

## Letter n°1037 of Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### New biotechnologies, allies for food safety in the face of climate change. Where does Europe stand?

[Agnès Ricroch - 26 Sep 2023](#)

Faced with rising prices and the risk of food shortages, the European Union should adopt flexible regulations to encourage the development of new genomic techniques.



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### ■ Foundation :



### Publication of the Schuman Report, State of the Union 2023

Europe has changed... This is what the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union 2023" shows, as it analyses the profound changes that have taken place in Europe, accelerated by the shock of the war in Ukraine. This 17th edition, published by Marie B., includes 19 contributions from high-level experts, including Zeljana Zovko. The book includes 30 original maps and a full set of commented statistics. The book is available in French and in English in digital format. Order your copy here. [Read more](#)

### ■ Commission :



## Fine of 376 million € for Intel

On 22 September, the Commission imposed a fine of €376 million on Intel for abuse of a dominant position and unlawful rebates aimed at eliminating competition between 2002 and 2007. This decision follows the annulment by the Court of Justice of a fine of more than €1 billion, decided in 2009. The Court had ruled in 2022 that the abuses found did not justify the amount of the fine, and had asked the Commission to recalculate the amount. [Read more](#)



## Glyphosate authorisation extended for 10 years

On 20 September, the Commission proposed a 10-year extension to the authorisation for the use of glyphosate, based on a risk assessment carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), which did not identify any "areas of critical concern" for humans, animals or the environment. The representatives of the Member States are due to vote on 13 October. [Read more - Other link](#)



## Payment of €127 million in aid to Tunisia

On 22 September, the Commission announced the payment of €127 million to the Tunisian government to support the implementation of the EU-Tunisia memorandum of understanding and assist Tunisia with migration management. The money will be used in particular to equip the Tunisian coastguard. Accelerated implementation of the memorandum was one of the points in the emergency plan announced by the Commission on 17 September in response to the migration situation in Lampedusa. [Read more](#)

## ■ Parliament :



## Announcement of the nominees for the Sakharov Prize 2023

On 21 September, Parliament announced the nominees for the 2023 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. The winners will be announced on 19 October. [Read more](#)

## ■ Council :



## Meeting of Agriculture and Fisheries Ministers

On 18 September, the Agriculture and Fisheries ministers discussed fishing quotas with the United Kingdom and Norway. They debated the directive on the management of agricultural land, and the state of trade in agriculture, in relation to the free trade agreements currently being negotiated with Mercosur and Australia. [Read more](#)



## Transport Ministers adopt a declaration regarding mobility

On 21 and 22 September, the transport ministers meeting in Barcelona adopted a declaration on the role of transport and mobility as means of social and territorial cohesion, in the context of decarbonisation and digitalisation. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



## Agreement on two consumer rights directives

On 19 September, Parliament and the Council reached agreement on the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive and the Consumer Rights Directive. Businesses will only be able to mention the ecological impact of their products if this is sanctioned by a recognised label, and will have to provide more details on sustainability and consumer rights in the face of obsolescence. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



## Meeting of European Affairs Ministers

On 19 September, the European Affairs ministers reviewed developments in the rule of law in the Member States and discussed the Commission's letter of intent for the coming year. The report of a Franco-German working group on the reform of the European Union was also presented. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



## Informal Meeting of Education and Youth Ministers

On 18 and 19 September, the ministers for education and youth, meeting in Zaragoza, discussed the participation of young people in the European decision-making process and inequalities in higher education. They committed to reducing university drop-out rates for students from low-income families. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



## Strengthening judicial cooperation in cases of terrorism

On 18 September, the Council gave final approval to a European regulation aimed at strengthening judicial cooperation between Member States in terrorist cases. States will be required to forward information on any criminal investigation into terrorist offences to the European judicial cooperation agency Eurojust as soon as national judicial authorities become involved. The regulation provides for a more secure and effective exchange of information, as well as closer cooperation with third countries. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



## Increase in the number of MEPs

On 22 September, the Council definitively adopted a decision on increasing the number of Members of the European Parliament to take account of demographic changes in the Member States. The number of MEPs will rise from 705 to 720 after the 2024 elections. France, Spain and the Netherlands will have 2 additional seats, and 9 States (Austria, Belgium, Poland, Denmark, Finland, Slovakia, Ireland, Slovenia and Latvia) will have 1 additional seat. [Read more](#)

