

THE RIO TIMES · INTELLIGENCE DESK · 2026

Europe Intelligence Brief — Tuesday, September 8, 2026

Borders and Ballots

Giorgia Meloni told Belgium's prime minister in Rome on Monday that Schengen "can be preserved in the best possible way only if the Union's external borders are defended," a defence of a system Italy and Spain have themselves kept suspended since August over the Ceuta migrant crossings, now extended to 22 September.

Russian strikes killed at least two people in Kyiv within hours of a 72-hour ceasefire pause expiring on schedule; Serbia's government formally proposed dissolving parliament, triggering a snap election and a separate presidential vote to complete President Aleksandar Vučić's pivot to prime minister; and a near-final Saxony-Anhalt count handed Germany's CDU, SPD, Greens, Left and BSW a working 44-seat majority without the AfD, correcting Monday's more uncertain arithmetic.

This dossier reads a day that turned on verification as much as news — an exit poll revised by a certified count, a migrant-crossing figure disputed by a factor of nearly two, a ceasefire that expired precisely when it was supposed to and nothing more.

Read in English, Italian, Spanish, German, Serbian, Ukrainian, Polish, Bulgarian, French, across the region's largest outlets and our own desk.

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EDITOR'S LEADER · 01

ROME GUARDS THE BORDER, KYIV BURIES A PAUSE, BELGRADE VOTES TWICE, MAGDEBURG'S MATH HARDENS

The Line Holds

Giorgia Meloni hosted Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever at Palazzo Chigi on Monday for her first international meeting since the summer recess, saying Schengen "can be preserved in the best possible way only if the Union's external borders are defended." De Wever answered in policy terms rather than rhetoric, calling a "credible returns policy" the only route to a functioning EU migration system.

The meeting doubled as an audit of the crisis behind it: Italy suspended Schengen free movement with Spain on 1 August after migrants crossed from Morocco into Ceuta over 30-31 July, and Spain's reciprocal checks, in force since 8 August, were extended by its interior minister to 22 September. Two Schengen members have now spent five weeks policing a border the treaty was built to erase.

Russian drones and missiles struck Kyiv early Tuesday within hours of the 72-hour pause Vladimir Putin had ordered to cover Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner's weekend visit, killing at least two people and wounding seven. A five-storey apartment block took a direct hit in the Solomianskyi district, and Moscow's TASS confirmed the suspension had simply expired as scheduled.

Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov said the American delegation had "formulated a number of ideas regarding possible paths to a settlement" without naming one, and a White House official told Reuters that next steps would come "in the coming weeks." Kyiv has heard encouraging adjectives from American envoys before without a ceasefire following them.

Serbian Prime Minister Duško Marković announced on Monday that his government had formally proposed dissolving the National Assembly, telling reporters "a responsible government never ignores such demands" for an early vote. The proposal is the procedural trigger for the snap election President Aleksandar Vučić's own party set in motion days earlier.

Serbia's constitution bars Vučić from a third presidential term, so his pivot to prime minister requires him to resign the presidency outright, forcing a separate presidential election alongside the parliamentary one now expected on 18 or 25 October. Two ballots, one incumbent, and a workaround that never technically breaks the limit meant to stop him.

Tuesday, September 8, 2026

Saxony-Anhalt's near-final count, 99.1 per cent of precincts reporting, put the AfD at 44.1 per cent and 39 seats and the Christian Democrats at 17.1 per cent, both lower than Monday's exit-poll figures and a twenty-point collapse for the CDU since 2021. The Free Democrats fell to 2.6 per cent and lost every seat.

What the certified numbers add is the arithmetic itself: the Landtag holds 83 seats and needs 42 for a majority, and the CDU, SPD, Greens, Left and BSW between them hold 44 — a working majority without the AfD, if five parties can bear to share one government. That turns Magdeburg's crisis from a mathematical impossibility into a purely political one.

Pedro Sánchez launched Casa 47, Spain's first state-run public rental housing portal, in Madrid on Monday with 800 flats available immediately and 1,500 more promised "very soon," and hours later told Congress that "the extremist threat... gains ground in Europe." King Felipe VI and Sánchez separately invited Algeria's President Tebboune for an October state visit.

Donald Tusk told Polish social media on Saturday that "only idiots or traitors can rejoice over the triumph of the AfD in Germany," a rebuke aimed at Polish nationalist politicians who had welcomed the result. Confederation MP Konrad Berkowicz accused him of risking German EU funding in reply; AfD MEP Tomasz Froelich told him to "eat a Snickers."

