President of Turkey with enhanced powers - the Turks voted "yes" in the referendum on constitutional reform. In this program we analyze the impact on relations between Ankara and Brussels

The European Commission will investigate Hungary's new legislation on higher education - thousands of students took to the streets in Budapest against what they fear is an attack on academic freedom

In this program we also analyze the position of the Southern European countries meeting last week in Madrid

Welcome to the Europe Magazine,

The "yes" won in Sunday's referendum in Turkey. 51 percent of the Turks voted in favor of a constitutional reform that strengthens the powers of the country's President.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the current head of state, speaks at a historic moment for the country.

Turnout was significant - more than 86 percent of voters voted. The opposition rejected, however, the results of the referendum and said it will ask for the recount of the votes.

The constitutional reform in question establishes a presidentialist regime in Turkey. Journalist Olga Pereira of Radio Macau explains what will change in the country:

RM – Olga Pereira:
"The amendments to the Constitution provide for the disappearance of the figure of the Prime Minister. The President is now able to appoint the country's top officials, including Ministers.

The Turkish Head of State will also be able to appoint a large number of judges in the Turkish judicial system, as well as to decide on the imposition of states of emergency in the country.
The reform to which the Turks gave the green light provides for the holding of presidential and legislative elections in 2019.
The President of the country will now serve five-year terms, with a maximum of two. Which means that if Erdogan wins the election, he can stay in power until 2029.

Erdogan took over as President of Turkey in 2014, after more than a decade as head of government.
The referendum came after a failed coup attempt in July last year. A case that led Erdogan and the Turkish government to order the arrest of tens of thousands of people on suspicion of involvement. More than a hundred thousand saw the job suspended or even finished.
Supporters of the constitutional reform believe it will bring stability and security to Turkey.
Critics say it's too much power in the hands of one man. "

On the phone from Brussels is Magazine Europe's resident commentator, Victor Ângelo, an international consultant based in the Belgian capital.

Hello, Victor, Erdogan argued that the constitutional reform will allow Turkey to stabilize, but the "yes" won by a rather small margin. What consequences can Turkey have for this division among the Turks?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
"Erdogan's victory is a very short win. He won by a black nail. This means, fundamentally, that Turkey is extremely divided and that, above all, the most modern populations, the populations of big cities such as Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir are against Erdogan's project and are against the abuse of power that it represents. For this reason, we will see, in the near future, on the one hand, the reinforcement of Erdogan's authority in the sense of absolute power, and, on the other hand, we will see the continuing radicalization of Turkish society. That is, we have a very divided and very radical Turkey in the way each side sees the opposite side. "

The European Commission has issued a statement urging the Turkish authorities to "seek the widest possible national consensus" when implementing constitutional reforms. What impact do these changes in Turkey have on relations between Ankara and Brussels?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
"For Europe, what is happening in Turkey, and especially the referendum, is a dramatic situation. We already had a fox in the henhouse of the West, now we have a wolf. This will mean that the issue of continuing discussions on Turkey's accession to the European Union does not make sense at the moment. And, on the other hand, there is great concern about refugees: what will be Erdogan's position on Turkey's agreement with the European Union on the issue of refugees and candidates for emigration. I think Erdogan will put immense pressure on the European Union on the basis of this agreement, and will probably say that the agreement will only continue if the visa issue - when Turkish citizens want to visit Europe - is resolved. It's a fundamental issue. "

After the results of the referendum were known, Erdogan once again spoke of the possibility of holding a referendum on the replacement of the death penalty in the country ... Victor, faced with a possible "yes" on this issue, and also with the constitutional reform now made possible , What are the chances that the European Union will give in to these requirements vis-à-vis visas or even in relation to membership of the Bloc?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
"I think that vis-à-vis visas is likely to be some progress and probably the only concession the European Union will make vis-à-vis the Turks. As for the continuation of discussions on membership of the European Union, even if there are some Union leaders who would like the discussion to continue, the vast majority of European populations are currently opposed to accession, and I think it will be very difficult for European Leaders to continue with this agenda. The image of Erdogan and the group that is in power in Turkey at the moment is

very bad in Europe. It is an image that, on the one hand, is associated with the word 'dictatorship', and, on the other hand, is also associated with the expansion of Islamic ideas. And I think that such questions are not at all favorable to European public opinion at the moment. "

In other editions of the Magazine Europe, Victor warned of the risks of holding referendums nowadays ... On the other hand, results like those of this Sunday challenge democracy ... Democracy is a system of government that faces every time More challenges?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
"I think yes. There is now an attack coming from the populists - and certainly Erdogan is a populist - against democracy, using, so to speak, the so-called direct democracy, namely referendums. We are losing in terms of representative democracy and we are also losing in terms of balance of power. The old theory that it was necessary to balance executive power with the legislature and a strong judiciary is increasingly alienated from the populists. Populists are against such questions. They make a direct appeal to the people - through referendums - to the deep feelings of fears and passions, so to speak, that animate the populations, and end up taking advantage of these direct consultations to have absolute power. In other words, we are in a situation where direct democracy and, in particular, the great willingness of people to participate in the day-to-day of political decisions - and this results from the expansion of the Internet, access to information - To be exploited by individuals who have dictatorial tendencies and who ultimately dominate not only the executive but also the judges, the military, the police and, in the case of Turkey, the media as well. "

In Hungary, thousands of students took to the streets in Budapest to protest against new legislation restricting the licensing of foreign higher education institutions in Hungary.

Demonstrators understand that the recently passed diploma in parliament can dictate the end of the European Central University in Budapest, a university founded by the American-born Georges Soros millionaire in Hungary.
The government led by Victor Orban has already come to say that this will not necessarily be the case, but has not convinced the citizens. Neither the European Union.

