

**Letter n°1072 of Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

## Being European (free, modern and independent): a view from Central and Eastern Europe

Nathalie de Kaniv - 18 Jun 2024

Deprived of political freedom behind the Iron Curtain, Central and Eastern European societies have learnt to broaden their horizons and continue to be European. The Ukrainian resistance, but also the inventiveness of the whole of society, despite being at war, illustrates this choice of freedom enabled by the European Union.



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### ■ Front page! :



#### European Elections: only France ...

"Jean-Dominique Giuliani analyses: "The European elections showed a relative stability in the continent's political groupings. "However, France stood out for the dissolution of its government, which is worrying both economically and politically", and the country risks losing an opportunity to lead the necessary changes in European policies and finding itself weakened at European level. [Read more](#)

## ■ Elections :



### Despite a shift to the right, the outgoing majority coalition is likely to be renewed

The main political balances already in place since 2019 are being maintained, and the outgoing majority made up of the EPP, S&D and Renew should be renewed, with a total of more than 400 seats. Turnout rose again in 2024 to 51.08% in the European Union. Radical right-wing, nationalist populist and even extreme parties are making progress, but to a lesser extent than expected. As a result, the nominations for positions of responsibility can now begin. [Read more](#)

## ■ Foundation :



### All the results of the European elections

In the European elections held from 6 to 9 June, Europeans elected 720 MEPs for the next five years. The Foundation has set up a website to help you better understand the role and powers of the Parliament and the results in each Member State. [Read more](#)



### The Schuman Network, ideas for Europe

The Schuman Network is an initiative of the Foundation, which works to promote the sharing of ideas on a European scale. With 20 members from 12 European countries, the Schuman Network is a forum for pooling research on topical European issues. Since its launch, around a hundred studies have been published. [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 12 June, the Commission approved a preliminary assessment I for Croatia, on 13 June for Spain and on 14 June for Greece. The Foundation offers you an interactive map of the plans country by country, to check the sums involved and the timescales. [Read more](#)



## Publication of the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union 2024".

The Foundation has published the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union 2024" which contains eminent contributions drawing the portrait of a Union tracing the contours of environmental and digital sovereignty and projecting itself into a new geopolitical era, full of new challenges, particularly for its industry and defence. The book is available in French and English, in paper and digital versions. A must-read for a full understanding of European issues. Buy it here! [Read more - Other link](#)

### ■ Commission :



#### Unfair Chinese subsidies for electric cars

The Commission provisionally concluded on 12 June that the electric vehicle value chain in China was unfairly subsidised, posing a threat of economic damage to EU manufacturers. The Commission has approached the Chinese authorities to examine these findings and explore ways of resolving the problems observed in a manner compatible with WTO rules. The individual duties that the Commission will apply to the three Chinese manufacturers selected in the sample would be 17.4% for BYD, 20% for Geely and 38.1% for SAIC. [Read more](#)

### ■ Council :



#### Meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers

Meeting on 13 and 14 June, the Home Affairs and Justice ministers reached agreement on the proposal to extend temporary protection for more than 4 million Ukrainian refugees until 4 March 2026. They adopted the joint implementation plan for the Pact on Migration and Asylum, aimed at preparing the Union for the implementation of the common information system, the functioning of solidarity, and the fairness and efficiency of return procedures. [Read more - Other link](#)

### ■ Court of Justice :

## Hungary ordered to pay €200 million

On 13 June, the Court of Justice of the European Union ordered Hungary to pay a lump sum of €200 million and a penalty payment of €1 million per day of delay for failing to comply with the judgment of the Court of Justice of 17 December 2020, finding that Hungary had failed to comply with the rules of EU law relating, in particular, to procedures for granting international protection and for returning illegally staying third-country nationals. [Read more](#)

## ■ ECB :



## Report on the international use of the euro

According to the European Central Bank's annual report on the international role of the euro, published on 12 June, the international use of the euro remained stable in 2023, with its share in various indicators remaining above 19%. The euro has retained its position as the world's second most important currency. Despite global inflation and geopolitical tensions, there has been no substantial change in the use of currencies. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ European Agencies :



## Fall in irregular border crossings in the EU

According to data published by Frontex on 14 June, the number of irregular border crossings in the European Union in the first five months of 2024 fell by almost a quarter (23%) to almost 80,000. The Western Balkans and the Central Mediterranean Sea recorded the biggest falls in detections of irregular crossings among the main migration routes (-71% and -58%), while the West African and Eastern Mediterranean Sea routes recorded the biggest increases (+303% and +103%). [Read more](#)



