

Letter n°1051 of Tuesday 23rd January 2024

A New Security Order for Europe

[Pierre Vimont - 23 Jan 2024](#)

"Europeans cannot afford not to reflect on the future of stability in Europe in response to the Russian question, which has plagued our continent for far too long", writes French Ambassador Pierre Vimont.



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■ Front page! :



2024: a Strategic Europe at last? - The Challenge of forward defence

"Jean-Dominique Giuliani writes: "Europe wants to be 'geostrategic': the time has come! "Europe must assume global responsibilities to avoid the contagion of the Russian example, which has unleashed violence all over the planet and unleashed thugs where they hope to exploit resentments hitherto contained." [Read more](#)

■ Foundation :



Schuman Network

The Schuman Network aims to promote debate and reflection on European issues. Numerous contributions from think tanks on the international situation, the forthcoming European elections and the issues and challenges to be faced are available, such as those from the Centre for European Reform, ELIAMEP and the Brexit Institute, which have recently been put online. More will follow. [Read more](#)



A site for everything you need to know about the European elections

From 6 to 9 June 2024, Europeans are invited to elect their MEPs for the next five years. The Foundation has set up a website to help you understand the elections and the issues at stake, and to follow the campaign with the lists of candidates and the programmes of all the parties. [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 set up a €672.5 billion recovery fund. On 17 January, the Commission received France's third request for payment. The Foundation offers you an interactive map of the plans, country by country, to view the funding amounts and timetables. [Read more](#)

■ Parliament :



Debate with the Belgian Prime Minister

Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo debated with MEPs on 16 January as part of the start of the Belgian Presidency of the Council. For him, 2024 will be a year when democracy will be put to the test, and Europe will have to respond to the expectations of its citizens. Opening up European capital markets, managing migration, resolving the conflict in Israel and Palestine and supporting Ukraine are among the priorities of the Belgian Presidency. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Economic Governance Reform

On 17 January, MEPs adopted their position on the reform of the EU's economic governance rules. The Commission's initial proposal was based on the idea of specific trajectories for each Member State to reduce its public debt and deficit. MEPs want these trajectories to be supported by quantified targets based on the percentage of GDP represented by the debt and deficit, and to give Member States more budgetary room for manoeuvre. Parliament can now begin negotiations with the Council on this dossier. [Read more](#)



Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and informing consumers

On 16 January, MEPs adopted new rules designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The first regulation concerns fluorinated gases, found in domestic refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pumps. A second regulation focuses on ozone-depleting substances, found in building materials in particular. On 17 January, MEPs adopted a directive to combat "greenwashing", the practice of promoting a product on the basis of a misleading positive environmental impact. Consumers will also have to be given precise information on the sustainability of products. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



European values, fundamental rights and the rule of law

On 17 and 18 January, MEPs adopted a report condemning the rollback of fundamental rights in certain EU Member States in 2022 and 2023, as well as resolutions on European values, fundamental rights and the rule of law in Slovakia and Hungary, calling on the Council and the Commission to reverse the decision to release European funds for these countries, which were conditional on reforms to the judicial system. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



Financial instrument markets, tax distortions and trade measures

On 16 January, MEPs voted on economic and financial measures. They adopted the final versions of the reforms to the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive and Regulation (MiFID II and MiFIR). They voted in favour of trade measures to bring the countries of the Western Balkans closer together, and spoke out in favour of reducing tax distortions in favour of debt. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



Open letter in support of new genomic techniques

An open letter signed by a thousand scientists and 34 Nobel Prize winners, published on 19 January and addressed to Members of the European Parliament, calls on MEPs to vote in favour of a Commission proposal relaxing the rules on genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The aim is to exclude new genomic techniques (NGTs) from GMO legislation, which, according to the signatories, make it possible to improve agricultural yields without posing a risk to humans or the planet. The Environment Committee will vote on this issue on 24 January. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Council :



Meeting of Economy and Finance Ministers

At the meeting of the Ministers for Economic Affairs and Finance on 16 January, the Belgian Presidency of the Council presented its work programme for the first half of 2024. The ministers launched the European Semester process and took note of the financial repercussions of the war in Ukraine. The day before, the eurozone ministers reviewed competitiveness, with a particular focus on energy prices. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Meeting of Environment and Climate Ministers

The European environment and climate ministers, meeting on 15 and 16 January, addressed the issue of preparing for the risks of climate change and the challenge of a just transition. They also discussed the circular economy and resource management. [Read more](#)



Agreement regarding the reduction of HGV CO2 emissions

On 18 January, Parliament and the Council reached agreement on a regulation to set CO2 emission standards for buses, lorries and trailers. By 2040, emissions from these vehicles will have to have been reduced by 90%, and by 2035, 100% of urban buses will have to be neutral. The co-legislators will now have to adopt the regulation definitively. [Read more](#)



