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The Élysée Treaty, Franco-German reconciliation and the construction of Europe: myth and reality

Author: Hartmut Marhold



The Franco-German Friendship Treaty of 22 January 1963 was not the starting point for the reconciliation between the two countries, which began with the Schuman Plan of 1950. But by facilitating the pursuit of Franco-German reconciliation, it has rendered a very important service to the construction of Europe, to the benefit of all members of the Union.

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Front page! :

The Franco-German Relation, an imperative necessity



French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz renewed their agreement with powerful language, but without hiding the nuances and differences, on 22 January on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Élysée Treaty. They thus offer Europeans more than perspectives, they offer real chances for the future, writes Jean-

Dominique Giuliani... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

Retirement systems in the European Union



Pension systems are regularly the subject of debate in the Member States and discussions at European level because of their importance for budgets and the demographic evolution of Europe. While each country has its own system, the Foundation offers a comparative table to better understand the situation in each country and the issues involved... [Read more](#)

European recovery plans: figures and priorities



In response to the economic and social consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, the European Union has established a €672.5 billion recovery fund. On 19 January, the Commission made a second payment of €3.6 billion to Greece and gave a positive assessment to Germany's revised plan. On 17 January, the Council adopted Luxembourg's revised plan. The Foundation offers you an interactive map of the plans country by country, to know the amounts, the timetables... [Read more](#)



Ukraine/Russia :

First European Disbursement of 3 billion €



On 17 January, the Commission disbursed a first tranche of €3 billion of the €18 billion macro-financial assistance to Ukraine for the year 2023. The aim is to help Ukraine maintain the functioning of public services, including hospitals and schools, as well as critical infrastructure... [Read more](#)



Arms supply to Ukraine



On 19 January, 11 European states announced that they were going to deliver new weapons to Ukraine: armour, shells, ammunition, helicopters, machine guns and drones. Denmark will supply all 19 Caesar guns it owns. On 20 January, Finland announced the supply of artillery and ammunition worth €400 million and the Netherlands would soon be sending Patriot anti-missile systems. Meeting in Ramstein on the same day, defence ministers and senior military officials from some 50 countries discussed military aid to Ukraine... [Read more](#)



First UN Convoy arrives in Soledar



On 20 January, the UN announced that its first humanitarian convoy had arrived in Soledar. This town has been one of the most contested since the beginning of the conflict. The convoy is bringing essential goods for the population... [Read more](#)



World Food and Agriculture Forum



The 15th edition of the World Food and Agriculture Forum was held from 18 to 21 January in Berlin, under the theme "Transforming Food Systems: A Global Response to Multiple Crises". Agriculture ministers from the 64 countries present committed to creating sustainable, resilient and inclusive food systems. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky spoke and recalled that food exports from Ukraine have been halved due to the Russian invasion... [Read more](#)



Call for the creation of a special tribunal for crimes in Ukraine



On 18 January, MEPs called for the creation of a special international tribunal to prosecute crimes of aggression against Ukraine and bring Russian and Belarusian political and military leaders to justice. They believe that an ad hoc tribunal would help to strengthen the investigative work of the International Criminal Court... [Read more](#)



Visit by Charles Michel in Kyiv



The President of the European Council Charles Michel visited Kyiv on 19 January for talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to prepare the summit to be held in Kyiv on 3 February. He told the Ukrainian Parliament that the EU should deliver tanks and air defence systems, long-range missiles and ammunition... [Read more](#)



European Council :

Meeting between Charles Michel and Ulf Kristersson



The President of the European Council, Charles Michel, met with the Swedish Prime Minister, Ulf Kristersson on 16 January in Stockholm to launch the Swedish Presidency of the Council. He announced that the discussions at the February European Council will focus on migration and the economy, in particular the issue of state aid rules, the flexibility of European funds, the creation of a sovereign wealth fund and solidarity between Member States.

