I.

European leaders postpone December review of progress on Brexit talks. Decision taken during the European Council.

And in the Czech Republic: Andrej Babis, Eurosceptic, multimillionaire politician and anti-migration campaign wins the parliamentary elections in the country.

Still in this issue: Portugal and Spain ask Europe for solidarity fund because of the fires.

II.

Welcome to the Europe Magazine!
European leaders postponed the review of progress made in the Brexit negotiations in December. The bill to be paid for the departure of Britain from the European Union or the rights of citizens are matters that have yet to be answered ...
Brussels remains optimistic. Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, denies the possibility of an agreement.

Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission
We are working is not so that there is an agreement. I hate scenarios where there is no agreement. And I do not even know what that means. No one has yet explained to me what the consequences of a scenario without agreement would be. I am not in favor of a non-agreement, I want to have a fair agreement with Britain.

With us, from Brussels we have to the telephone Victor Ângelo, resident commentator of Magazine Europe and international consultant based in the Belgian capital.

Victor, in relation to the Brexit negotiations, further analysis of the progress of the negotiations postponed to December. Was it expected?
I think so, I think European leaders are unhappy with the way the process is going, the process is very slow, but on the other hand they try to give some signs of encouragement and some positive signals. In fact, European leaders had to find a balance between moving the process forward and therefore being very frank about the lack of progress and, on the other hand, on the other side of the scale, they have to continue to support Theresa May. European leaders believe that Theresa May is, after all, the best British interlocutor they can have. If she leaves - and Theresa May is in an extremely fragile position within the political class of her party, the political leaders of her party - most likely who would take the lead of the British Government, would have an even more radical leader, even more difficult to negotiate with the European Union.

This meeting was also marked by the cut of pre-accession funds to Turkey. Negotiations with Ankara on Turkey's accession to the European Union were not suspended, but the European Council penalized Tayyip Erdogan. It is an increasingly difficult relationship between Ankara and Brussels ...
The truth is that the agenda of the European Council had many themes, but the theme of Turkey and the theme of Brexit were the dominant themes, which shows the major

concerns at the moment in Europe. And relations between the European Union and Turkey are now in a very tense situation. This tension has been exacerbated by the fact that bilateral relations between Germany and Turkey are in a very difficult situation. There have been a number of incidents between the German government and Erdogan, the Turkish political class, and of course this has a great repercussion on the European Union's relationship with Turkey, and in particular on the accession process. Because it is seen that Turkey is in an undemocratic drift, it is on a drift that grants exceptional powers to President Ergogan and, in addition, it is also considered that Turkey at this time, in particular when buying arms systems from Russia, is leaving space of Western defense. And all of this obviously causes a lot of worry.

And besides Turkey and Brexit, what else is there to keep from this meeting of the European Council?
I think the third major theme remains the subject of migration. The European leaders were very clear in their support for Italy and Greece in their efforts to solve the problems that migrations cause to these two countries (...). In addition to the migration issue, there were other important issues: the issue of defense remains a very important issue. There was talk of external issues, notably Iran and North Korea, and of course the digital economy, which is one of the big issues on Jean-Claude Juncker's agenda.
In the end, I think it would be important to emphasize that there were four personalities who marked this European Council. Merkel is the one who sets the agenda, remains the European leader par excellence; Macron came to the European Council but is not yet heard, it is perfectly clear that he has a European agenda, but at the moment he is still regarded as a relatively recent and junior leader. On the other hand, the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, came out stronger, he is giving a good direction to the European Council. And also Mariano Rajoy, who managed to mobilize the support of the European Union or, at least, the silence of the countries of the European Union with regard to the internal affairs of Spain.