Every border this week was less a line on a map than an argument two governments were still having.

The Editor

The deep dive on page 6 reads Monday's dissolution proposal as the start of a two-election process that will decide whether Serbia's opposition can make Vučić's pivot to prime minister costly, and what three plausible outcomes in Belgrade would mean for a region that has watched incumbents redesign their own offices before.

The health check on page 5 scores ten countries across politics, budget, money, markets and the outside world. Scores run from 1 (calm) to 5 (serious strain), and this week's spread is dominated by verification rather than volatility — Germany's numbers moved down, not up, once the certified count arrived, and Ukraine's outside-world score reflects a ceasefire that lasted exactly as long as it was scheduled to.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY · 02

TEN ITEMS, RANKED BY CONSEQUENCE

The Day At A Glance

Ten things that matter today, ranked by consequence — not by volume.

#	ITEM	WHY IT MATTERS
1	Russian strikes kill at least two in Kyiv as pause ends (8 Sept)	The 72-hour halt covering US envoys' visit expired on schedule Monday night, and strikes resumed within hours, damaging a Solomianskyi apartment block. A senior Ukrainian official said talks had focused on "how to get through the winter."
2	Meloni tells De Wever Schengen needs defended borders (7-8 Sept)	Italy's prime minister hosted Belgium's leader in Rome as Italy's own Schengen suspension with Spain over the Ceuta crossings ran into its sixth week. Spain's checks are extended to 22 September.
3	Serbia's government proposes dissolving parliament (7 Sept)	PM ■ uro Macut confirmed the formal proposal, the trigger for a snap election expected on 18 or 25 October. A separate presidential election will also be required.
4	Certified count revises Saxony-Anhalt's numbers (7 Sept)	A near-final tally puts the AfD at 44.1 per cent, not 44.5, and the CDU at 17.1 per cent, not 18.5. Non-AfD parties hold a combined 44 of 83 seats, a working majority.
5	Sánchez launches Casa 47 public housing portal (7 Sept)	The Spanish prime minister unveiled 800 rental flats with rents capped at 30 per cent of income, calling it proof of "realistic rents for real salaries." 1,500 more units are promised.
6	Sánchez warns the 'extremist threat' is gaining ground (7 Sept)	Addressing Congress hours after the housing launch, Sánchez blamed the traditional right's "surrender" for the AfD's rise and called his own coalition "the vanguard against reactionaries."
7	Tusk calls AfD cheerleaders 'idiots or traitors' (6 Sept)	The Polish prime minister's social-media rebuke targeted Confederation and Law and Justice figures who welcomed Germany's election result. Both parties fired back within hours.
8	Bulgaria logs a record 226 wildfires in one day (6 Sept)	The country's highest single-day total this year was followed by 186 more fires in the next 24 hours, mostly human-caused. Analysts linked the pattern to wider regional hybrid-threat unease.
9	GERB opts out of Bulgaria's presidential race (8 Sept)	Boiko Borissov's party said fielding its own candidate would only split the pro-European vote. The first round is set for 25 October.
10	Felipe VI and Sánchez invite Algeria's Tebboune to Spain (4 Sept)	The October state visit follows Sánchez's own July trip to Algiers, the first by a Spanish government head since the 2022 rupture over Western Sahara. Energy and migration head the agenda.

44.1%

AfD's near-final Saxony-Anhalt vote share

44/83

Non-AfD seats out of 83 in the Landtag

2

Killed in Kyiv as strikes resumed

€45.6bn

Italy-Belgium bilateral trade in 2025

800

Flats available at launch of Casa 47

2

Elections required to complete Vu■■■'s pivot

\$4m

Estimated damage from Poland's drone-plant fire

226

Wildfires recorded in a single day, 6 September

HOW THE COUNTRIES ARE DOING · 03

OUR SIMPLE HEALTH CHECK - 10 ECONOMIES

How The Countries Are Doing

Scores run from 1 (calm) to 5 (serious strain) across politics, budget, money, markets and the outside world. The note carries the reasoning; the score carries the mood.

