

Greece has the oldest passenger car fleet in Europe.

The ageing vehicle fleet, the density of the fleet and the inadequate transport infrastructure, especially in areas of Athens which remain "cut off" from the metro network, creating a suffocating situation on the streets of Athens. Overall, the average driver loses approximately 111 hours per year stuck in traffic, while the corresponding figure in Lisbon is approximately 79 hours. A major thorn in the side, as the study's data show, is the fact that Athens has one of the densest fleets of passenger cars, with almost 900 cars per square kilometre, compared to over 500 in Rome and around 250 in Lisbon. At the same time, the Greek vehicle fleet is ageing, partly as a result of the 2010 economic crisis, with the result that Greece now has the oldest fleet of passenger cars in the EU (over 17 years), while limited parking spaces and high car ownership contribute to congestion.

and congestion on the roads. Traffic conditions in Athens highlight the need for comprehensive solutions that take into account both traditional public transport and ridesharing services such as Uber. From 2015 to today, Uber's driver base has grown from 244 in 2015 to nearly 5,000 in 2024, accounting for 10.3% of the total number of people employed in the taxi sector in 2023. At the same time, revenue generated through Uber has increased sixfold between 2015 and 2024, with a significant increase in night-time journeys and trips to and from airports, as a result of increased tourism and domestic demand. According to the study, taxi rides through Uber contributed €110 million to Greek GDP in 2024.

We can't even sell potatoes.

Forty per cent of Neurkopio potato production has been rotting in warehouses since autumn, according to recent reports, and if no solution is found due to the product's low shelf life, it will be destroyed. Approximately 10,000 tonnes were produced, harvested from the fields and remain in warehouses in Drama, waiting for someone unknown. Most likely a trader. Although reports said that traders had bought the rest of the production, they had not paid for it. The argument for not selling it was that the market is flooded with cheaper imported potatoes, such as those from Egypt, which Greek producers cannot compete with. The underlying demand of producers is obviously to find a way to limit imports so that they can sell their production, or for there to be some state intervention.

Xenia hotels are once again becoming a tourist attraction.

Xenia hotels, often iconic properties in ideal locations across the country, which in some cases had fallen into disrepair after their heyday in the mid-20th century, are making a comeback one after the other, as the Ministry of National Economy, the Superfund and the Hellenic Tourism Development Company (ETAD) proceed with their concession through long-term leases. Following the completion of the concession agreement for the Xenia Hotel in Ouranoupoli, the next step, according to information from relevant sources, is the concession of the Xenia Hotel in Vytina. The relevant tender is already being prepared by ETA for a building that is abandoned but located in an excellent spot in the area. Designed by architect Kostas Bitsios in 1965, the property has an area of 1,330 square metres and a capacity of 40 beds. Of the Xenia hotels managed by ETAD throughout the country, ten are already leased: Arachova, Kastoria, Ancient Olympia, Nafplio, Cape Sounio, Lagonisi, Edessa, Serres, Portaria and Chios. Another seven are in the process of signing contracts. In addition to Ouranoupoli, this category includes the Xenia hotels in Kastania, Andros, Heraklion, Platamonas, Tsagarada and Xanthi. Finally, another eight are still available for development: this category includes the Xenia hotels in Kozani, Kalentzi, in Thasos, in Drama, in Komotini, in Epidaurus and Delphi. Another public asset linked to the past, the thermal springs, will be developed after 2028, according to the medium-term planning of the economic team. These are the thermal springs of Kaiafa, Methana, Ypati and Aidipsos, which ETAD aspires to transform into wellness products.

Most homes are energy-intensive and old.

Tens of billion euros estimated that will be required in order to gradually upgrade, both energetically and functionally, the at least 3 million homes that need intervention today. More than 50% of the country's homes were built before 1980, i.e. 45 years ago, with 35.7% of them built in the 1960s and 1970s. At the same time, only 2.6% of homes have been built since 2010, due to a lack of investment caused by the economic crisis. Based on the relevant analysis, it is estimated that six out of ten homes nationwide are in need of energy upgrades, as they lack insulation and other important infrastructure. In fact, the greatest needs are found in southern Greece, specifically 60% in Attica, 62% in central and southern Greece, and 66% in the islands, while 58% of homes in northern Greece need upgrades. At the same time, as market executives report, in many cases design errors have been made that limit the impact of the programmes. One of the most characteristic examples concerns the "Exoikonomo" programme of 2025, which was launched in April 2025, but the first applications were announced in December of the same year. At the same time, although the programme's budget has more than doubled and now stands at €924 million, the market estimates that some of the funds related to the Recovery Fund will be lost due to the tight timelines. It should be noted that approximately 30% of the programme is financed by the Recovery Fund.

India at the centre of AI's geo-economics.