Victor, and last week also a few days before the European Council, the Union's foreign ministers reaffirmed that they will continue to comply with the 2015 international agreement on the Iranian nuclear program. This is even after the president of the United States has threatened to withdraw this support. Trump said he was willing to drop the deal if several "shortcomings" were not corrected and gave Congress 60 days to decide whether to reimpose economic sanctions on Tehran. What reading can be made of the position taken by the EU?
The European Union recognizes that after several years of negotiations and several countries committed to a settlement process, an agreement with Iran has been reached which is a possible agreement, which is a very positive and reasonable agreement. To reopen this folder would be to go back many years and probably aggravate the instability in the Middle East. Right now, both in Europe and in some American circles, it is thought that Donald Trump's only agenda is to try to undo, to try to nullify all that President Obama has managed to achieve.

III.

Elections in the Czech Republic give victory to anti-migration candidate. After Sebastian Kurz in Austria, Czech billionaire Andrej Babis is joining a group of leaders challenging Brussels. More with the journalist Sofia Jesus.

Populist, bold and the second richest man in the Czech Republic. There are those who compare entrepreneur Andrej Babis to US President Donald Trump. Including the multimillionaire's aversion to immigration.
Babis was the winner of Saturday's parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic. The Alliance of Disgruntled Citizens was responsible for a campaign that focused on the Euro Zone, corruption and migration. It reached the victory with 29.6 percent of the votes.

The right-wing ODS party came in second with 11.3 percent of the vote, followed by the Pirate Party with 10.7 percent. Direct Democracy and Freedom, the far-right party of Tomio Okamura, took fourth place with 10.6 percent and 22 seats in parliament. The Social Democrats, until then the first political force of the country, reached only 15 parliamentary seats.
Andrej Babis is a Eurosceptic and has campaigned against the policy of welcoming refugees from Brussels. It is also a controversial figure. This year in May he was removed from the post of Finance Minister to be investigated for alleged tax fraud.

Victor, Babis will now have to find a coalition and is already meeting with some Parties. How can the composition of the next government of the Czech Republic be?
You'll probably try to find a coalition with the most moderated parties. At the moment, the Czech political panorama is a very fractured panorama, has nine parties in Parliament. The Andrej Babis party has many places in Parliament and probably if he can make an alliance with the Social Democrats and with the Christian Democrats could probably rule. But it will be difficult, in that the relationship of Andrej Babis with the Social Democrats is a very, very difficult relationship. We must not forget that the Social Democrats were in power, that he was Minister of Finance and was dismissed from the government and accused of fraud of European funds.
We are watching in Central Europe not only a very dangerous deepening of nationalisms, we are also watching the propagation of xenophobic ideas, but we are also watching a situation of Euroscepticism. This Euroscepticism has a little to do with the feeling that Brussels treats the east and the European Centre as a part of the second level Europe. And that kind of sentiment right now is recognized in Brussels, is being fought, i.e. Brussels says no, that all are European citizens, but the truth is that there is a growth of Euroscepticism and nationalism in this part of Europe.
There are now a number of alarms in Europe, including, as we have been following here, the situation in Spain. After the Catalan referendum, deemed illegal by the government of Madrid, the Spanish Council of Ministers approved the removal of the Puigdemont government. Mariano Rajoy said he wants to convene early elections in Catalonia as soon as possible. Let's hear the declarations:

Mariano Rajoy, Pres. Of the Government of Spain
The autonomy or self-government of Catalonia is not suspended. They move away from the people who put this self-government out of law and the Constitution, and the Statute.

It is the first time that the Government of Spain will trigger article 155. How do you expect the Puigdemont government now and all those who want independence to act from here to the front?

Anything can happen before the actuality of article 155. This article will only be approved by the Spanish Senate at the end of this week or at the beginning of next week. We have several days of uncertainty in which everything can happen, namely we can see a situation where the Parliament of the Catalan region decides to unilaterally declare independence. However, Mariano Rajoy will have a very serious problem to resolve in Catalonia, as far as the whole of the regional and Catalan local administration has been penetrated, gradually over the years, by independent cadres. At this time, Madrid will have to work directly with a command structure, with a bureaucratic structure in Catalonia that is contrary to the Spanish unity and which is strongly for independence. We will watch during the application of article 155 to a very large resistance of regional and local administration in Catalonia from the most important frames of this administration. This will provoke continuous tensions and we shall certainly watch street demonstrations by those who are in favor of the independence of Catalonia.