Financial support for Ukraine and its European integration will also be discussed... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Industrial plan for the Green Deal



On 17 January, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen presented the broad lines of a European industrial plan that will be based on four pillars: the regulatory environment, financing, skills and trade. She announced that the Commission will propose a regulation for a net zero emission industry by 2030. Pending the creation of a European Sovereignty Fund, state aid rules will be temporarily adapted to stimulate investment... [Read more](#)

Harnessing talent in Europe's regions



On 17 January, the Commission launched the 'Talent Facility' which aims to help regions which, due to the ageing of the population, are facing a shrinking workforce, in particular through the departure of qualified young people. The Commission proposes specific solutions per region and support through EU funds to retain and attract people and skills... [Read more](#)

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Parliament :

Speech by Ulf Kristersson in Parliament



Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson presented the priorities of the Swedish Council Presidency to MEPs on 17 January. He stressed that the priority remains support for Ukraine and preparation for its integration into the European Union. He pledged to continue on the path towards reducing carbon emissions. After mentioning the challenges related to competitiveness, he emphasised the work to be done to respect the rule of law... [Read more](#)

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Proposals regarding the fight to counter corruption



On 16 January, Parliament President Roberta Metsola presented new measures that will form a first approach to strengthening "the integrity, independence and accountability of the Parliament". On 17 January, Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson announced that the Commission would submit a law to criminalise all forms of corruption. On the same day, MEPs adopted an amendment to the rules of procedure on immunity procedures... [Read more](#)

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Humanitarian consequences of the blockade in Nagorno Karabakh



On 19 January, MEPs denounced the ongoing blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh by self-proclaimed Azerbaijani militants and urged the Azerbaijani government to free the Lachine corridor so that Armenians living in the area can access essential goods and services. In view of the risk of a humanitarian crisis, they called for international organisations to be allowed access to the area and for a fact-finding mission to be conducted by the UN and the OSCE... [Read more](#)

Foreign, Security and Defence Policy



MEPs adopted the annual reports on the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy on 18 January. They urge the EU to increase its military aid to Ukraine and call for the abolition of unanimity for Council decisions without military involvement. They asked the Commission to launch an independent enquiry into the behaviour of Enlargement Commissioner Oliver Varhelyi towards the Western Balkans... [Read more](#)

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Human rights and democracy in the world in 2022



On 18 January, MEPs adopted the annual report on human rights and democracy, which states that 75% of the world's population experienced a deterioration in their country's situation in 2022. The report depicts global trends and challenges to democracy, focusing on the war in Ukraine, and offers analysis and recommendations on policies, instruments and European diplomacy to protect these values... [Read more](#)

Exchange of personal data between Europol and New Zealand



On 17 January, MEPs approved a new agreement between Europol and New Zealand that will allow them to exchange data for the purpose of fighting crime and terrorism and to cooperate with each other's law enforcement agencies... [Read more](#)

Marc Angel elected to the Vice-Presidency



On 18 January, Parliament elected Marc Angel (S&D, LU) as its fifth Vice-President, replacing Eva Kaili (S&D, GR), who has been jailed in connection with the Qatar corruption case... [Read more](#)

Council :

Meeting of Economy and Finance Ministers



On 17 January, Swedish Minister for Finance Elisabeth Svantesson presented the Swedish Council Presidency's programme, which focuses on tackling economic instability and the energy crisis. The ministers launched the annual European Semester process for monitoring Member States' economic, employment and budgetary policies... [Read more](#)

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Eurogroup Meeting



On 16 January, the Finance Ministers of the euro zone took stock of the changeover to the euro in Croatia on 1 January. They discussed the objectives of the digital euro project, the coordination of their budgetary policies, particularly with regard to energy support measures for households and businesses. They discussed the economic policy of the euro area for 2023 and economic governance. In addition, the IMF presented the interim results of its review of euro area policies, which will be completed by mid-2023... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Increase in aid in 2023



On 18 January, the EU adopted a €1.7 billion budget for 2023 to meet the needs arising from humanitarian crises around the world. Some of the aid will go to the EU's south-eastern neighbours, notably to deal with the war in Ukraine, and the rest will be divided between several areas such as North Africa, the Middle East, East Africa, Asia and South America to help people displaced by conflict, insecurity and climate shocks... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers



