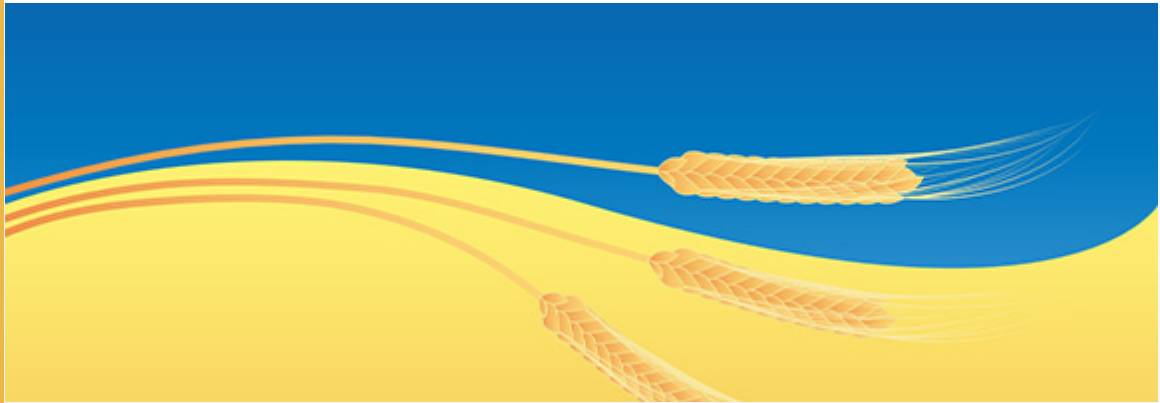


**Letter n°1074 of Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024**

## European agriculture and Ukrainian agriculture complement each other

Jean-Jacques Hervé - 02 Jul 2024

With the opening of negotiations for Ukraine's accession to the European Union, the prospect of an agricultural powerhouse joining the single market may give rise to fears of new competition between Member States. However, when it comes to global competition - and with Russia in particular - Ukrainian agricultural production is, according to the author, an asset to be taken seriously.



[Elections](#) | [Foundation](#) | [European Council](#) | [Commission](#) | [Parliament](#) | [Council](#) |  
[Diplomacy](#) | [Court of Auditors](#) | [ECB](#) | [Spain](#) | [France](#) | [Hungary](#) |  
[Montenegro](#) | [UK](#) | [Russia](#) | [Serbia](#) | [Ukraine](#) | [Council of Europe](#) |  
[ECHR](#) | [NATO](#) | [Culture](#) |

[Agenda](#) | [Other issues](#) | [Contact](#)

### ■ Elections :



## Results of the first round of the legislative elections in France

The Rassemblement National (RN), a radical right-wing party chaired by Jordan Bardella, came out on top in the 1st round of the early parliamentary elections held in France on 30 June. With 33.34% of the vote, it beat the Nouveau Front populaire (NFP), a left-wing coalition comprising La France insoumise (LFI), the Parti socialiste (PS), the Parti communiste (PCF), the Ecologists, the Nouveau Parti anticapitaliste (NPa), Place publique (PP) and the Parti ouvrier indépendant (POI), which took 27.99% of the vote. Ensemble!, a coalition of Emmanuel Macron's presidential majority led by Prime Minister Gabriel Attal (Renaissance (RE), Horizons, led by former Prime Minister (2017-2020) Edouard Philippe and François Bayrou's Mouvement démocrate (MoDem)), came third in the poll with 20.04% of the vote. Turnout was high at 64.99%. The 2nd round of voting will take place on 7 July. The week between the two rounds will see a new electoral battle and a great deal of political wrangling within and between the parties. [Read more](#)

## ■ Foundation :



## Everything you need to know about the new European Parliament

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, the voting rules and the issues at stake, and to find out about the newly elected MEPs and the composition of the European Parliament. [Read more](#)



