

Letter n°1073 of Tuesday 25th June 2024

Ukraine's EU accession brings added value and serves historical justice

Dmytro Kuleba - 25 Jun 2024

On the eve of the first intergovernmental conference to open negotiations on Ukraine's accession to the European Union, Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs takes stock of the benefits of Ukraine's membership of the European Union.



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■ Front Page :



Europe, the last bulwark against the extremes

"The demagogic programmes presented during election campaigns in the Member States are generally not implemented because they are incompatible with membership of the European Union", analyses Jean-Dominique Giuliani, who believes that "the close ties woven between the Member States have as much to do with their sovereign interests as with the values they claim to share with Europeans". [Read more](#)

■ Elections :



Snap legislative election in France

The French legislative elections, originally scheduled for June 2027, have been brought forward by three years to 30 June and 7 July, following the French President's decision on the evening of 9 June to dissolve the National Assembly, the lower house of the French Parliament, following the results of the European elections. The French President is thus clearly seeking to establish himself as master of the game and is trying to catch his opponents off guard by deciding on a lightning election campaign. Since then, there has been a great deal of confusion on the right, and the forces on the left have chosen to join forces despite their differences. The outcome of the election remains uncertain, given the voting system. [Read more](#)

■ Foundation :



Everything you need to know about the results of the European elections and the Parliament's composition.

In the European elections held from 6 to 9 June, Europeans chose 720 MEPs to serve for the next five years. The Foundation has set up a website to help you get to know the MEPs and their political affiliations, and to understand the role and powers of the European Parliament, [Read more](#)



The Schuman Network, ideas for Europe

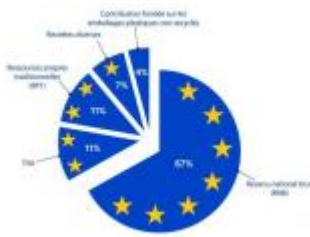
The Schuman Network, a Foundation initiative, works to promote the exchange of ideas across Europe. A new member has joined the network, bringing the number of partners to 21 from 13 European countries. The Schuman Network is a forum for pooling research on topical European issues and has received over a hundred contributions since its launch. [Read more](#)



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

The Foundation has just published the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union 2024". Eminent representatives from the worlds of politics, business, research and diplomacy, such as the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dmytro Kuleba, paint a portrait of a Europe projecting itself into a new geopolitical era, full of new challenges. The book is available in English and French, in paper and digital versions. Order your copy now! [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Commission :



Draft budget for 2025

On 19 June, the Commission proposed an annual budget of €199.7 billion for 2025. This budget will be supplemented by disbursements estimated at €72 billion under the NextGenerationEU initiative. This substantial financial package will help the Union to meet its political priorities while integrating the changes agreed at the mid-term review of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) in February 2024. [Read more](#)



New guidelines for the European Semester

On 19 June, the Commission presented strategic guidelines to the Member States as part of the European Semester. These aim to build a strong and resilient economy, guaranteeing competitiveness, resilience and long-term prosperity for all, despite a difficult geopolitical environment. It indicates that the opening of an excessive deficit procedure is justified for seven Member States: Belgium, France, Italy, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovakia. The spring economic forecasts predict GDP growth of 1% in the EU and 0.8% in the eurozone in 2024. In 2025, growth is expected to rise to 1.6% in the EU and 1.4% in the eurozone. At the same time, inflation should fall from 6.4% in 2023 to 2.2% in 2025. [Read more](#)



Investigation into Apple's failure to comply with competition rules

On 24 June, the European Commission paved the way for a fine against Apple, finding that its App Store did not comply with the new rules "of the Digital Market Regulation (DMA) because they prevent application developers from directing consumers to alternative distribution channels for offers and content", according to Brussels in a "preliminary opinion". [Read more](#)

■ Parliament :



Constitution of the Groups

On 19 June, the European People's Party (EPP) re-elected Manfred Weber, (Germany) as President of its group in the European Parliament. The EPP group renewed its leadership team with the election of 10 vice-presidents. The Greens/European Free Alliance (EFA) group elected its two co-presidents on 19 June, appointing Terry Reintk (Germany) and Bas Eickhout (Netherlands). [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Diplomacy :