The Foreign Ministers decided on 23 January to release a seventh tranche of €500 million for military support to Ukraine, and an additional €45 million for the EUMAM Ukraine military training mission. They decided to establish a civilian mission in Armenia to maintain the stability of the border with Azerbaijan. They added 18 Iranian officials and 19 Iranian entities involved in the repression against the population to the list of those sanctioned. They exchanged views with Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh, including on the elections and the Palestinian reform plan... [Read more](#)

Germany :

New Defence Minister



Boris Pistorius, Lower Saxony's Minister of the Interior, was officially appointed on 19 January as head of the Federal Ministry of Defence, following the resignation of Christine Lambrecht on 16 January... [Read more](#)

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Bulgaria :

GRECO Report on Bulgaria

On 19 January, the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) published its report on measures to prevent corruption and promote integrity of public authorities and law enforcement agencies in Bulgaria. What emerges is the lack of an appropriate integrity framework applied to senior officials, as well as too little transparency regarding their remuneration and assets. Criminal justice in cases of corruption involving senior officials and the independence and oversight of the police need to be improved... [Read more](#)

Spain :

Franco-Spanish Friendship Treaty



On 19 January, French President Emmanuel Macron and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez signed the first Franco-Spanish friendship treaty in Barcelona. The text reasserts the link between the two countries, structures their relations and underlines their desire to cooperate on a European scale... [Read more](#)

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France :

60th Anniversary of the Elysée Treaty



French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, their ministers and MPs from both countries celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty on 22 January in Paris. In a joint declaration issued after a Franco-German council of ministers, the two governments pledged to strengthen their ties "in all areas that underpin genuine European sovereignty". At a Franco-German Defence and Security Council, they decided to intensify their strategic armaments partnership... [Read more](#)

Increase in the Defence Budget



President Emmanuel Macron announced on 20 January that the next military programming law will be allocated a budget of €413 billion for the period 2024-2030, compared to the current €295 billion. It will be oriented around 4 priorities: the reinforcement of France's sovereignty, the anticipation of high intensity, the defence of common spaces and the renewal of partnerships... [Read more](#)

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Ireland :

Fine of 5.5 million euro for Meta



The Irish Data Protection Commission (DPC) found on 19 January that Facebook's parent company Meta had breached the EU Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) with its Whatsapp application, particularly with regard to transparency obligations. Meta has been fined €5.5 million, following a first penalty of €390 million imposed by the same authority earlier this year... [Read more](#)

Italy :

The Bank of Italy raises its growth forecast for 2030 to 0.6%



The Bank of Italy published on 20 January its first economic bulletin for the year 2023. It points out the slowdown in economic activity in the country during the last quarter of 2022. It raises its growth forecasts for 2023 to 0.6%, compared to 0.4% previously forecast... [Read more](#)

Czech Republic :

Polls before the second round of the Presidential election



Former general Petr Pavel is leading in voting intentions ahead of the second round of the Czech presidential election on 27-28 January, with 57.7% of the vote, compared to 42.4% for former Prime Minister Andrej Babis, according to a survey by the STEM agency. According to a survey conducted by Data Collect and Kantar CZ, 46% of respondents said they were "determined" to vote for Petr Pavel, against 29% for Andrej Babis... [Read more](#)

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Switzerland :

Davos World Economic Forum



At the World Economic Forum in Davos, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez called for a commitment to multilateralism and the fight against inequality and climate change. On 18 January, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz repeated his targets for achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. In his speech, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called for international mobilisation against Russia. Finally, the President of the European Central Bank, Christine Lagarde, confirmed the objective of reducing the level of inflation in 2023 and was reassuring about the prospects for economic growth in Europe... [Read more](#)

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NATO :

Creation of the Space Centre of Excellence



Representatives of 15 NATO member states signed a memorandum in Paris on 18 January to establish the Alliance's Space Centre of Excellence, which will provide Allies with expertise and manpower in four pillars: conceptual development and experimentation, doctrine and standardisation, education and training, analysis and feedback. The centre, which will be based in Toulouse, is expected to reach full operational capability in 2025... [Read more](#)