## Dismantling of a cocaine cartel and servers operated by terrorists

On 12 June, Europol announced the dismantling of a major drug trafficking network in Europe, resulting in 40 arrests and the seizure of 8 tonnes of cocaine and goods worth over €65 million. On 14 June, European and US police seized several servers in four countries that were broadcasting messages linked to the Islamic State organisation and "inciting terrorism in at least 30 languages". [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Bulgaria :



### IMF Report

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) believes that the Bulgarian economy is resilient despite the succession of domestic and international shocks it has suffered, according to the conclusions of the IMF's consultations in Bulgaria, published on 13 June. However, the IMF believes that long-standing challenges remain, such as convergence towards the average income of the European Union, low levels of investment, high levels of corruption, poverty and inequality, and demographic decline. [Read more](#)

## ■ Finland :



### Meeting of the Council of the Baltic Sea States

On 14 June, the foreign ministers of the Council of the Baltic Sea States (Poland, Germany, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Norway) met in Finland. At the end of their meeting, they adopted the Porvoo Declaration, which aims to strengthen resilience, cooperation between democratic states, security and crisis preparedness in the region, particularly in the face of Russian hybrid threats. They also reiterated their support for Ukraine. [Read more - Other link](#)

## ■ Greece :



### Government reshuffle

Following the European elections, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis reshuffled his government on 14 June to focus on the cost of living and employment. The ministers were sworn in by Greek President Katerina Sakellariopoulou. [Read more](#)

## ■ Hungary :



### Meeting with the NATO Secretary General

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg met Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban in Budapest on 12 June. Support for Ukraine was discussed, with Jens Stoltenberg calling for long-term financial support. Viktor Orban stated that Hungary would not take part in this initiative, but that it would not block it. [Read more - Other link](#)

## ■ Italy :



### G7 Summit

From 13 to 15 June, the G7 heads of state and government, accompanied by the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, met in Apulia to reiterate their support for Ukraine in its fight against Russia. They released around \$50 billion by drawing on the exceptional income from Russia's frozen sovereign assets. They also expressed their support for the proposed comprehensive agreement, which would lead to an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the release of all hostages and a credible path to peace, leading to a two-state solution. Finally, they announced the launch of the "Energy for Growth in Africa" initiative, in collaboration with several African partners. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Latvia :



### B9 Summit

On 11 June, the Heads of State and Government of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, together with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, met in Riga in the Bucharest 9 format. Finland and Sweden also took part in the summit. As countries on the Alliance's eastern flank, they reiterated their commitment to supporting Ukraine, as well as their concern about Russia's hybrid attacks. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ The Netherlands :



### Agreement on the composition of the government

On 11 June, the four parties of the future coalition announced an agreement on the composition of the new government. The far-right PVV party won five ministries, including immigration. The candidate ministers will be received by the government's "formateur" from 17 to 19 June. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Poland :



## Buffer zone on the Belarus border

On 10 June, the Polish government announced the re-establishment on 13 June of a no-entry buffer zone on part of its border with Belarus. Warsaw accuses Moscow and Minsk of waging a hybrid war by orchestrating the influx of migrants from Belarus into Poland. Since the beginning of the year, customs officials have recorded more than 18,000 attempts at illegal crossing. According to Warsaw, more than 90% of those attempting to cross the border illegally have Russian visas. The 45-kilometre zone will be around 200 metres deep. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Slovakia :



## Investiture of the President

Peter Pellegrini, who was elected President of the Slovak Republic on 6 April, took office on 15 June. He succeeds Zuzana Čaputová, who did not stand for re-election. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Ukraine :



## Peace Summit for Ukraine

The Ukraine Peace Summit was held at Bürgenstock in Switzerland on 15 and 16 June. The final declaration recognises the need for peace based on Ukraine's territorial integrity, and addresses a number of issues including the safe operation of Ukraine's nuclear facilities, food security, and the release of prisoners of war and displaced Ukrainian civilians. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



## Journey to Germany

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky visited Germany on the occasion of the conference on the reconstruction of Ukraine from 11 to 12 June. He met his German counterpart Frank-Walter Steinmeier. He then addressed members of parliament in a speech in the Bundestag. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



## 1.4 billion € agreement for Ukraine's recovery

At the Conference on Ukraine's Recovery on 11 and 12 June in Berlin, Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, announced the signature of new guarantee and grant agreements worth €1.4 billion to support Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction, as part of the Ukraine Facility's investment programme. These agreements are intended to underline the Union's firm determination to support Ukraine for as long as necessary. [Read more - Other link](#)