Frans Timmermans, Vice-President of the European Commission, announced that Brussels will investigate whether the new rules in Hungary are compatible with the law of the Block:

RM - Frans Timmermans:
"The recently adopted legislation on higher education is worrying many people in Europe's academic community as well as politicians in Europe and abroad." It is understood by many as an attempt to close the European Central University. We need to rapidly complete an in-depth legal assessment of its compatibility with the free movement of services and the freedom of establishment of institutions and with the European Union rules on the admission of researchers from third countries. "

Victor, what is the target of Victor Orban's government with these changes in higher education?

RM - Victor Ângelo:
"Victor Orban controls the parliament, controls justice and controls the media, but does not control a large part of society and, in particular, does not control youth and intellectuals. And he needs to control, because it is the way of seeing the power he has; He is inspired by what Vladimir Putin teaches us: that the power of the Chief must be an absolute power. And, on the other hand, Victor Orban has general elections in 2018 and specifies that, in these general elections, support for his party will increase substantially. He is currently ruling the country with only 30 percent of the votes - it is an insufficient electoral base - and many of these measures he is taking and which are presented as measures of Hungarian nationalism - and Hungarian nationalism is a key that touches in many hearts of Hungary - ... by betting on Hungarian nationalism he is investing in his absolute power and trying to win the 2018 elections with a much greater margin than he currently has. "

What do these changes represent for academic freedom in Hungary?

RM - Victor Ângelo:
"They represent a lot because, in fact, Victor Orban is violating several principles that are basic principles of the European Union, namely the principles of pluralism, the principle of freedom of expression and freedom of thought, as well as issues of tolerance, The issues of equality between men and women, and human rights issues. In fact, Victor Orban is in breach of most of the principles set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, which is a very important article in terms of the definition of the value bases on which the European Union is based. "

The European Union has reacted; says they will investigate the case. What can Brussels do?

RM - Victor Ângelo:
"Brussels will intensify the political dialogue with Budapest. They will continue to criticize Victor Orban. They will try to coordinate also better with the United States, because the United States, because of this university issue, have also been very critical of Victor Orban, because they see the attack as an attack on one of the great citizens of the United States, which is Georges Soros. What is curious is that Victor Orban belongs to the largest European political family, the European People's Party, and so the leaders of this family, notably Angela Merkel or Juncker, are to a certain extent not being in the center of attention when it comes to critic to Victor Orban. The criticism of Victor Orban will continue to be made by the Vice-President of the European Commission, Frans Timmermans, for the very simple reason that he is more at ease in making such criticisms insofar as he belongs to the European socialist family and Not the family of the European People's Party. "

The Heads of State and Government of the Southern European Countries met last week in Madrid.

It is the third such meeting since last year. The journalist Hugo Pinto, of Radio Macau, tells us some of the points that resulted from this meeting:

RM - Hugo Pinto:
"The Heads of State and Government of Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain say they want to work together to build a 'strong and united' European Union.
In the joint statement adopted after last week's meeting in Madrid, leaders of these southern European nations reaffirm "the importance of strengthening cooperation in the Mediterranean with African countries" and insist that "migration requires global planning." They also argue that the European Union's migration policy must be based on the sharing of 'responsibilities and solidarity'.
The countries of the South also warn of the need to make the fight against unemployment a priority. One of the measures, they say, is to strengthen investment in education and vocational training.
The leaders of these countries call for the 'swift conclusion' of the Banking Union and, in security matters, remind us of the need to prevent radicalization. "

Victor, this statement does not seem to bring surprises ... What do these meetings in Southern Europe represent? Are they a sign of a north-south divide in the European space?

RM – Victor Ângelo:
"Well, the Madrid meeting, and these meetings in Southern Europe, show that Europe is made up of various geopolitical spaces. And certainly the geopolitical space of the South is an important space. The truth is that countries with governments from different political families meet periodically - and met for the third time now in Madrid - to discuss issues considered common. The fact is that the Madrid meeting has shown that this type of country strongly supports the European Union, it is for the strengthening of the Euro, it is extremely concerned about the issue of migration, especially since two of these countries - notably Italy and Greece - are the Ports of entry for migrants and refugee candidates; And, on the other hand, some countries are also relatively economically disadvantaged, and so these meetings allow us to insist on economic convergence within the European Union, the Banking Union issue - and Namely the creation, as soon as possible, of a European system for guaranteeing deposits, banking - and also social convergence, which is an issue that our Prime Minister, Mr Costa, brought to the meeting and on which he spoke long. "

These meetings - already in the third since september last year - indicate that the Berlin-Paris axis may be in decline?

RM - Victor Ângelo:
"The Berlin-Paris axis suffered greatly from the difficulties François Hollande had in France. The fact that he lost immense popularity and turned out to be a relatively weak French president in France did not allow him to take a more

active action at the European level. That is why the traditional axis, the strong axis that holds the European Union together, the axis between Berlin and Paris, has suffered greatly. Let's see what will happen after the French elections that start next weekend. If the candidate to be elected is a pro-European candidate, it is clear that the Berlin-Paris axis will be strengthened again, but Paris will continue to play on several fronts and notably in front of the countries of southern Europe. France bridges, so to speak, between the different geopolitical regions of Europe. "

The analysis of Victor Ângelo, resident commentator of Magazine Europe.

To close, we will talk with you about Emma Morano, who was, until days ago, the oldest person in the world.

The Italian died last week at the age of 117. She was the last person in the world to have been born in the nineteenth century.

Emma Morano survived two world wars and attended 90 different governments in Italy.

The elderly woman attributed longevity to the genes and 90 years to consume three eggs a day - two of them raw.

The oldest person in the world is now a Jamaican woman born in 1900.

See you next week!

[Datasheet]

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