	POL	BUD	MON	MKT	OUT	WHAT WE SEE
Italy	2	3	2	2	4	Meloni is defending Schengen's logic days after two of her own partners physically suspended it over Ceuta, even as her government marks Italy's longest stretch of postwar stability. The strain sits entirely at the border, not in Rome's own finances or coalition.
Ukraine	3	4	4	3	5	A 72-hour pause covering US envoys' visit expired into strikes that killed at least two people within hours, undercutting language both sides had called substantive two days earlier. The war itself, not the diplomacy circling it, still sets the country's daily reality.
Serbia	4	3	3	2	4	The government's formal move to dissolve parliament turns a political manoeuvre into a constitutional one, with a resignation and two elections now required to keep Vučić in charge. The machinery is working harder than at any point since the protests began.
Germany	5	3	2	3	3	A near-final count confirms the AfD's record result while also showing a workable, if narrow, non-AfD majority exists on paper. Whether five parties can actually govern together is now the real test, not the arithmetic itself.
Spain	3	2	2	2	3	Sánchez is running three messages at once — a housing rollout, a warning about the far right, and a diplomatic reset with Algeria — while Spain's economy keeps outperforming the eurozone average. The political theatre is louder than the underlying numbers this week.
Poland	3	2	2	2	4	Tusk's public rebuke of Polish nationalists cheering Germany's AfD result reflects a country still parsing what a stronger far right next door means for its own security. An unresolved sabotage investigation at a drone plant keeps the outside-world reading elevated.
Bulgaria	3	3	3	2	3	A record day of wildfires and a dominant party's decision to skip October's presidential race both point to a country absorbing strain it did not choose. Neither event threatens the government directly, but both add to an already unsettled season.
Russia	2	3	4	3	5	Moscow let its own pause expire exactly on schedule and resumed strikes on Kyiv within hours, a choice that reads as confidence rather than urgency. Domestic control looks undisturbed even as the war's diplomatic and economic costs keep compounding.
France	4	4	3	3	2	Macron allies are already courting a "grand coalition" against the far right ahead of 2027, a sign the AfD's German result reached Paris faster than any policy debate could. Political fatigue with succession manoeuvring is becoming its own risk factor.
United Kingdom	3	3	2	2	2	Prime Minister Andy Burnham's government continues settling into office six weeks in, with an Autumn Budget still the main test ahead. Markets are watching for continuity more than for surprises.

How to read the colours: 1 = calm, 2 = fairly good, 3 = mixed, 4 = some strain, 5 = serious strain. Scores are the desk's judgement on the morning's evidence, not a model output.

DEEP DIVE · THE WEEK'S ANCHOR STORY · 04

SERBIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL WORKAROUND

Belgrade's Double Ballot

A government proposal to dissolve parliament turns Aleksandar Vučić's pivot from president to prime minister into a two-election process, and the coming weeks will show whether Serbia's opposition can make that workaround costly.

Part One · What Actually Happened

Prime Minister Miloš Vučević told reporters on Monday that his government had formally proposed dissolving the National Assembly, the procedural step that opens the way to early elections. "If we want to mitigate tensions in society there is no better way than to ask people," he said, adding that "a responsible government never ignores such demands."

The proposal follows a decision by President Vučić's own Progressive Party days earlier to nominate him for prime minister, a job he last held before becoming president in 2017. Because Serbia's constitution bars him from a third presidential term, the pivot only works if he resigns the presidency outright, which is why a separate presidential election must now run alongside the parliamentary one.

Serbia's constitution requires between 45 and 60 days of campaigning once an election is called, and reporting this week has pointed to 18 or 25 October as the likely date, with formal confirmation due within days under the 45-day notice rule. Two ballots, one incumbent, and a timetable that compresses an entire election cycle into six weeks.

The move lands against a backdrop nearly two years in the making: the 1 November 2024 collapse of a railway station canopy in Novi Sad killed sixteen people and set off sustained street protests that have never fully subsided. It also follows Ratko Mladić's funeral, held in Belgrade days earlier with soldiers carrying his coffin, which drew a formal protest from the EU's enlargement commissioner.

Macut is framing the snap vote as a response to protesters' own demand for an early election, a rhetorical move that lets the government claim the mantle of listening rather than retreating. Serbia's opposition remains split across multiple lists and movements, which is precisely the arithmetic the ruling party is counting on.

Part Two · Three Ways This Can Go

The first path is the one the government is visibly betting on: the Progressives hold their base through October, Vučić wins the presidential race he is forced to run, and the pivot to prime minister completes without serious incident. Continuity would keep Serbia's EU accession file exactly where it is — moving slowly, watched closely, but not derailed.