## ■ Studies/Reports :



### Report on Drugs

The report from the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) published on 11 June warns of stronger and purer drugs in Europe. With a diversified market and high availability, European consumers are exposed to psychoactive substances and new mixtures of drugs, increasing the risks to health. In 2023, 26 new drugs were identified, bringing the total to over 950. [Read more](#)



### Increase in cases of dengue fever in Europe

On 11 June, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) announced a "significant increase" in the number of cases of dengue fever in Europe, with 130 cases recorded in 2023 compared with 71 in 2022. The number of imported cases has soared, with more than 4,900 cases recorded in 2023, three times higher than the previous year. Thirteen countries in the European Union and the European Economic Area (EEA) are involved. According to the ECDC, climate change is having a major impact on the spread and transmission of these diseases, by creating climatic conditions that are favourable to mosquito breeding. [Read more - Other link](#)

## ■ Culture :



### Music Festival

The Fête de la musique will be back for its 42nd edition on 21 June. Numerous concerts will be held throughout France and in 120 other countries. This festive event celebrates the summer solstice to the rhythm of music. [Read more](#)





## Photo Festival in Athens

The Athens Photo Festival will run until 28 July at the Benaki Museum, showcasing the work of over 100 artists from all over the world. At the same time, 20 satellite exhibitions are being organised throughout the city. [Read more](#)



## Degas in London

The exhibition "Degas & Miss La La" runs until 1 September at the National Gallery in London. It features Degas's painting of the acrobat Miss La La (Anna Albertine Olga Brown) suspended by a rope held between her teeth. The exhibition also features rare drawings by Degas and previously unseen photographs offering new insights into the artist and his muse. [Read more](#)



## Joel Meyerowitz in Malaga

The Picasso Museum in Málaga is honouring the American photographer Joel Meyerowitz until 15 December. In 1966, he left New York for a year-long trip to Europe. The exhibition features prints from his European travels, with a particular focus on his extended stay in the Andalusian city. [Read more](#)



## Christina Capetillo in Copenhagen

The Danish architecture centre is exhibiting photographs by Christina Capetillo until 17 November. The Danish photographer and architect questions our perception of nature, confronting our idea of wild, untouched nature with the reality of human activity. [Read more](#)



## "Between day and dream" in Antwerp

The exhibition "At home: between day and dream" is on until 8 September at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp. From Frans Francken to Marc Chagall and Rik Wouters, the exhibition presents the finest works depicting the domestic world. [Read more](#)



MUSÉE GRANET  
AIX-EN-PROVENCE

## Jean Daret in Aix-en-Provence

The Musée Granet in Aix-en-Provence is paying tribute to the Baroque painter Jean Daret, until September 29. This 17th-century Belgian painter settled in Aix and made a name for himself by decorating homes and religious buildings. The exhibition features the painter's major works, including paintings, drawings and engravings, enriched by loans from a number of Provençal churches. [Read more](#)



## Władysław Hasiór in Warsaw

The Royal Palace in Warsaw is exhibiting "Hasiór. The Persistence of Experience" until 8 September. The exhibition offers the opportunity to discover Władysław Hasiór (1928-1999), a Polish sculptor, painter and scenographer known for his works that bear witness to the existential experiences and artistic explorations of the 20th century. [Read more](#)



## Ljubljana Festival

The 72nd edition of the Ljubljana Festival will take place from 20 June to 3 September. It is the country's oldest festival. The focus is on the performing arts, with some sixty dance, theatre, opera and music performances. [Read more](#)



## Nuits de Fourvière

The 75th edition of the Nuits de Fourvière is being held in Lyon until 25 July. Founded in 1946, the festival returns the ancient theatres to their original role as venues for the arts, bringing together music, dance, opera, theatre and circus. This year, the festival is back with two new features: a programme for children and families, and the Samedi des Nuits event, an invitation to celebrate and discover. [Read more](#)

## ■ Agenda :

 18 June 2024

**Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Transport)** (Luxembourg)

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 18 June 2024

**General Affairs Council (Cohesion)** (Luxembourg)

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 20 June 2024

**Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (Social Policy)** (Luxembourg)

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 21 June 2024

**Economic and Financial Affairs Council** (Luxembourg)

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 21 June 2024

**Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (Health)** (Luxembourg)

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 24 June 2024

**Agriculture and Fisheries Council** (Luxembourg)



### The Letter n°1072

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