Fourteenth set of sanctions against Russia

On 24 June, the foreign ministers adopted a fourteenth package of sanctions against Russia. This new package contains new measures in the energy field, targeting liquefied natural gas (LNG) and vessels supporting Russia's war. With regard to LNG, the package bans all future investments and exports to LNG projects under construction in Russia. It will also ban, after a nine-month transition period, the use of EU ports for the transshipment of Russian LNG. In addition, the package prohibits the import of Russian LNG into specific terminals that are not connected to the EU pipeline network. [Read more](#)

■ Council :



Meeting of Economy and Finance Ministers

The Ministers for the Economy and Finance met on 21 June to agree on the need to allow disbursements of €50 billion from the extraordinary proceeds derived from the immobilisation of Russian sovereign assets before the end of the year. They made progress towards agreement on the package of measures concerning value added tax (VAT) in the digital age, aimed at combating VAT fraud, supporting businesses and promoting digitisation. The ministers approved the opening of accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova. [Read more](#)



Eurogroup Meeting

At the Eurogroup meeting on 20 June, the finance ministers of the eurozone member states discussed the role of industrial policy in competitiveness and the importance of the single market. Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the IMF, presented the main recommendations of the IMF's mission to the eurozone, warning against the risks of fragmented and hasty industrial policies while promoting solutions focused on competitiveness and innovation. [Read more - Other link](#)



Meeting of Ministers for Social Affairs and Health

On 21 June, the health ministers discussed implementing a "Health Union" and making it a priority for the next Commission. They adopted a recommendation defining new measures concerning vaccine-preventable cancers, as part of the European plan to "beat cancer". They called for a more in-depth definition of unmet medical needs. On 20 June, the social affairs ministers adopted a negotiating position for the revision of the directive on European Works Councils (EWCs), aimed at strengthening worker representation in multinational companies. They also discussed the social dimension of the internal market. [Read more - Other link](#)



Meeting of Environment Ministers

On 17 June, the environment ministers adopted the regulation on nature restoration, which aims to regenerate at least 20% of the European Union's land and sea areas by 2030, and 95% of its volume by 2050. They adopted a decision for the Union to conclude the agreement on biodiversity in the high seas, in order to protect the oceans in areas beyond national jurisdiction, representing around two-thirds of the surface area of the oceans and 95% of their volume. [Read more](#)



Meeting of Transport Ministers

On 18 June, the ministers approved a general approach on a new regulation on the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), a revised directive on harmonised river information systems (RIS) on inland waterways, and a new regulation on the use of rail infrastructure capacity. They examined reports on the Commission's proposals to amend the directives on combined transport, vehicle weights and dimensions, multimodal passenger rights and the withdrawal of driving licences at European level. [Read more](#)



Programme of the Hungarian Presidency

On 18 June, the Hungarian Minister for European Affairs, Janos Boka, unveiled his country's programme when it takes over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union from Belgium on 1 July. He has outlined seven strategic priorities, including a stronger European defence policy, the fight against illegal immigration, and a common agricultural policy that will ensure Europe's food sovereignty. European competitiveness is at the top of the strategic agenda of the Hungarian Presidency, whose slogan is "Make Europe Great Again". [Read more](#)

■ France :



Purchase of Caesar guns and Mistral missiles

On 19 June, at the Eurosatory territorial armaments show, France, Croatia and Estonia announced that they would be making a joint purchase of CAESAR guns from KNDS France. In partnership with Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia and Hungary, France has signed an agreement with MBDA for the procurement of Mistral missiles. The signing of these projects is part of a wider framework for the joint acquisition of defence capabilities by European countries using European Union funding. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Italy :



Official visit by the Italian President to Moldova and Romania

Italian President Sergio Mattarella made an official visit to Moldova and Romania from 17 to 20 June. In Chisinau, he met Moldovan President Maia Sandu, to recall the close relations between the two countries and to express Italy's support for Moldova's integration into the European Union. In Bucharest, he met the Prime Minister, Marcel Ciolacu, and the President of the Senate, Nicolae Ciucă. The Italian head of state expressed his support for Romania's full integration into the Schengen area. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Latvia :



Strengthening the eastern borders

On 18 June, Latvian President Edgars Rinkēvičs visited the Russian and Belarusian borders. Welcoming the progress in security, he announced that the State will invest a further €300 million over 5 years to further strengthen the country's eastern borders. He highlighted the important role of Latvia's armed forces. [Read more](#)