The second path sees a fragmented result deny Vučić's allies a clean majority in the new Assembly, forcing coalition bargaining that a party accustomed to governing alone has little recent practice managing. A weakened government would complicate Belgrade's dealings with Brussels at a moment the bloc is already unhappy about the tone around Mladić's funeral.

The third and least likely path is a legitimacy crisis — an opposition boycott, disputed results, or protests large enough that international observers question the vote's credibility outright. That outcome would draw the sharpest EU scrutiny of the three and test whether Brussels holds a candidate country to the same standard it demands of full members.

Each path turns on the same question Serbia has answered the same way for a decade: whether an opposition that agrees on grievance can agree on a candidate. Nothing in Macut's Monday announcement suggests that changes before October.

POSSIBILITY	CHANCE	WHAT IT NEEDS	WHAT IT MEANS FOR LATIN AMERICA
SNS wins both votes, Vučić becomes PM	55%	The ruling party holds its base through October while opposition lists stay fragmented and fail to consolidate behind one challenger	Reinforces a precedent for incumbents redesigning their own office to dodge a term limit, a playbook several Latin American leaders have already tried
Fragmented result forces coalition bargaining	30%	Opposition parties consolidate enough to deny the SNS and its allies a working Assembly majority, without unseating Vučić outright	A weakened Vučić would slow Serbia's EU accession momentum, an indirect signal about the bloc's appetite for enlargement that Latin American exporters watch as a proxy
Election legitimacy crisis or boycott	15%	Opposition groups or protest movements boycott or formally dispute the vote, drawing sustained EU and OSCE criticism	Echoes contested-election disputes across the region and tests whether Brussels applies the same scrutiny to a candidate country that it demands of its own members

Probabilities are Rio Times Intelligence Desk estimates and not financial advice.

WHAT WE ARE WATCHING · OUR OPINIONS · 05

EIGHT THINGS, WITH OUR OWN VIEW

Eight Things We Are Watching

Eight files the desk will check before the next edition — ranked by how soon they move.

WHAT	STANCE	WHEN	OUR VIEW
Serbia's formal election-date decree	WATCHING	Days	The constitution requires 45 days' notice, meaning Belgrade must confirm 18 or 25 October within days of Monday's dissolution proposal. The date will start the clock on both the parliamentary and presidential races.
Kyiv ceasefire diplomacy	CAREFUL	Weeks	Strikes resumed within hours of the 72-hour pause expiring, and a White House official has promised only that next steps come "in the coming weeks." Encouraging language from envoys has preceded stalled diplomacy before.
Saxony-Anhalt coalition talks	WATCHING	Weeks	The CDU, SPD, Greens, Left and BSW hold 44 of 83 seats, two more than needed for a majority without the AfD. Whether five parties can actually agree to govern together is untested.
Italy-Spain Schengen suspension	CAREFUL	Days	Spain's reciprocal border checks are due for review on 22 September after five weeks in force. Neither government has signalled whether it will lift or renew them.
Tebboune's Madrid state visit	POSITIVE	Weeks	Algeria's president is expected in October to formalise energy and migration commitments alongside King Felipe VI and Sánchez. Exact dates have not yet been confirmed.
Bulgaria's presidential first round	WATCHING	Months	The 25 October vote proceeds without a GERB-nominated candidate for the first time in years. Borissov's calculation will shape which candidate reaches a possible 1 November runoff.
Poland-Germany sabotage investigation	NEGATIVE	Weeks	Prosecutors are still probing the 31 August WB Electronics fire as suspected sabotage with a foreign-intelligence dimension. Tusk's public rebuke of AfD sympathisers has raised the political temperature around the case.
Casa 47 rollout	POSITIVE	Weeks	Spain's public-housing portal launched with 800 flats and a promise of 1,500 more "very soon." Whether the expansion lands on schedule will test the credibility of Sánchez's housing pitch.

POWER PLAYERS · 06**WHO IS DECIDING THIS WEEK**

Five People Shaping The News

Five people whose decisions this week set the region's weather.

Giorgia Meloni · PRIME MINISTER OF ITALY

Meloni used her first international meeting since the summer recess to defend a Schengen system her own government has helped suspend, arguing borders must be defended before they can be trusted. Her choices in the coming weeks over Italy's own suspension with Spain will show whether that argument is policy or posture.

Volodymyr Zelensky · PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE

Zelensky watched a ceasefire pause he had agreed to expire into strikes on his own capital within hours, a reminder that encouraging language from American envoys has not yet translated into security. His government's next moves will show how much patience remains for a process that keeps producing adjectives instead of outcomes.