Agreement on the fight to counter capital laundering

On 18 January, Parliament and the Council reached agreement on new rules to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism. The aims are to harmonise existing rules, take account of crypto-assets, and increase the powers of the services responsible for combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Court of Justice :



Strengthening of International Protection of Women

A ruling by the Court of Justice of the European Communities (CJEU) on 16 January clarifies the conditions for international protection in cases of violence against women. The directive providing for the granting of refugee status in the event of persecution of a third-country national, and subsidiary protection in the event of a risk of persecution, must now be interpreted in compliance with the Istanbul Convention, ratified by the European Union in June 2023. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Germany :



Tribute to Wolfgang Schäuble at the Bundestag

On 22 January, a tribute to Wolfgang Schäuble, former President of the Bundestag and member of the Foundation's Board of Directors, was held in Berlin, in the presence of the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, and Jean-Dominique Giuliani, President of the Foundation. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Finland :



Poll one week before the first round of the presidential election

The newspaper Maaseudun Tulevaisuus has published the results of its poll of citizens' voting intentions ahead of the presidential election on 28 January. 24% of respondents support Alexander Stubb, former Prime Minister and member of the National Coalition Party, while 21% support Pekka Haavisto, member of the Green League. The Finns Party candidate, Jussi Halla-Aho, enjoys 15% of voting intentions, compared with 12% for Olli Rehn of the Centre Party. Jutta Urpilainen of the Social Democrats and Li Andersson of the Left Alliance each received the support of 7% of respondents. [Read more](#)

■ France :



Trip to Poland

The French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Stéphane Séjourné, visited Warsaw on 15 January to reaffirm France's support for Ukraine and to give fresh impetus to the "Weimar triangle", i.e. cooperation between France, Germany and Poland. [Read more - Other link](#)

■ Italy :



Giorgia Meloni meets Ursula von der Leyen

On 17 January, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, travelled to Forlì in Italy to discuss aid for flood victims with the President of the Italian Council, Giorgia Meloni. Since May 2023, €95 million has been mobilised under the EU Solidarity Fund, and €60 million from the agricultural emergency reserve. As part of Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), €1.2 billion will be earmarked for the Emilia-Romagna region. [Read more - Other link](#)

■ Poland :



Investigation into spying by the Law and Justice party

On 17 January, the lower house of parliament ("Sejm") voted to create a parliamentary committee of enquiry into the use of Israeli spyware Pegasus by the government when it was led by the Law and Justice party ("PiS"). In addition, the University of Toronto's Citizen Lab cybersecurity monitoring laboratory has confirmed the use of the software by PiS against Krzysztof Brejza, election campaign coordinator for the Civic Platform (PO) party, in the 2019 parliamentary elections. [Read more](#)



Former Polish Deputy Foreign Minister arrested

Former Polish deputy foreign minister Piotr Wawrzyk was arrested by the Warsaw Anti-Corruption Authority on 17 January. Although he was dismissed from his post on 31 August 2023 for accepting bribes in exchange for visas, he is now officially charged with participating in the illegal issue of around 350,000 visas, and faces up to 10 years in prison. [Read more](#)

■ UK :



Voting rights restored to British citizens living abroad

Since 16 January, British nationals living abroad for more than 15 years can now vote in UK general elections. This decision marks the end of 20 years of discussions on the British political scene and involves more than 3.5 million British nationals. [Read more](#)

■ Ukraine :



Launch of the "Artillery for Ukraine" coalition

On 18 January, the French Minister for the Armed Forces, Sébastien Lecornu, together with his Ukrainian counterpart, Roustem Oumerov, launched the "Artillery for Ukraine" coalition, which aims to strengthen and perpetuate military support for Ukraine. 23 countries are taking part. [Read more](#)



Suspension of blockade by Polish hauliers

On 16 January, the Polish Minister for Infrastructure, Dariusz Klimczak, signed an agreement to unblock several border crossings with Ukraine from November 2023. The agreement provides for a change in national legislation and the suspension of blockades until 1 March. [Read more - Other link](#)

■ Migration :



The number of irregular entries into the EU in 2023 will be the highest since 2016

According to a statement issued by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex on 16 January, irregular entries into the European Union increased by 17% in 2023 compared with the previous year, reaching their highest level since 2016. The most popular routes are the Central Mediterranean (41%), the Western Balkans (26%) and the Eastern Mediterranean (16%). The top three countries of origin are Syria, Guinea and Afghanistan. [Read more](#)