## ■ Court of Justice :



## Restricting the possibilities for turning back illegal immigrants

The "return" directive applies to all third-country nationals, even those checked at an internal Schengen border, according to a ruling by the Court of Justice on 21 September in response to a request from the French Council of State. [Read more](#)

## ■ France :



## Official visit by Charles III to France

From 20 to 22 September, King Charles III made his first official visit to France. The King held talks with French President Emmanuel Macron on the ecological transition, the situation in the Sahel and Ukraine, and artificial intelligence. He gave a speech in the Senate to members of both chambers, recalling the importance of the Franco-British relationship. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



## The Pope visits Marseilles

On 22 and 23 September, Pope Francis visited Marseille to close the "Rencontres Méditerranéennes", a meeting of Catholic bishops and young people from around the Mediterranean to reflect on the major challenges facing the region. He called for migrants to be welcomed, saying that saving them was "a duty of civilisation" and that shipwrecks were caused "by the fanaticism of indifference". He met French President Emmanuel Macron, with whom he discussed the war in Ukraine, the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, immigration and ecology. Before his departure, he celebrated mass at the Velodrome stadium in front of more than 50,000 faithful. [Read more](#)

## ■ Poland :



## Requests for explanations on visa policy

On 20 September, following revelations in the Polish media, the European Commission and Germany asked the Polish government for explanations concerning 250,000 visas granted to nationals from Africa and the Middle East in exchange for bribes. The Commission believes that these revelations "raise questions about compliance with European legislation". Germany has threatened to re-establish controls at its border with Poland. [Read more](#)

## ■ Slovakia :



## Poll one week before the general election

With just a few days to go before the general elections in Slovakia on 30 September, former prime minister Robert Fico's opposition party Direction-Social Democracy (SMER-SD) is credited with 20.3% of voting intentions, compared with 17.2% for its main opponent Progressive Slovakia (PS, liberal). [Read more](#)

## ■ Armenia :



## Azerbaijan's war offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh

On 19 September, Azerbaijan launched a military offensive against the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. The following day, the local Armenian authorities agreed to a ceasefire. The military operation was condemned by the Council of Europe. France called for an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council, which was held on the 22nd. At this meeting, EU High Representative Josep Borrell condemned the military operation and called on Azerbaijan not to hinder humanitarian aid, to enter into dialogue with the Armenians to guarantee their rights and security, and to resume negotiations with Armenia to conclude a peace treaty. The Commission has also mobilised €500,000 in humanitarian aid for Nagorno-Karabakh. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Ukraine :



### European loan of €1.5 billion

On 22 September, as part of its macro-financial assistance, the Commission disbursed a €1.5 billion loan to Ukraine, which will help the Ukrainian government to continue operating its public services. The total disbursed by this mechanism since January 2023 amounts to €13.5 billion for a budget of €18 billion for the year. [Read more](#)



### Extension of temporary protection for Ukrainians

On 19 September, the European Commission proposed to extend the temporary protection granted to Ukrainians fleeing the war until March 2025. Since March 2022, these people have had access to rights on European territory, such as residency, access to the labour market and access to social assistance. The extension now has to be approved by the Council. [Read more](#)



### WTO complaints against Hungary, Poland and Slovakia

On 18 September, Ukraine took Poland, Slovakia and Hungary to the World Trade Organisation following their decision to unilaterally impose an import ban on Ukrainian agricultural products. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



## Meeting of the contact group for the defence of Ukraine

On 19 September, the Ukraine Defence Contact Group met at Ramstein air base in Germany. US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin assured Ukraine of the arrival of Abrams tanks, promised in January. The Czech Republic announced that it would supply arms to Ukraine with financial support from Denmark and the Netherlands, according to a "letter of intent" signed by the three countries. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ UN :



## 78th session of the General Assembly

From 19 to 23 September, world leaders gathered in New York for the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Europeans included German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Polish President Andrzej Duda, European Council President Charles Michel and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Volodymyr Zelensky also addressed the Security Council, where he called for a reform of the right of veto. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



## Signing of the treaty on the high seas

On 21 September, 81 States, including 26 Member States and the European Union, signed the High Seas Treaty in New York. This agreement relates to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and regulates the preservation of marine territory outside exclusive economic zones, which account for more than half of the world's ocean surface. In particular, it creates marine protected areas. The treaty must now be ratified by sixty of the signatory states or regional organisations before it comes into force. [Read more](#)