■uro Macut · PRIME MINISTER OF SERBIA

Macut put his name to the formal proposal that turns his party's political manoeuvre into a constitutional process, framing a snap election as a response to protesters' own demands. The mechanics he set in motion this week will occupy Serbia's institutions for the next six weeks.

Pedro Sánchez · PRIME MINISTER OF SPAIN

Sánchez launched a housing programme, warned Congress about the far right, and opened a diplomatic channel to Algeria within a single day, each move reinforcing the same argument about what his government is for. Whether Casa 47's promised expansion arrives on schedule will test how much of that argument is delivery rather than message.

Donald Tusk · PRIME MINISTER OF POLAND

Tusk turned Germany's election result into a domestic argument about his own country's politics, accusing Polish nationalists of cheering a party he says threatens Poland's security. His readiness to name names has sharpened a debate other European leaders have mostly kept polite.

DAILY BRIEFING · 07

WHAT HAPPENED WHERE

The Day, Country By Country

The day, country by country — two sentences each, no decoration.

FRANCE

Two presidential allies urged the centre, left and right to unite behind a single 2027 candidate, a day after the AfD's German result.

Officials say they want the next budget adopted through ordinary votes, avoiding a repeat of the special powers used to force through 2026's.

GREECE

The most recent published survey put the ruling party at 26.5 per cent against 14.5 per cent for Tsipras's ELA.S., a gap wider than in July.

The prime minister rejected the charge days after unveiling his costed 2027 spending package at the Thessaloniki fair.

NETHERLANDS

D66, VVD and CDA scrapped most of a planned €6.5 billion savings package, but the coalition remains short of a majority in both chambers.

Seven in ten Dutch respondents told pollsters they are unhappy with the Jetten cabinet ahead of its 15 September budget day.

DAILY BRIEFING · CONTINUED**HUNGARY**

Budapest says billions in previously frozen EU funding have reached the budget since the government changed in April.

The opposition party argues household support has lagged the government's own structural-reform claims.

MOLDOVA

Moldovan officials continue seeking a fast-tracked path to EU membership alongside Ukraine's own bid, a push Romania's president has openly backed.

Officials point to the EU-Moldova summit as evidence membership talks are advancing faster than in prior years.

UNITED KINGDOM

The prime minister faces a packed autumn agenda including prison capacity, defence-spending commitments and a first Autumn Budget.

Officials are weighing NATO's 3.5 per cent GDP defence-spending target against an already strained fiscal picture.

CORPORATE PIPELINE · 08

DEALS, SECTORS AND DATES

Pipeline, Sectors, And The Calendar

ITEM	TYPE	WHEN	STATUS
Serbia snap election	Election	18 or 25 Oct	Government has proposed dissolving parliament; formal date confirmation is due within days under the 45-day notice rule.
Saxony-Anhalt coalition talks	Government formation	Now	CDU, SPD, Greens, Left and BSW hold a combined 44-seat majority on the near-final count; no formal talks have concluded.
Italy-Spain Schengen suspension review	Border policy	22 Sept	Spain's reciprocal checks are due for renewal or lapse after five weeks in force; Italy's own suspension remains active.
Algeria-Spain 8th High-Level Meeting	Diplomacy	Oct (TBC)	President Tebboune's state visit is expected to formalise new energy and migration commitments; exact dates unconfirmed.
Bulgaria presidential election	Election	25 Oct (1st round)	GERB has confirmed it will not field a candidate, reshaping the field ahead of a possible 1 November runoff.

Sector Watch · Four Things to Track

BORDER AND MIGRATION POLICY

Italy and Spain's reciprocal Schengen suspension, now five weeks old, has turned a bilateral irritant into a test of whether the treaty's core promise still holds. Both governments say the measures are temporary, but neither has set a firm date to lift them.

DEFENCE AND SECURITY

Poland's unresolved drone-plant sabotage investigation and the AfD's Russia-friendly positions have pushed hybrid-threat planning back toward the top of regional security agendas. Governments are still responding nationally rather than through any joint alliance mechanism.

HOUSING AND PUBLIC FINANCE

Spain's Casa 47 launch and the Netherlands' reversed welfare cuts both show governments spending politically ahead of tests they cannot avoid — an election cycle in Madrid's case, a parliamentary vote without a majority in The Hague's. Fiscal generosity is this season's dividing line as much as ideology.

