

Tēnā koutou katoa, Dia dhaoibh, Greetings and Hello!

I am now nine months into my time here in beautiful Aotearoa New Zealand. It is really a pleasure and a privilege to be the European Union Ambassador to New Zealand – I am enjoying my posting a lot! There is so much energy between New Zealand and the European Union. Let's take Horizon Europe: as I write, there is a roadshow underway across Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch (we will visit more cities next year).



It is an ideal chance to test drive Horizon Europe and how it can work for your business, university or organisation (see more inside the newsletter). In Wellington on 21 October, I will host a reception for our Horizon Europe friends – please email/LinkedIn me if you do not yet have an invitation and would like to join us.

Green diplomacy is in full swing in the lead-up to the climate and biodiversity COPs, a major priority for the European Union. It was great to roll up my sleeves and get the gumboots on for the beach clean-up and tree-planting – new ways to get close up, learn and enjoy New Zealand. Reading this newsletter, you will see how like-minded New Zealand and the European Union are: on Ukraine, security, Pacific and space. We are growing our commitment with each across a range of topics.

Looking ahead, in about a year's time, we plan to hold a European Business Summit. A year into implementation of our Free Trade Agreement, it will be a great moment to see how trade has changed and where we can grow new areas. I welcome your ideas on the key sectors for our trade to include and who or which European business you would like to hear at the Summit.

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## Key milestones in the EU-NZ relationship

### The EU honours Kīngi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII

Ambassador Lawrence Meredith offered condolences in person on behalf of the European Union following the passing of Kīngi Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII. At his tangihanga, all paid tribute to the King's life of public service and his gift for bringing people together. Kua hinga he totara i te wao nui a Tane.



As was said on the marae, a mighty totara has fallen, but may it become a waka wide enough for all people of Aotearoa. The EU flew its flag at half-mast to mark the occasion.

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### David McAllister MEP visits Aotearoa New Zealand

German Member of the European Parliament and Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, David McAllister, visited Aotearoa New Zealand in August and met with Government leaders.

[Read More](#)



More information: [LinkedIn Post](#) | [LinkedIn Post](#) | [Facebook post](#)

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## Europol cooperation agreement with NZ Police takes effect

The landmark agreement between Europol and NZ Police agreement is now in force, enhancing efforts to combat serious crime and terrorism. This agreement marks a new chapter in EU-NZ cooperation, ensuring robust data protection and paving the way for stronger security ties.

[Read More](#)



More information: [Press Release](#) | [NZ Police](#) | [Europol](#) | [Europol Agreement](#)

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## Ambassador Meredith speaks at Small States, a Powerful Voice Together Conference

Appearing alongside Minister of Defence, Hon. Judith Collins KC, Ambassador Lawrence Meredith recently spoke at Diplosphere's conference *Small States, a Powerful Voice Together: Defence, AI, and Multipolarity*.



Ambassador Meredith's comments focused on the EU's new AI Act (see below) which offers opportunities for innovation, encourages investment, and strengthens international partnerships. He also highlighted research and innovation under the EU's Horizon Europe programme as a key pillar of the EU-NZ relationship.

**More information:** [NZ Herald](#) | [Diplosphere Event Summary](#)

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## A fond farewell to Deputy Head of Mission Kevin O'Connell

The Delegation of the European Union to New Zealand has bid a fond farewell to the Deputy Head of Mission Kevin O'Connell, who completed his four-year posting. Kevin moves to be the Head of the Political Section at the European Union Delegation to Mexico.

Kevin has been a pivotal figure in strengthening the relationship between NZ and the EU. His dedication and natural flair for diplomacy have left an indelible mark.

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# Foreign Policy Developments

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## EU marks Ukrainian Independence Day

The EU will always stand with Ukraine because Ukraine is Europe. This was the message President von der Leyen delivered to mark Ukraine's Independence Day.

[Read More](#)



**More information:** [EU Solidarity with Ukraine](#) | [Message of President Von Der Leyen](#) | [Mahi for Ukraine](#)

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### **Commissioner Urpilainen participates in Pacific Islands Forum**

European Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, represented the EU at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting in Tonga. Leaders from both regions celebrated and discussed the way forward of the Pacific protocol of the Samoa Agreement.



[Read More](#)

**More information:** [Press Release](#) | [Newsdesk](#) | [EU Reporter](#) | [Pacific Islands Forum](#)

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## **Trade Developments**

## Trade opportunities for Maori and SMEs under the EU-NZ FTA

Te Taumata held a regional hui in Ōtautahi Christchurch to discuss tech and renewable energy opportunities created for the Maori economy and SMEs by the EU-NZ FTA. Diane Lacoste Chevalier, Head of Trade, at the European Union Delegation was there.



[Read More](#)

**More information:** [Te Taumata Regional Hui Programme](#)

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## European Union features at New Zealand Aerospace Summit 2024

Ambassador Meredith spoke at the New Zealand Aerospace Summit. He underlined that the European Union wants to work with New Zealand – because it is a like-minded partner - in research and innovation, cyber and space, secure supply of technologies.

This year's focus on "Aerospace for Good" and collaboration across Aotearoa's unique aerospace capacity highlights the importance of working together for a better future through programmes such as Horizon Europe and leveraging the opportunities created by the EU-NZ FTA. Europe is open for business!

[Read More](#)

**More information:** [Conference Website](#) | [New Zealand Space and Advanced Aviation Strategy 2024-2030](#)

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## New guidance document on the application of rules of origin under EU-NZ FTA



The EU has published a [guidance document](#) to assist NZ importers in taking advantage of tariff savings. This guidance outlines the application of the rules of origin under the EU-NZ Free Trade Agreement, which became effective on 1 May 2024.