## The Schuman Network of ideas in Europe

The Schuman Network is an initiative of the Foundation, which works to promote the sharing of ideas on a European scale. With 21 members from 13 European countries, the Schuman Network is a forum for pooling research on current European issues. Since its launch, around a hundred studies have been published. [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". In it eminent representatives from the worlds of politics, business, research and diplomacy paint a portrait of a Union that is 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 English and French, in hard copy and online. Order your copy here! [Read more - Other link](#)

## ■ European Council :



### Conclusions

On 27 and 28 June, the 27 Heads of State or Government agreed on the appointments to the Union's key posts, with Ursula von der Leyen as President of the Commission, Antonio Costa as President of the European Council, and Kaja Kallas as High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. They adopted the Strategic Agenda for 2024-2029, which defines the Union's future direction and objectives. A call was made to step up military support for Ukraine. The leaders condemned terrorist attacks, called for respect for international law, called for a ceasefire and humanitarian aid to Gaza, condemned the expansion of settlements, and reaffirmed their commitment to a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine. They invited the Council and the Commission to speed up work on all the measures identified to create integrated markets. They reaffirmed the importance of the Capital Markets Union in mobilising the private investment needed to meet the challenges ahead. [Read more](#)

## ■ Commission :



### IFF group fined for obstructing investigation

On 24 June, the Commission fined International Flavors & Fragrances Inc. and International Flavors & Fragrances IFF France SAS (IFF) €15.9 million for obstructing a Commission inspection in 2023. The Commission found that during the inspection, a senior IFF employee deliberately deleted WhatsApp messages exchanged with a competitor. [Read more](#)



## Microsoft accused of "abuse of a dominant position" by the European Union

The European Commission has accused Microsoft of abusing its dominant position with its Teams application. According to Commission Vice-President Margrethe Vestager, in charge of competition, the linking of this application to its office automation software violates the European Union's competition rules. On 1 April, the Microsoft group announced that it was dissociating Teams from its Office 365 and Microsoft365 suites, but this is not enough for the European executive, who sees a problem with the on-demand services offered to businesses through cloud computing. Microsoft, which wishes to avoid a fine, must now comply with European standards. [Read more](#)



## Chikungunya vaccine

On 28 June, the Commission authorised the first vaccine against the Chikungunya virus, a disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes. The effects of climate change have led to an increase in the presence of mosquitoes that transmit serious diseases in Europe. The European Union's authorisation of the Chikungunya vaccine is intended for adults over the age of 18. The Commission has announced funding of €500,000 under the "Union for Health" programme. [Read more](#)



## Conference on investment with Egypt

At the investment conference organised jointly by the European Union and the Egyptian government on 29 and 30 June, the European Union and Egypt decided to join forces to step up private sector investment in Egypt. They signed a Memorandum of Understanding providing Egypt with macro-financial assistance of up to €1 billion. [Read more](#)

## ■ Parliament :



## Constitution of Groups

On 26 June, the Socialists and Democrats Group (S&D) re-elected Spanish MEP Iratxe García Pérez as its Chair and Vice-Chairs. Valérie Hayer was re-elected chair of the Renew Europe group and elected its 8 vice-chairs. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Council :



## Meeting of Agriculture and Fisheries Ministers

The agriculture and fisheries ministers met on 24 June to approve a series of conclusions setting out a vision for the future of agriculture in the European Union. They stressed the importance of a strong and competitive agricultural sector, the simplification of procedures, support for new farmers and resilience in the face of climate change. They welcomed the fact that the biological situation of Europe's marine resources continues to improve, except in the Baltic Sea, where the environmental situation is particularly worrying due to Russian fishing activities. [Read more](#)

## ■ Diplomacy :



## Opening of accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova

On 25 June, the European Union held the first intergovernmental conference at ministerial level to open accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova. This follows the decision by the European Council on 14 and 15 December 2023 to open accession negotiations with these two countries and the approval by the Council on 21 June of the Negotiating Framework, in accordance with the revised enlargement methodology. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



## Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers

The foreign affairs ministers met on 24 June to adopt a 14th set of economic and individual restrictive measures targeting high-value-added sectors of the Russian economy. They also approved conclusions on the European Union's guidelines on children and armed conflict, and on the Union's priorities at the United Nations (UN) during the 79th session of the UN General Assembly. [Read more](#)

## ■ Court of Auditors :



## Security of gas supplies in the Union

On 24 June, the European Court of Auditors published a report on the security of gas supplies in the European Union, aimed at assessing whether the Union's strategic framework and actions in favour of security of gas supply have been effective. The Court noted that this framework promotes security of gas supplies, but that the achievement of exit objectives is often difficult to demonstrate. The Court recommends finalising the implementation of the EU Gas Affordability Framework, optimising the reporting process by Member States and reviewing the structure of regional cooperation, as well as making the implementation of projects of common interest more transparent. [Read more](#)

### ■ ECB :



## Report on progress towards adoption of the euro

The European Central Bank (ECB) and the European Commission have both published a report on progress towards adoption of the euro. Several countries have been examined, including the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Sweden and Bulgaria. Bulgaria, which joined the eurozone banking regulatory framework and the European Exchange Rate Mechanism in 2020, is tipped to be the next country to join the eurozone. The ECB and the European Commission believe that Bulgaria meets all the criteria to join the eurozone, with the exception of inflation. Indeed, the country has an inflation rate of 5.1%, well above the 3.3% benchmark for the price stability criterion. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

### ■ Spain :



## Implementation of the amnesty bill in Catalonia

Members of the High Court of Justice of Catalonia (TSJC) applied the amnesty law to two Catalan separatist activists for the first time on 25 June. Convicted of acts committed in connection with Catalonia's bid for independence, former Catalan councillor Miquel Buch and a former bodyguard of separatist leader Carles Puigdemont were granted amnesty, ending their civil and criminal liability. The amnesty law, which was definitively adopted in May, is the result of negotiations between Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez and the two Catalan pro-independence parties, without whose support he would not be able to govern. The law remains highly controversial, particularly among opposition MPs. [Read more](#)

### ■ France :



## Weimar Triangle Meeting

On 24 June, Sébastien Lecornu, the French Minister for the Armed Forces, received German counterpart Boris Pistorius and Polish counterpart Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz in Paris as part of the Weimar Triangle. They agreed to conduct joint training in Poland in 2025, to improve military mobility in Europe, and to strengthen their cooperation in the arms industry. They also discussed preparations for the NATO summit in Washington on 9 July. [Read more](#)



## Meeting with Jens Stoltenberg

French President Emmanuel Macron met NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on 24 June. In the run-up to the NATO Summit in Washington on 9 and 10 July, Emmanuel Macron reiterated the importance of NATO for Europe's collective security and praised the role played by this organisation since the start of the war in Ukraine. He also stressed the importance of strengthening the Alliance's European dimension, in particular by promoting the European defence industry and Europeans' ability to act. Jens Stoltenberg emphasised France's key role within NATO. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Hungary :



## Viktor Orbán visits European leaders

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán met European leaders as part of Hungary's 6-month Presidency of the Council of the European Union, which begins on 1 July. With German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Berlin on 21 June, he stressed the importance of economic relations between the two countries and their convergence on issues such as the enlargement of the European Union to the Balkans and their nuanced approach to China. In Rome on 24 June, he and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni discussed European competitiveness and the birth rate, as well as illegal migration. Finally, with French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on 26 June, discussions focused on support for Ukraine, the European defence industry and EU enlargement. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Montenegro :



## 16th Meeting of the Membership Conference with the European Union

On 26 June, the sixteenth meeting of the conference on Montenegro's accession to the European Union was held in Brussels. The Europeans confirmed Montenegro's progress on chapters 23 (on the judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (on justice, freedom and security) relating to the rule of law, announcing the start of the process of their closure. [Read more](#)

