

English articles

It's useful to read articles in English, even if you don't understand every word - it will help you increase your vocabulary and keep up to date with things happening in English-speaking countries!

*This page will be updated on **Mondays**. The first article is aimed at a B1 and upwards level and the second article is aimed at a B2 and upwards level*

Articles of the week



Austria welcomes JJ back home with cheers, hugs and roses after he wins the Eurovision Song Contest



By PHILIPP JENNE and KIRSTEN GRIESHABER Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — Austrian fans enthusiastically welcomed classically trained singer JJ back home at Vienna airport on Sunday after he won the 69th Eurovision Song Contest with “Wasted Love.”

As JJ walked through the gate, hundreds of fans cheered, some played his song and others surrounded the new star, hugging him and asking for autographs.

The 24-year-old countertenor, whose winning song combines operatic, multi-octave vocals with a techno twist, and who also sings at the Vienna State Opera, held up his trophy in one hand and a big bouquet of roses in the other. He smiled, wiped away tears and told the crowd “that victory is for you.”

JJ, whose full name is Johannes Pietsch, was Austria's third Eurovision winner, after bearded drag queen Conchita Wurst in 2014 and Udo Jürgens in 1966.

“This is beyond my wildest dreams. It's crazy,” said the singer when being handed the microphone-shaped glass Eurovision trophy after his win in the Swiss city of Basel on Saturday night.

On Sunday night, JJ told reporters in Vienna that “I don't think you'll realize that you did it at all until you're on your deathbed.”

'All of Austria is happy'

Austria's president, Alexander van der Bellen, celebrated JJ in a video posted on X.

“What a success! What a voice! What a show!” he exclaimed. “All of Austria is happy.”

Chancellor Christian Stoecker wrote on X: “What a great success — my warmest congratulations on winning #ESC2025! JJ is writing Austrian music history today!”

The Vienna State Opera also expressed joy over the win. “From the Magic Flute to winning the Song Contest is somehow a story that can only take place in Austria,” opera director Bogdan Rosic told the Austrian press agency APA.

Several Austrian cities were quick to show their interest in hosting next year's contest. Innsbruck Mayor Johannes Anzengruber told APA that “not everything has to take place in Vienna. ... Austria is bigger than that,” and the towns of Oberwart in Burgenland and Wels in Upper Austria also threw their hats into the ring.

JJ himself said he hoped that Vienna would get the next ESC which he would love to host together with his mentor, Conchita Wurst.

A nail-biting final

Israeli singer Yuval Raphael came second at an exuberant celebration of music and unity - JJ won after a nail-biting final that saw Raphael scoop up a massive public vote from her many fans for her anthemic “New Day Will Rise.”

At a post-victory press conference, JJ said the message of his song about unrequited romance was that “love is the strongest force on planet Earth, and love persevered.

“Let's spread love, guys,” said JJ, who added that he was honored to be the first Eurovision champion with Filipino heritage, as well as a proudly queer winner.

Eclectic and sometimes baffling

The world's largest live music event, which has been uniting and dividing Europeans since 1956, reached its glitter-drenched conclusion with a grand final in Basel that offered pounding electropop,

quirky rock and outrageous divas.

Acts from 26 countries — trimmed from 37 entrants through two elimination semifinals — performed to some 160 million viewers for the continent's pop crown. No smoke machine, jet of flame or dizzying light display was spared by musicians who had three minutes to win over millions of viewers who, along with national juries of music professionals, picked the winner.

Estonia's Tommy Cash came third with his jokey mock-Italian dance song "Espresso Macchiato." Swedish entry KAJ, which had been favorite to win with jaunty sauna ode "Bara Bada Bastu," came fourth.

The show was a celebration of Europe's eclectic, and sometimes baffling, musical tastes.

Grieshaber reported from Berlin. Associated Press writer Jill Lawless in Basel, Switzerland contributed to this report.

The UK and the EU hail a new chapter as they sign fresh deals 5 years after Brexit



By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain and the European Union hailed a new chapter in their relationship Monday after sealing fresh agreements on defense cooperation and easing trade flows at their first formal summit since Brexit.

Five years after the U.K. left the EU, ties were growing closer again as Prime Minister Keir Starmer met European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and other senior EU officials in London for talks.