■ Norway :



Arctic military transport corridor

On 20 June, Norway, Sweden and Finland agreed to create a military transport corridor crossing the north of each of the three countries. The aim is to transport troops and weapons to Finland in the event of Russian aggression, by forming a link between the infrastructures of the three countries. [Read more](#)

■ Ukraine :



Visits to Kyiv by the Presidents of the Polish Diet and the Lithuanian Parliament

On 18 and 19 June in Kyiv, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky hosted the Speaker of the Polish Diet (lower house of parliament) Szymon Hołownia and the Speaker of the Seimas (Lithuanian parliament) Viktorija Čmilytė. He thanked these countries for their support for the Ukrainian war effort. Support for Ukraine's integration into the European Union and NATO, as well as the urgent need to strengthen Ukraine's anti-aircraft defences, were also reaffirmed. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Road transport between the European Union and Ukraine

On 20 June, the European Union and Ukraine decided to extend their current road transport agreement until 30 June 2025. The agreement aims to help Ukraine access world markets by facilitating transit through EU countries and further developing its links with the European market. First signed on 29 June 2022 following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the agreement has significantly increased road trade between Ukraine and the EU to the benefit of both economies. [Read more](#)

■ ECHR :



Decisions against Russia

On 18 June, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) condemned Russia for its 2015 law on "undesirable organisations", which imposes significant restrictions on the operation of non-Russian NGOs. In its ruling, the Court found that the law "imposes significant restrictions" on four associations - Free Russia Foundation, Ukrainian World Congress, Association of Schools of Political Studies of the Council of Europe and Society for the Freedom of Information - to which Russia must now pay several hundred thousand euros. On the same day, the Court condemned Russia for refusing access to the archives on Soviet repression, in particular to the NGO Memorial, which was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2022. According to the Court, the Russian authorities' refusal of access to certain archives constitutes a violation of article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which deals with freedom of expression. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ NATO :



Mark Rutte sole candidate for the post of Secretary-General

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte is the final candidate for the post of NATO Secretary General, after Romanian President Klaus Iohannis withdrew his candidacy on 20 June. He will replace Jens Stoltenberg, who has held the post since 2014. His appointment will be formally confirmed shortly. [Read more](#)

■ Studies/Reports :



Overview of society

On 20 June, the OECD published the 2024 edition of its *Society at a Glance*, in which a chapter is devoted to the fertility rate in OECD countries. Between 1960 and 2022, the fertility rate fell by half, from 3.3 children per woman to 1.5 on average, well below the 2.1 children per woman needed to renew a generation. This decline in fertility can be explained in particular by the fact that women are having children later in life, often after the age of 30, and that young people are encountering difficulties, mainly economic and financial, which are prompting them to postpone their plans to have children. The report does, however, highlight the fact that the fertility rate rises when women can easily reconcile work and family life. [Read more](#)



Report on the state of asylum

The European Union Agency for Asylum (AUEA) believes that capacity-building efforts have enabled asylum systems to better manage the increase in the number of applications. In its annual report published on 17 June, the AUEA notes that European and national courts have played an increasing role in the convergence of practices. On the other hand, some reception systems are under considerable pressure, such as Germany, France, Spain and Italy, which together received almost 70% of all applications. [Read more](#)



Annual report on racism and intolerance

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), a body of the Council of Europe, published its 2023 annual report on 20 June. The report highlights major challenges in Europe, such as the crisis of people displaced by conflict, particularly Ukrainians and Armenians. At the same time, the report notes a significant rise in anti-Semitism following the conflict in the Middle East, as well as an increase in anti-Muslim discourse and acts of racism. [Read more](#)



STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL

Nuclear Rearmament

One of the key findings of SIPRI's annual report, published on 17 June, is that the number and types of nuclear weapons under development are increasing as states rely more heavily on nuclear deterrence. [Read more](#)

■ Culture :



Women among the Nabis at Pont-Aven

The "Femmes chez les Nabis" exhibition at the Musée de Pont-Aven will run until 3 November. It explores a new perspective about the Nabis group, formed at the end of the 19th century by artists influenced by Gauguin. It focuses on the women - wives, lovers, mothers - associated with the members of the group who were essential collaborators supporting the artists emotionally, morally and financially as well as influencing the creative processes of the movement. [Read more](#)