## ■ Studies/Reports :



## Report on the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility

On 19 September, the Commission published its second annual report on the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, an investment instrument with a budget of €723 billion designed to relaunch the European economy after the Covid-19 crisis. The Commission has disbursed more than €150 billion under this instrument. The funding has been granted with particular attention paid to transparency in the use of funds, compliance by beneficiary countries with European standards of the rule of law, and the protection of European financial interests. [Read more - Other link](#)



## OECD Report on economic outlook

The OECD published its interim economic outlook report on 19 September, according to which the first half of 2023 was stronger than expected, but global economic growth remains weak. Global economic growth is expected to reach 3% in 2023, before declining to 2.7% in 2024. Underlying inflation remains above central bank targets, which could lead to continued high interest rates. [Read more](#)



## Report on combating violence against women

On 21 September, the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on combating violence against women and domestic violence (GREVIO) published its activity report. In 2022, three Member States ratified the Istanbul Convention and the group published evaluation reports on 9 countries. The report devotes a thematic section to sexual violence, stressing the importance of legislation, policies and support services, as rape remains one of the most under-reported forms of violence against women. [Read more - Other link](#)

## ■ Eurostat :



## Decline in inflation in August

In August, inflation stood at 5.2% in the European Union and 5.9% in the eurozone, down slightly on July, according to a Eurostat study published on 19 September. [Read more](#)

## ■ Culture :



## Gertrude Stein and Picasso in Paris

The Musée du Luxembourg is devoting an exhibition to two great artists and friends of the 20th century, Gertrude Stein and Pablo Picasso, until 28 January 2024. The exhibition highlights the great artistic freedom of the two painters, who both immigrated to Paris, and their influence on Cubism and the avant-garde. [Read more](#)



## Picasso in Monaco

The "Pablo Picasso and Antiquity" exhibition is running at the Palais Princier in Monaco until 15 October. The event highlights the way in which the painter approached the legacy of Greco-Roman antiquity. [Read more](#)



## Louise Bourgeois at the Vienna Belvedere

The Belvedere museum is devoting an exhibition to the Franco-American artist Louise Bourgeois, entitled "Unbeirrbarer Widerstand", until 28 January 2024. The exhibition will explore the work of the celebrated visual artist, marked by hybridity and antagonism. [Read more](#)



PALAZZO  
ROVERELLA

## Tina Modotti in Rovigo

Until 28 January 2024, the Italian photographer Tina Modotti is being honoured at the Palazzo Roverella in Rovigo, with over 300 documents, images and films tracing the artist's photographic work. [Read more](#)



## Marina Abramovic in London

Until 1 January 2024, the Royal Academy of Arts in London is hosting an exhibition of works and performances by Marina Abramovic, the Serbian contemporary artist and pioneer of body art. The exhibition presents key moments in Abramovic's career through sculpture, video and the particularity of being versatile. Different works will be shown throughout the exhibition, so no two visits will be identical. [Read more](#)



## Female power in art in Madrid

From 28 September to 14 January 2024, the CaixaForum in Madrid is hosting an exhibition on female power in art. This exhibition highlights the many faces of feminine power, such as goddesses, demons, saints and other spiritual beings who have played an important role in our understanding of the world and in our society. [Read more - Other link](#)

**MUZEUM  
sztuki  
nowoczesnej  
w warszawie**

## Refugee artists on show in Warsaw

From 29 September to 10 December, Warsaw's Museum of Modern Art is holding its annual exhibition and charity auction on the theme of the migration crisis. The aim of the exhibition is to showcase the artistic creations of refugees. In addition, more than 80 works will be auctioned off on 5 November, with the proceeds going to the Refugees Welcome Poland and the Centre for Assistance to Foreigners organisations. [Read more](#)

## ■ Sports :



## The Ryder Cup is launched and Europeans retain the Solheim Cup

The Ryder Cup, the famous golf tournament that has pitted Europe against the United States since 1979, is being held near Rome from 29 September to 1 October. This is the forty-fourth edition of the event, during which 12 Europeans and 12 Americans compete in teams to win the trophy held by the United States. The European women's team retained its title at the Solheim Cup, held from 18 to 24 September. [Read more - Other link](#)

## ■ Agenda :

 25-26 September 2023

**Informal meeting of Culture Ministers** (Caceres)

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 27-29 September 2023

**Informal Meeting of European Affairs Ministers** (Murcia)

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 28 September 2023

**Justice and Home Affairs Council** (Brussels)

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 30 September 2023

**General Elections** (Slovakia)



### The Letter n°1037

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