## ■ UK :



### Polls four days from the election

On 4 July, the UK will vote to elect the 650 Members of Parliament who will serve for the next five years. The most recent polls indicate a landslide victory for Keir Starmer's Labour Party, which has a 41% share of the voting intentions. The Conservatives, led by outgoing Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, face a crushing defeat after 14 years in power, with 20% of voting intentions. The Reform Party, led by Nigel Farage, has seen its popularity rise steadily and is close on the heels of the Conservatives (15%). Key campaign issues include tax levels, housing and the state of the NHS. In a first-past-the-post election, Labour needs 326 seats to win an absolute majority. [Read more](#)

## ■ Russia :



### 81 European media outlets blocked in Russia

On 25 June, Russia announced that it was blocking access to 81 European media outlets on its territory, in "retaliation" for the European Union's decision in May to ban four Russian state media, "Voice of Europe", "Ria Novosti", "Izvestia" and "Rossiiskaia Gazeta". Magazines, public television channels and newspapers from 25 of the 27 EU Member States will become inaccessible in Russia. The Russian decision has been condemned by the European Union. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Serbia :





## Migration agreement with Frontex

On 25 June, the European Union and Serbia signed an agreement on operational cooperation in the field of border management with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex. The agreement is part of the European Union's action plan for the Western Balkans, which since 2022 has aimed to strengthen the capacity of the countries in the region to manage migratory flows in close cooperation with the EU. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Ukraine :



### Security Agreements

On 27 June, during his visit to Brussels for the European Council meeting, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky signed security agreements with the European Union, Lithuania and Estonia. The European Union is reasserting Ukraine's place in its midst, as well as its long-term military, political, financial and humanitarian support. For its part, Ukraine pledges to continue its reforms linked to its accession process, and to increase the transparency of the aid it receives. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



### Protection granted to Ukrainian refugees until 2026

On 25 June, the ministers adopted a decision to extend temporary protection until 4 March 2026 for more than 4 million Ukrainians fleeing Russia's war of aggression. The temporary protection mechanism was triggered on 4 March 2022, just a few days after the Russian armed forces launched a large-scale invasion of Ukraine, and was due to last until 4 March 2025. The extension decision adopted on 25 June does not amend the March 2022 decision in terms of the categories of people to whom temporary protection applies. [Read more](#)

## ■ Council of Europe :



## Summer session of the Parliamentary Assembly

The plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) was held from 24 to 28 June, with Alain Berset of Switzerland elected Secretary General. An observation report on the elections in Northern Macedonia concluded that the presidential and parliamentary elections "were competitive and well organised". In a resolution, PACE congratulated Armenia on its progress in its ambitious reform programme, particularly in a complex security context. PACE passed a resolution expressing concern about Georgia's commitment to international democratic standards and Euro-Atlantic integration, in the context of the controversial adoption of the Law on the Transparency of Foreign Influence. PACE has launched a new Parliamentary Network on the situation of children in Ukraine. Nearly 20,000 Ukrainian children have been deported by Russia. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ ECHR :



### Decision against Russia and its policy in Crimea

On 25 June, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) condemned Russia for its repressive policy in Crimea. The ECHR ruling unanimously found that Russia had violated no less than 14 articles of the European Convention on Human Rights in Crimea, including the right to life, respect for private life and freedom of expression, all as part of an organised pattern. The ECHR therefore ruled in favour of two Ukrainian applications filed in 2014 and again in 2018, accusing Russia of pursuing a policy of disappearances, illegal detentions, fabricated prosecutions and convictions, and repression of the Ukrainian media, the Ukrainian language in schools, and any pro-Ukrainian stance. [Read more](#)

## ■ NATO :



### Mark Rutte appointed Secretary General

On 26 June, the North Atlantic Council announced the official nomination of Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of the Netherlands, to the post of Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). When he takes up his duties on 1 October, he will succeed the Norwegian, Jens Stoltenberg, who held the post for 10 years. [Read more](#)