Trilateral cooperation regarding Balkan migration route

On 16 January, the Croatian, Slovenian and Italian interior ministers met in Buzet (Croatia) to strengthen their cooperation in the fight against illegal immigration from the Balkans. The ministers therefore decided to strengthen their police cooperation, the implementation of which will be defined at a forthcoming meeting in March. [Read more - Other link](#)

■ NATO :



Defence exercise Steadfast Defender 2024

On 18 January, Christopher Cavoli, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, announced the start of a large-scale military exercise on European soil between the end of January and May. 90,000 troops will train for a scenario in which American reinforcements will support European forces as part of an alliance defence operation. The exercise will take place over a wide area, but in particular on the soil of countries close to Russia, such as the Baltic States and Poland. [Read more](#)

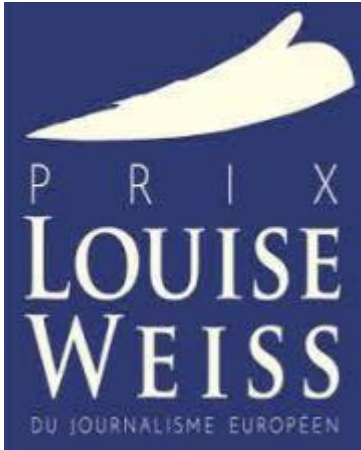
■ Studies/Reports :



Report on European climate policies

According to a report by the European Climate Advisory Board on 18 January, the European Union needs to speed up its climate policies if it is to achieve its goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. The independent scientists recommend putting an end to subsidies for fossil fuels and ensuring public support for the transition through redistribution measures for citizens and businesses suffering the economic impact of climate policies. [Read more](#)

■ Prize :



Louise Weiss Prize for European Journalism

With the support of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Hippocrène Foundation, the Association of European Journalists is organising the 18th Louise Weiss Prize for European Journalism. Candidates have until 19 February to send in their journalistic production (written, audio, video or web) published in 2023 in French, on a European subject. Originality is the key. [Read more](#)



Prize for the best article about the transformation of the energy sector

The Hanns Seidel Foundation, the Academy for Politics and Current Affairs, and the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities are organising their first International Prize for the best article covering the subject of the transformation of the energy sector, with a total prize of €1,750. Young researchers from all disciplines are invited to submit an article on political and technical approaches to energy transformation by 31 January. [Read more](#)

■ Culture :



Cinema Festival in Angers

The "Premiers Plans" film festival in Angers is running until 28 January. The 36th edition is devoted to first films by European directors, with the aim of revealing new cinematic talent. [Read more](#)



Photographs of Japan in Krakow

Until 29 March, the National Museum in Krakow is hosting an exhibition of photographs depicting the beginnings of modern Japan. The photographs retrace the modernisation and industrialisation of the country at the turn of the 19th century. [Read more](#)



Art Genève

The 12th edition of Art Genève, the contemporary art fair, will be held from 25 to 28 January at Palexpo. The fair will host some 80 modern and contemporary art galleries, as well as prestigious institutional and private collections. A new space dedicated to large-scale works is making its debut at the fair. [Read more](#)



Comic Strip Festival in Angoulême

The 51st Angoulême Comic Strip Festival is taking place from 25 to 28 January. It is one of the biggest of its kind in the world, and many prizes are awarded. [Read more](#)



"Cute" Exhibition in London

From 25 January to 14 April, London's Somerset House is presenting a ground-breaking exhibition on the role of the 'cute' in contemporary culture. Bringing together works of art and cultural phenomena in music, fashion, toys, video games and social networks, 'CUTE' explores the complex potential of 'cuteness' on our society. [Read more](#)



Exhibition at the Gallery Courthouse

From 26 January to 24 February, the Courthouse Gallery in Ennistymon, Ireland, is presenting 'Beyond Brushstrokes: Between Matter and Memory'. Bringing together works by local artists, the exhibition highlights the way in which these artists have pushed back the traditional codes of artistic creation, adopting an experimental approach that captures both the physical and the emotional, the tangible and the intangible. [Read more](#)



Jewellery in Madrid

From 25 January to 5 May, the "Escultura Timida" exhibition is on show at the Museo del Traje in Madrid. In this exhibition, traditional jewellery meets the creations of contemporary Spanish jewellers. [Read more](#)



Art Fair in Brussels

From 28 January to 4 February, the BRAFA fair will be held at Brussels Expo, one of the most prestigious art fairs in Europe. The event attracts rare works ranging from Antiquity to the 21st century. [Read more](#)

■ Agenda :

 22-23 January 2024

Trade Ministers Meeting (Brussels)

 23 January 2024


EU-Egypt Association Council (Brussels)

 23 January 2024

Agriculture and Fisheries Council (Brussels)

 24-26 January 2024

Justice and Home Affairs Ministers Meeting (Brussels)



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