WTO :

International Coalition for Climate Trade Policy



On 19 January, the European Commission, Member States and 26 partner countries launched a "Coalition of Trade Ministers for Climate", led by the European Union, Ecuador, Kenya and New Zealand, to support trade policies that help tackle the climate crisis. The aim is to identify good practices and provide policy guidance, in particular to help those countries most vulnerable to the consequences of climate change... [Read more](#)

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Fisheries Financing Mechanism



On 20 January, the European Union pledged €1 million to the Fisheries Financing Mechanism, which is part of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreement on fisheries subsidies reached in November 2022. The mechanism aims to support sustainability in the fisheries sector and eliminate damaging fisheries subsidies... [Read more](#)

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IMF :

Report on Spain's economy



On 18 January, the IMF published a report on the Spanish economy. Inflation has slowed the recovery of output, which is not expected to return to pre-pandemic levels until 2024. Growth is expected to slow to 1.1% in 2023. The report highlights the resilience of the financial sector and praises the Spanish government for the positive results of the labour market reform... [Read more](#)

Report on Slovenia's economy



The IMF published its report on Slovenia's economy on 18 January, which shows that the country's economic growth is expected to slow further, from 5.4% in 2022 to 1.8% in 2023. Inflation is also expected to fall, although it will remain at a high level. The IMF has called for a tighter fiscal policy in 2023 and more targeted measures on energy prices... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Decrease in inflation in December



According to figures published by Eurostat on 18 January, annual inflation in the euro area was 9.2% in December compared with 10.1% in November, and 10.4% in December compared with 11.1% in November in the EU. The lowest rate was recorded in Spain at 5.5% and the highest in Hungary at 25%... [Read more](#)

Culture :

International Classical Music Festival in Krakow

capella
cracoviensis

The Capella Cracoviensis, an international classical music festival in Krakow, ends on 26 February. Artists from all over the world give concerts in historic buildings, including churches... [Read more](#)

Mozart Week 2023



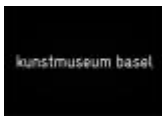
The 2023 edition of the "Mozart Week" is being held from 26 January to 5 February in the Austrian musician's birthplace: Salzburg. The programme includes numerous concerts celebrating the artist's choral works... [Read more](#)

Spain and the Hispanic world in London



Until 10 April, the Royal Academy of Arts in London is presenting the exhibition "Spain and the Hispanic World", with more than 150 works, including masterpieces by El Greco, Zurbarán, Velázquez and Goya, which give the public the opportunity to explore the art and culture of the Hispanic world... [Read more](#)

Lu Yang in Basel



The Kunsthalle Basel is devoting an exhibition to Lu Yang until 21 May. Each room presents a different cosmos through videos and installations to "extract the disorder and magic of the human condition"... [Read more](#)

"Il continente buio" by Alice Faloretti in Rome



From 25 January to 25 March, the Francesca Antonin Gallery in Rome is hosting the second exhibition of the artist Alice Faloretti. In "Il continente buio" (The Dark Continent), she presents a group of works that use the genre of landscape painting to express an enigmatic spirit with multiple meanings... [Read more](#)

Serge Gainsbourg at the BPI of the Pompidou Centre



From 25 January to 8 May, the Centre Pompidou in Paris is devoting an exhibition to Serge Gainsbourg. Manuscripts by the singer will be on display, as well as works from his library and previously unseen films to understand "the artist's writing and composition process"... [Read more](#)

Canaries Music Festival



The 39th International Music Festival of the Canary Islands (FIMC) is taking place until the 11th of February. It features around 60 concerts, eight conductors, soloists and musicians. The Kyiv Symphony Orchestra will be present... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



23 January 2023
Brussels
Foreign Affairs Council



26-27 January 2023
Stockholm
Informal meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers



27-28 January 2023
Czech Republic
Presidential election (second round)



30 January 2023
Brussels
Agriculture and Fisheries Council

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