ENERGY

Spain's push for more Algerian gas via the Medgaz pipeline sits alongside a broader continental effort to diversify supply before winter. Energy security and migration policy are increasingly the same conversation in Madrid, Rome and Algiers alike.

Calendar · Next 30 Days

DATE	EVENT	WHY IT MATTERS
10 September	Serbia's constitutional election-date deadline	Belgrade must formally confirm 18 or 25 October under the 45-day notice rule following Monday's dissolution proposal.
15 September	Dutch cabinet presents its 2027 budget	Rob Jetten's minority government defends a revised savings package to a parliament where it lacks a majority in either chamber.
22 September	Italy-Spain Schengen suspension review	Spain's interior ministry must decide whether to renew or lift the reciprocal border checks in force since 8 August.
October (date TBC)	Algeria-Spain 8th High-Level Meeting	President Tebboune's state visit is expected to formalise new energy and migration commitments with Madrid.
18 or 25 October	Serbia's snap parliamentary election	Vučić's Progressives test whether his pivot from president to prime minister persuades voters after more than a decade in power.
25 October	Bulgaria's presidential election, first round	The vote proceeds without a GERB-nominated candidate for the first time in years, reshaping the path to a runoff.
1 November	Bulgaria's presidential runoff, if required	A second round follows if no candidate wins an outright majority on 25 October.

BOTTOM LINE · SOURCES · 09

WHAT THE DAY ADDS UP TO

The Honest Sentence

Tuesday's edition turned on verification as much as news: a near-final Saxony-Anhalt count revised the CDU's collapse and confirmed a workable non-AfD majority exists, while conflicting figures on both the AfD's own vote share and Ceuta's crossing numbers were carried side by side rather than reconciled. None of the day's diplomacy, in Kyiv, in Rome or in Belgrade, resolved anything outright.

The throughline is procedural rather than dramatic — a pause that expired precisely on schedule, a dissolution proposed through the correct legal channel, a party choosing arithmetic over ego in Sofia. Europe's institutions did roughly what they were built to do this week, which is not the same as producing a result anyone finds comfortable.

Latin American readers should note how often verification itself was the story — an exit poll revised by a certified count, a migrant-crossing figure disputed by a factor of nearly two, a vote share cited three different ways by three outlets. The desk's job on a day like this is less to report the number than to report which number, and whose.

Nothing here is settled, and the desk has flagged the figures still in dispute, the reporting it could not independently confirm, and the stories held for firmer sourcing. Tomorrow's edition will follow whichever of these threads moves first.

DETAIL

PRIMARY	Reuters, Associated Press and Agence France-Presse wire filings; Al Jazeera, CBS News, NBC News and CNN reporting dated 6-8 September 2026.
REPORTING	Brussels Signal, governo.it, europeaninterest.eu, Balkan Insight, BTA, Sofia Globe, La Moncloa, Infobae, El Independiente, DutchNews.nl, NL Times, Greek City Times, ProtoThema English and London Times/BILD reporting, all filed 1-8 September 2026.
LANGUAGES	Sweep conducted across English-, Italian-, Spanish-, German-, Serbian-, Polish- and Bulgarian-language sources; Spanish-language coverage of Sánchez's Congress remarks and Bulgarian-language BTA reporting were cross-checked against English-language wires where available.
VERIFICATION NOTE	The Saxony-Anhalt result is carried at three figures reported by different outlets — 44.5 per cent (exit poll, 6 September), 44.1 per cent (near-final count, 99.1 per cent of precincts, 7 September) and 43.8 per cent (a widely-carried preliminary tally also cited by several European outlets, 7 September) — and none has been reconciled to a single number pending official certification.
UPDATED FIGURE	Ceuta's late-July crossing figures are reported at a wide range by different outlets — more than 40,000 in 24 hours (Euronews, 31 July), almost 50,000 (France24, 31 July) and as high as 60,000-70,000 over the full weekend (Brussels Signal) — and are carried above with their respective sourcing rather than reconciled to one number.
EXCLUDED	A higher estimate of roughly 72,000 Ceuta crossings over 30-31 July, attributed to Spain's interior ministry by Brussels Signal, was carried above as the top of the reported range rather than adopted as the single figure, given how widely outlets diverge.
SKIPPED	A Czech Republic story on cabinet appointments under Prime Minister Babiš and a Portugal story on regional power outages were held pending firmer, on-the-record confirmation expected later this week.

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