## ■ Culture :

# Toledo Museum of Art

## Luis Tristán in Toledo

The Museo del Greco in Toledo is devoting an exhibition to the painter Luis Tristán until 10 November. To mark the 400th anniversary of his death, the exhibition presents the artist's work, which combines a world of images of religious exaltation with other genres such as portraiture and still life. A symbiosis of the divine and the human, his work preserves the distinctive Spanish Baroque expression of the Toledo school of painting in the first third of the 17th century. [Read more](#)



## Henri Cartier-Bresson in Athens and Hamburg

The Basil & Elise Goulandris Foundation, in collaboration with the Henri Cartier-Bresson Foundation, is paying tribute to the famous French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson with an exhibition in Athens until 27 October. In Hamburg, the exhibition "Watch! Watch! Watch! Henri Cartier-Bresson" is on until 22 September at the Bucerius Kunst Forum. [Read more - Other link](#)



## Jean Hugo at the Fabre Museum of Montpellier

The Musée Fabre in Montpellier is paying tribute to the 20th-century French painter Jean Hugo until 13 October. More than 330 works on loan from French and foreign institutions are on show. The exhibition, on exceptional loan from the Centre Pompidou, traces the artist's work from its beginnings in 1914 through to the Second World War. [Read more](#)



## Meeting with the photography of Arles

The Rencontres de la photographie d'Arles (Arles Photography Festival) will run until 29 September under the banner of "beneath the surface". More than 40 exhibitions have been set up across the city, a pioneering centre for photography. The rich and varied programme ranges from Japanese artists depicting fisherwomen and mysterious worlds to collections such as the one entitled "Sport put to the test" at the Olympic Museum. [Read more](#)



## Savonlinna Opera Festival

The Savonlinna Opera Festival will run until 4 August in the Olavinlinna fort in the Finnish lakeside town of Savonlinna. This year's highlights include a new production of Verdi's Nabucco, Wagner's Lohengrin, Mozart's Don Giovanni, as well as the Czech classics Káťa Kabanová and The Bartered Bride presented by Prague National Opera. [Read more](#)



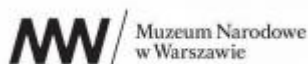
## Festival of Aix-en-Provence

The Aix-en-Provence opera festival is back for its 76th edition, running until 23 July. The focus is on French opera, with performances of Rameau's Samson and Debussy's Pelléas et Mélisande. Numerous recitals and concerts spanning all eras and styles complete the programme. Over 70,000 spectators are expected to attend the 2024 edition. [Read more](#)



## 58th Montreux Jazz Festival

The 58th Montreux Jazz Festival will take place from 5 to 20 July. As well as concerts, the festival includes over 500 activities, including DJ sets, screenings, workshops, jam sessions and a new Festival route along the waterfront. [Read more](#)



## "Creme de la creme" in Warsaw

Paintings by the best European artists (including Napoleon's personal painters), as well as sculptures, military artefacts, furniture, porcelain and everyday objects depicting the material culture of the Duchy of Warsaw (1807-1815) are on display in Warsaw's Copper Roof Palace until 1 September. [Read more](#)



## "Modernism in Ukraine" in London

The exhibition 'In the Eye of the Storm', at the Royal Academy in London until 13 October, explores Ukrainian revolutionary modernist art from 1900-1930, a period marked by empires, the First World War and the establishment of Soviet Ukraine. Featuring 65 works by renowned artists such as Kazimir Malevich, Sonia Delaunay and Alexandra Exter, the exhibition highlights their impact on Ukrainian art and culture. [Read more](#)

## ■ Agenda :

 4th July 2024

**General Elections (UK)**

 7th July 2024

**Legislative elections (second round) (France)**



### The Letter n°1074

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Kuntel**

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A question, a suggestion ?

Contact us!

[info@robert-schuman.eu](mailto:info@robert-schuman.eu)

Editors-in-chief :

**Elise Bernard, Stefanie Buzmaniuk**

Publishing Director :

**Pascale Joannin**

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