India aspires to act as a bridge between technologically advanced economies and developing markets, promoting a model of technology diffusion based on infrastructure, interoperability and the exploitation of digital public goods. Nvidia will expand the Shakti Cloud platform with more than 20,000 graphics processing units (GPUs), while Dell Technologies has unveiled the "AI India Blueprint," tailored to the Indian digital infrastructure model. On a broader scale, Microsoft has committed to investing \$50 billion by 2030 to accelerate the adoption of AI in the Global South. Structural trends are reinforcing this momentum: demand for data centre power in India, Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Middle East-North Africa is estimated to grow up to

sixteen times by 2035, according to estimates from a recent BloombergNEF study. However, uneven technology adoption, infrastructure gaps and institutional constraints pose real risks to labour markets and public finances. Bill Gates' absence from the summit was a reminder that tech diplomacy remains a politically sensitive area. India is trying to make the most of the situation.

The Italian experiment with cheap electricity.

The government of Giorgia Meloni has announced a sweeping reform of the electricity market. Since then, the whole of Europe has been watching the "Italian experiment" because if it succeeds without major repercussions for energy companies, then the cost of electricity will fall significantly for businesses and consumers. The central idea is not to pass on the cost of carbon dioxide allowances to electricity bills. Today, electricity prices across Europe are based on the most expensive technology, which is usually natural gas-fired power generation. The problem is that natural gas plants pay emission allowances. This cost is passed on to the price. And because in Italy, as in Greece, natural gas plants determine the price paid by all consumers, even if the electricity is generated from renewable sources, prices are high. The Italian government is now saying, "I will compensate natural gas plants for the cost of carbon allowances from the revenue I get from the mechanism already in place for the entire industry." For better or worse, in order to have resources, it has also increased the tax burden on energy companies by two points. In this way, it is estimated that wholesale prices will fall and, accordingly, electricity bills will be reduced. Many wonder whether this measure is enough to save Europe from the madness of high energy prices. Or whether other factors, such as cross-border trade, will continue to drive prices up.

The Dutch experiment with a four-day working week.

The transition to a four-day working week did not result from a sudden legislative intervention, but was the outcome of a long social change that began in the 1980s. The entry of women into the workforce led to the so-called "one-and-a-half income" model, where part-time employment became the norm in order to maintain family balance. Over time, this culture spread to men, especially new fathers, establishing the famous "father's day" and decoupling professional success from the exhausting five-day work week. Today, the four-day week is so widespread in the Netherlands that full-time employees often compress their working hours into four days, while trade unions such as the FNV are pushing for the four-day week to be officially established. The unions also argue that "one day less" can be good for energy, productivity and society, and that the

The 'normalisation' of the four-day working week may keep people in work who would otherwise have left the labour market altogether.

Buying a home is an unattainable dream for 29% of Europeans.

Almost half of Europeans who do not own their own home are either unable or unwilling to buy one in the future. On average, 29% of respondents believe they will never be able to buy their own home, with the percentage ranging from 13% in Turkey, which is included in the survey, to 44% in the Czech Republic. In Greece, this figure rises to 30%, while it is even higher in Slovenia (39%), Italy (35%), Malta (34%), Ireland, Poland and Hungary (33%) and Finland (32%). At the other end of the scale are Luxembourg (17%) and Turkey. Slow economic growth has weighed on wage growth in many parts of Europe, while property prices have continued to rise. As a result, affordability remains a significant challenge, especially for younger generations, even in markets with relatively stable employment conditions. More and more residents of Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic are turning away from the housing market, as the property rally and the difficulty of saving make home ownership a distant dream. However, the data also show an overall shift in interest. Fifteen per cent of respondents are not interested in buying a home at all.

Panama takes control of two canal ports.

Panama cancelled its contracts with Hong Kong-based Chinese-influenced company CK Hutchison for the management of two ports on the canal and instead entered into temporary management agreements with two Western companies, namely APM Terminals, a unit of Danish giant AP Moller-Maersk, and MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company, based in Switzerland. His decision is a victory for Washington, but also an escalation of the peculiar economic proxy war that has been going on since last year between the US and China over control of the strategically important canal. This follows last month's decision by the country's Supreme Court, which ruled that the contracts for the management of the ports of Balboa and Cristobal, adjacent to the Panama Canal, were unconstitutional. The contracts with Panama Port Co. or PPC, a subsidiary of the Chinese-influenced CK Hutchison of Hong Kong, had a duration of more than two decades. The Panamanian government will take over the management of the two ports.



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The world's largest food company 'cuts' ice cream

Nestlé announced today that it is in "advanced negotiations" to sell its ice cream brands to Froneri. This move comes at a time when the company, which owns Nespresso and KitKat chocolates, among other brands, is seeking to simplify its range of activities. As announced, it will focus on the coffee, pet care, food and snack sectors. In a teleconference with journalists, it stated that Nestlé's six ice cream brands were something of a "distraction" from the rest of its portfolio, which includes cereals, coffee, confectionery and frozen products.