The deals will slash red tape, grow the British economy and reset relations with the 27-nation trade bloc, Starmer said, while von der Leyen called the talks a "historic moment" that benefits both sides.

"Britain is back on the world stage," Starmer told reporters. "This deal is a win-win."

He hailed Monday's agreements — the third package of trade deals struck by his government in as many weeks following accords with the U.S. and India — as "good for jobs, good for bills and good for our borders."

But Britain's opposition parties slammed the deals as backtracking on Brexit and “surrendering” anew to the EU. “We're becoming a rule-taker from Brussels once again,” Conservative Party leader Kemi Badenoch said.

Here are the main takeaways from the summit:

Cutting red tape on food trade

Officials said they will remove some routine border checks on animal and plant products and align with EU regulations, which will reduce costs on food imports and exports and make it easier for goods to flow freely across borders.

Businesses have complained about trucks waiting for hours at borders with fresh food that cannot be exported to the EU because of laborious post-Brexit certifications.

The changes will mean the U.K. can sell products like raw British burgers, sausages and seafood to the EU again, officials said. The benefits will apply also to movements between the British mainland and Northern Ireland, where post-Brexit customs checks have been a thorny issue for years.

While the EU is the U.K.'s largest trading partner, the government said the U.K. has been hit with a 21% drop in exports since Brexit because of more onerous paperwork and other non-tariff barriers.

Defense procurement pact

A new security and defense partnership will pave the way for the U.K. defense industry to access a new EU loan program worth 150 billion euros (\$170 billion.) That will allow Britain to secure cheap loans backed by the EU budget to buy military equipment, in part to help Ukraine defend itself.

The EU has said that the loan program will help boost the readiness of European defense as well as enable more coordinated support for Ukraine.

Fishing rights

The deal included a 12-year extension of an agreement allowing EU fishing vessels to operate in U.K. waters until 2038, which angered U.K. fishermen and their supporters.

While economically minor, fishing has long been a sticking point and symbolically important issue for the U.K. and EU member states such as France. Disputes over the issue nearly derailed a Brexit deal back in 2020.

Elsbeth Macdonald, head of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, called the agreement a “horror show for Scottish fishermen” that was granted in order to secure other objectives. Scottish First Minister John Swinney said the deal was “the direct opposite of what was promised by Brexit.”

Easing movement for young people

Post-Brexit visa restrictions have hobbled cross-border activities for professionals such as bankers or lawyers, as well as academic and cultural exchanges, including touring bands.

The U.K. and EU said they agreed to co-operate on a youth mobility plan that's expected to allow young Britons and Europeans to live and work temporarily in each other's territory, though no details were provided.

British officials insisted that numbers would be capped and stays would be time-limited.

The free movement of people remains a politically touchy issue in the U.K., with the youth mobility plan seen by some Brexiteers as inching back toward completely free movement for EU nationals to move to the U.K. The U.K. has similar youth mobility arrangements with countries including Australia and Canada.

Cutting airport waits

British passport holders will be able to use e-gates at more European airports as part of the deal.

Since Brexit, many British travelers cannot use automated gates when they arrive at EU airports. The new measure will end “the dreaded queues at border control,” officials said.

Opposition objects to a 'surrender'

Britain's opposition parties have criticized Starmer's bid to reset relations with the EU. The pro-Brexit and anti-immigration Reform U.K. party, which recently won big in local elections, and the Conservatives have called the trade-offs in the deals a betrayal of Brexit.

Starmer is “taking us backwards. We left the European Union. That was settled, we drew a line under that,” said Badenoch, the Conservative leader. “This deal is taking us to the past and that is why we call it surrender.”

Starmer stressed that he did not violate his “red lines”: The U.K. won't rejoin the EU's frictionless single market and customs union, and will not agree to the free movement of people between the U.K. and the EU.

David Henig, a U.K. trade policy expert at the European Centre for International Political Economy, suggested that while some will continue to argue against agreeing to EU regulations, most Britons likely believe it's time to move forward.

“Simply following EU rules in some areas is going to be controversial to those who thought that Brexit means casting off all influence from the EU entirely,” he said. “That wasn't realistic for a trading nation like the UK., where 50% of our trade is with the EU.”

Pan Pylas and Jill Lawless in London and Lorne Cook in Brussels contributed reporting.

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