According to the Agreement, NZ importers can claim preferential tariffs on EU-originating products if the EU exporter provides a statement of origin for consignments valued over EUR 6,000. To issue this statement, the EU exporter must be registered in the REX system and include their REX number on the document.

**More information:** [Guidance Document](#) | [EU-NZFTA \(MFAT\)](#) | [EU Country Factsheets for New Zealand: Investment and Services and Digital Trade](#)

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## EU concludes negotiations with Singapore for Digital Trade Agreement

The EU and Singapore have concluded negotiations for a Digital Trade Agreement (DTA). The deal is the first EU agreement of its kind, reflecting that the EU is a global standard-setter for digital trade rules and cross-border data flows.



The Agreement reflects the strategic importance of digital trade and the pivotal role that Southeast Asia plays given the growth of its digital economy.

[Read More](#)

**More information:** [Press Release](#) | [Joint Statement](#)

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## European Commission and Fiji announce full implementation of EU-Pacific interim Economic Partnership Agreement:

The European Commission and Fiji have announced the full implementation of the EU-Pacific interim Economic Partnership Agreement. The latest development means that Fiji has removed duties in the committed tariff lines on imports from EU Members States. These are referred to as committed basket of tariff lines.

[Read More](#)

**More information:** [Press Release](#) | [IEPA Website](#)

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## A five-year retrospective on European agricultural policy



In the past five years, European agricultural policy has advanced significantly while weathering considerable disruption from COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, and the increasing frequency of climate disasters. Commissioner Wojciechowski recently delivered his Preliminary Activity Report reflecting on the previous five years.

[Read More](#)

**More information:** [Press Release](#) | [Agri-Food Chain Observatory](#) | [Euractiv](#)

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## Horizon Europe Developments

### Horizon Europe Roadshow across Aotearoa New Zealand

**HORIZON EUROPE ROADSHOW  
NEW ZEALAND**  
15-23 October 2024

The graphic features four circular images representing the roadshow locations: Auckland (15 Oct), Hamilton (16 Oct), Wellington (21 Oct), and Christchurch (23 Oct). Each image shows a prominent landmark of the city.



The Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment and EURAXESS Australia & New Zealand are co-organising a series of information and networking events up and down the country to spread the word about the opportunities which Horizon Europe presents for New Zealand based researchers.

The information sessions include:



- General information about how to participate in Horizon Europe
- In-depth practical information and guidance
- Presentations from some of New Zealand's successful Horizon Europe recipients
- Thematic workshops with New Zealand's National Contact Points

The roadshows will take place on the following dates:

- Auckland: 15 October
- Hamilton: 16 October
- Wellington: 21 October
- Christchurch: 23 October

These sessions are open to all stakeholders. So don't wait as places are limited. Sign up to an information session to learn more about the opportunities that Horizon Europe can create for your organisation!

**More information:** [Registration Link](#) | [Horizon Europe Success Stories](#) | [Horizon Europe Roadshow New Zealand 2024](#)

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## Horizon Europe opportunities continue to grow across New Zealand

Since New Zealand joined Horizon Europe the number of opportunities has exploded. The Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment have made available a list of the successful projects on its [website](#). The successful Horizon Europe projects cover a broad range of topics including digital interactive health, infectious diseases, plant health and biosecurity, climate and disaster resilience, democracy, and social inclusion.



[Read More](#)

**More information:** [NZ Horizon Europe projects](#) | [Horizon Europe in New Zealand](#) | [Scion Horizon Europe project](#)

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## Green Deal Developments



### Ambassador Meredith speaks at 16th Climate Change & Business Conference

Ambassador Lawrence Meredith spoke at the annual Climate Change & Business Conference.

He talked about the EU and NZ's common commitment to sustainability, focusing on investments in clean technologies, renewable

energy, and green building materials. Together, we are addressing global climate challenges with innovative solutions. Our partnership fosters sustainable trade, global impact, and promotes research through initiatives like Horizon Europe.

**More information:** [Event programme](#)

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## Team Europe pulls together for beach clean-up



The entire Team Europe pulled together on 21 September to help with a beach clean-up in Wellington. Together with a group of committed volunteers the group cleared litter from the beach and made an impact. It's great to see the community come together for our oceans and planet.

[Read More](#)

**More information:** [Single-Use Plastics Directive](#)

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## Team Europe Plants for Aotearoa's Future



Thanks to all who showed up at the NZIIA Diplomatic Native Tree Planting Day, planting seven native species, including the iconic kōwhai hosted by New Zealand Institute of International Affairs Wellington Branch and Conservation Volunteers New Zealand.

Every tree planted contributes towards more native flora in New Zealand. Alongside Conservation Volunteers New Zealand and NZIIA Wellington, we contributed to protecting Aotearoa's unique biodiversity. It's wonderful to see the community unite for our environment!

## Digital Developments

### World's first law to regulate AI enters into force

The AI Act is the first-ever legal framework on AI, which addresses the risks of AI and positions Europe to play a leading role globally. European citizens and businesses can now safely and confidently seize the opportunities of secure and trustworthy AI which plays by clear rules:

- Unacceptable risk AI, such as social scoring, is banned.
- High-risk AI, including recruitment and applications in medical devices, must meet strict requirements.
- Limited-risk AI, like chatbots, must inform users they are interacting with AI.
- Minimal risk AI, for example, spam filters, follows existing rules with no additional obligations.



**More information:** [Commission Website](#) | [Regulation](#)

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