Louise Bourgeois in Rome

The Borghese Gallery is holding the exhibition "Louise Bourgeois: Souvenirs Inconscients" until 15 September, marking the first exhibition in Rome dedicated to this 20th-century sculptor. 20 emblematic works are on show, exploring the themes of the unconscious, memory and metamorphosis. Highlights include her marble sculptures, a monumental spider, and three of her famous Cellules. At the same time, Villa Medici is presenting two works by the artist. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Rosario de Velasco in Madrid

The Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, in conjunction with the Museo de Bellas Artes in Valencia, is devoting an exhibition to the Spanish figurative painter Rosario de Velasco, until 15 September. Paintings from the 1920s to the 1940s are on show, and a section is dedicated to the artist's illustration activities. Her art combines general questions concerning the history of art and explores aesthetic, social and political aspects. [Read more](#)



Hannah Hoch in Vienna

The "Hannah Höch - Mounted Worlds" exhibition is on until 6 October at the Belvedere Museum in Vienna. It showcases the photomontages and collages of this Dadaist artist, who played a central role in the art of the 1920s. Her works, a blend of irony and insight, deal in particular with themes of power. [Read more](#)

EMΣTNational Museum
of Contemporary Art Athens

Bertille Bak and Tala Madani in Athens

The National Museum of Contemporary Art in Athens is presenting two exhibitions until 10 November: Bertille Bak's "Spotlight", an exhibition of the French artist's work on human resilience, and the first solo show in Greece by the internationally acclaimed Iranian artist Tala Madani. The museum is also presenting the first solo exhibition in Greece by the internationally renowned Iranian artist Tala Madani. Entitled Shitty Disco, it depicts a metaphysical nightclub, a place that moves between fantasy and nightmare. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

**THE MODERN INSTITUTE**

Keith Haring in Glasgow

The exhibition "Keith Haring, Subway Drawings" is on until 5 September at the Modern Institute in Glasgow. The exhibition focuses on his chalk drawings in the New York underground between 1980 and 1985. His work, inspired by graffiti, reflects the flow of urban life, contemporary social issues and explores language and semiotics. [Read more](#)



"Notre-Dame de Paris: the quarrel over the stained-glass" in Troyes

The "Cité du vitrail" in Troyes is devoting an exhibition to the quarrel that began in 1935 over the idea of decorating the nave of Notre-Dame de Paris with contemporary stained glass. Until 5 January 2025, the Cité is exhibiting the Paris cathedral's stained glass windows for the first time since they were removed, in the chapel and adjoining rooms of the Hôtel-Dieu-le-Comte. This exhibition is part of the reopening of the Parisian monument, scheduled for December 2024, and has been labelled "Notre-Dame de Paris: towards the reopening". [Read more](#)

LOUISIANA MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Franz Gertsch in Humlebæk

The works of Franz Gertsch (1930-2022) are on show at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Denmark until 10 November. Visitors will have the opportunity to discover the works of this Swiss painter, who developed a new and distinctive concept of realism and won international acclaim for his photo-realistic paintings and woodcuts. [Read more](#)



Cork Chamber Music Festival

The West Cork Music Festival will be held from 28 June to 7 July. It features fifty concerts with eighty musicians, celebrating fifty years of classical music from Haydn and Mozart to Beethoven and Schubert. Highlights include Beethoven's ten violin sonatas, works by Danish composers, a Finnish wind quintet and an exploration of Ukrainian music. [Read more](#)



Opera Festival in Munich

The Munich Opera Festival will take place from 28 June to 31 July, with the central theme of "A Fountain Looking to the Sky". Numerous opera masterpieces are being performed, including those by Giacomo Puccini and Richard Wagner. The programme is complemented by a host of chamber concerts and recitals. [Read more](#)

■ Agenda :

 24-28 June 2024

Summer Session 2024 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg)

 24 June 2024

"Agriculture and Fisheries" Council "Foreign Affairs" Council (Luxembourg)

 25 June 2024

General Affairs Council (Luxembourg)

 27-28 June 2024

European Council (Brussels)

 30 June 2024

Legislative Elections (first round) (France)



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