iv.
Portugal and Spain will activate the European Solidarity Fund following the October fires. The Portuguese Government expects the expenditure on fire to stay out of the structural deficit calculations, as the Antena1 counts

[to accelerate and facilitate the request and achieve a faster response, Portugal and Spain will join efforts at the European Solidarity Fund.
"It was agreed with President Rajoy that Portugal and Spain were going to work together to present a common request, since much of the damages are common damages or continuity of the same circumstances and so we are able to have the European Commission each of us. Greater effectiveness in obtaining these results. "
At the end of the European Council António Costa welcomed the willingness of the European Union to re-examine the existence of a common but more effective European civil protection.
Jean-Claude Juncker, the President of the European Commission and Antonio Tajani, the President of the European Council has already insisted on this need.
"The Commission is studying the recovery of the proposal from the former Commissioner Michel Barnier on the establishment of a European civil protection force and he, being here today in the Council, has also had the opportunity to recall his proposal. Likewise, I hope that the Council will welcome the position of Commissioner Moscovici on the treatment for the relevance of fire-fighting expenditure for the purposes of the Portuguese deficit treatment. "
Pierre Moscovici said that the same has been done with other countries and must be what will happen with the expenses and losses that Portugal has with the fires that in the case of October will be higher than those registered in Pedrógão Grande.]

The area that has already burnt in the country is already six times higher than the average recorded in the last eight years, according to EU data. It also represents more than half of the burnt-out area throughout Europe. What have you failed in the national fire-fighting policy?
The truth is that fires show two great shortcomings in Portugal. One is the fact that public administration, particularly in the area of territorial planning, forests and also agriculture is a very weak administration. In the last ten or 15 years, the Ministries of agriculture, departments dealing with forests, etc... They've seen their number of employees be reduced in a spectacular way. The second big question is that we are

watching fires in areas of the country where agricultural property is extremely fragmented, parcels are very small, often these parcels are to abandon, because people migrated to urban centers and elsewhere Cases are elderly people and poor people who are taking care of their parcels and do not have any means to clean, for example, the kills, to treat the lands as it should be.
It is necessary to resolve the problem of forests, but it is also necessary to take into account that it is a situation of desertification of the countryside and that within the country were only the most vulnerable and those who have fewer conditions to respond to the great challenges of nature.

And the fires were on the agenda of the European Council that as we already said here today we met last week. Mr Tajani, President of the European Parliament, said that "the current European Civil protection mechanism does not work, with only an Italian Canadair airplane". Tajani then supports the proposal by Jean-Claude Juncker of the creation of a European initiative force, which can intervene in the event of calamity. Victor, could this be a possibility?
The European civil protection mechanism is unable to respond rapidly to requests for aid. In fact, it was verified in relation to Portugal. The Italian airplane available, which should have arrived in Portugal on Sunday, or at the latest on Monday morning, arrived only on Wednesday afternoon, i.e. we were waiting for European aid for three or four days. This means, on the one hand, that we need to revise the functioning of the mechanism and that is what Jean-Claude Juncker has decided, in fact, promised that a new model will be proposed for the next four weeks. But on the other hand this also means that the answer to this kind of problems like wildfires has to be before all one response at national level. Each of the countries has to have means to respond immediately to situations like the one that Portugal lived in this summer and about a week and a half ago.

V.

With us on the phone Victor Angelo, the Magazine Europa commentator. And before we finish, we get a cultural note.
Today we bring a suggestion of cinema – it is the first animated film made exclusively of oil paintings. "Loving Vincent" is a feature film about the last weeks of the Dutch painter Vincent Van Gogh. In all are 65,000 images produced by 125 painters from around the world and who have inspired themselves in testimonials and 800 letters from the painter himself.
Loving Vincent was the realization of the Polish Dorota Kobiela and the British Hugh Welchman.
We'll stay here. See you next week

[Technical Sheet]

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