

**Letter n°1084 of Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024**

## General elections 26 October in Georgia: a referendum on Europe?

Elise Bernard, Vincent Godbillon - 22 Oct 2024

Georgians are set to go to the polls on 26 October to renew the 150-member parliament. President Salome Zourabichvili sees these parliamentary elections as a referendum for "a European, democratic and independent Georgia, or a Russian-led, authoritarian and isolated Georgia". On the other hand, Georgian Dream, which has a majority in the Assembly and describes itself as "social-democratic", increasingly appears to be the Kremlin's Trojan horse.



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### ■ Foundation :



### Follow the Foundation's website on the European Parliament!

Since the European elections in June and with the hearings of the European Commissioners from 4th to 12th November, the European Parliament has been very much in the news. The Robert Schuman Foundation has created a website to help you find out more about the composition, role and powers of this institution. [Read more](#)



## The Schuman Network, ideas in Europe

The Schuman Network, a Foundation initiative, works to promote the sharing of ideas on a European scale. With 21 members from 13 European countries, the Schuman Network is a forum in which research on current European issues can be pooled. Since its launch, over 135 studies have been published. [Read more](#)



## All of our publications

The Robert Schuman Foundation's paper publications are available for sale on our website. Delivery is guaranteed throughout Europe. In particular you can order 'The Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union 2024', which includes contributions from numerous authors such as the President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron, the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen or the President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola; 'The Permanent Atlas of the European Union' (5th edition) offers more than 50 physical and geopolitical maps of Europe, or Robert Schuman's work 'For Europe'. [Read more](#)



## Forum on Enlargement

The European Economic and Social Committee is organising a forum on enlargement on 24 October, during which Élise Bernard, Head of Studies at the Foundation, will take part in a discussion on the role of civil society in the enlargement process. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ European Council :



## Conclusions

The Heads of State and Government meeting on 17 and 18 October had an exchange with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and reiterated their support for comprehensive peace and that no initiative could be taken without Ukraine, while calling for military support to be stepped up. The situation in the Middle East was also discussed, with European leaders once again expressing their deep concern and calling for a calming of the situation, both in Iran and in Lebanon. They also condemned the violence by extremist settlers in the West Bank and restated their commitment to a two-state solution between Israel and Palestine. They discussed European competitiveness and external border controls, the issue of hybrid threats from Russia, and the problem of energy prices as winter approaches. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Commission :



### New rules to strengthen cybersecurity

On 17 October, the Commission adopted the first implementing rules on the cybersecurity of networks and critical entities under the Directive on measures to ensure a common high level of cybersecurity in the European Union. [Read more](#)



### Erasmus Days

Erasmus Days, a celebration of the Erasmus+ programme, took place from 14 to 19 October. Events took place throughout the week. There was a particular focus on sport, following on from the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Erasmus+ programme was designed to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe, and almost 15 million people have benefited from it since it was launched in 1987. For the period 2021-2027, the programme has been allocated a budget of €26.2 billion. [Read more](#)

## ■ Council :



### Meeting of Energy Ministers

Meeting on 15 October, the energy ministers discussed the competitiveness of the energy sector, particularly in the light of the Draghi report. The divergence of electricity prices in the European Union was also discussed, with the ministers calling for price stability. The security of energy supply in the run-up to winter was also one of the issues discussed. [Read more](#)



## Meeting of Environment Ministers

The environment ministers meeting on 14 October asserted that climate change is a threat to the existence of ecosystems and biodiversity, and approved conclusions ahead of COP29 in November. They stressed the need to maintain the objective of limiting global warming to 1.5°C. [Read more](#)



## Meeting of European Affairs Ministers

The European Affairs ministers met on 15 October to prepare for the European Council, and also to discuss relations between the European Union and Switzerland and the fight against anti-Semitism. [Read more](#)

## ■ Diplomacy :



## Summit with the Gulf Cooperation Council

The first summit between the European heads of state and government and those of the 6 countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council took place in Brussels on 16 October. Discussions focused on a future free trade agreement and energy security. The geopolitical situation was also discussed, with the leaders calling for de-escalation and a ceasefire in Ukraine, Gaza, Lebanon and Iran. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ ECB :



## Reduction of key rates

On 17 October, the Governing Council of the European Central Bank announced a further cut of 25 basis points in its 3 key interest rates. This confirms the disinflation process that has been underway for several months, and reaffirms the Bank's desire to return to its main inflation target of 2%. [Read more](#)

## ■ European Agencies :



## The first major cosmic atlas from the Euclid mission unveiled

On 15 October, the European Space Agency (ESA) unveiled the first piece of the large map of the Universe produced by the Euclid mission. This map comprises an immense mosaic of 208 gigapixels and shows millions of stars and galaxies. It combines 260 observations made between 25 March and 8 April 2024. This represents just 1% of the total survey that Euclid will carry out over a period of 6 years, resulting in the largest 3D cosmic map ever made. [Read more](#)



## Illegal crossings at EU borders down 42% by 2024

According to Frontex, the European agency responsible for managing the EU's external borders, the number of illegal crossings fell by 42% in the first 9 months of 2024. A total of 166,000 illegal crossings were recorded by the agency, with sharp falls in the Western Balkans (-79%) and the Central Mediterranean routes (-64%). The nationalities most affected by these crossings are Syria, Mali and Ukraine. [Read more](#)

## ■ Germany :



## Berlin Process Summit

On 14 October, Germany hosted the summit of the Berlin Process, an initiative launched 10 years ago to bring the candidate countries of the Western Balkans closer to the European Union. Participants at the summit signed an Action Plan for a common regional market and the implementation of a Green Agenda by 2030. [Read more](#)



## Joe Biden's last trip to Europe

US President Joe Biden, his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer met in Germany on 18 October. Discussions focused on NATO, support for Ukraine and the forthcoming US election. This was President Biden's last visit to Europe. German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier awarded him the National Order of Merit for his contribution to transatlantic relations. [Read more](#)

## ■ Belgium :





## State Visit by the King of Belgium

The King and Queen of Belgium arrived in Paris on 14 October for a 3-day State visit. The highlight of the visit was the royal couple's reception by French President Emmanuel Macron at the Élysée Palace, with a view to strengthening economic and trade relations, as well as academic and cultural cooperation between the two countries, and at European level. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ France :



## Conference on nuclear safety in Ukraine

On 17 October, France and Ukraine jointly organised a ministerial conference in Paris on nuclear safety and security in Ukraine, with the participation of 70 States and partner organisations. The aim was to take stock of the critical situation of Ukraine's nuclear power plants, which are strategic targets for Russia, and to discuss assistance mechanisms for Ukraine. This conference is part of the Peace Plan proposed by President Zelensky and follows a commitment made by France at the Bürgenstock Peace Summit last June. Ukraine has called on its partners to take decisions to force Russia to stop its attacks on Ukraine's energy sector. Some partners said that protecting Ukraine's nuclear security was a priority requiring coordinated international action. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ Italy :



## Meeting of G7 defence ministers

On 18 October, the G7 defence ministers met in Naples with representatives of the European Union and NATO, as well as the Ukrainian defence minister. They reiterated their commitment to Ukraine and to the rules-based international order and international law, including the United Nations Charter. [Read more](#)

## ■ Albania :



## Launch of accession negotiations

On 15 October, Albania began accession negotiations with the European Union including particular focus on the chapter on human rights, the rule of law and the functioning of democratic institutions. [Read more](#)

## ■ Georgia :



### **The Council of Europe reminds Georgia to fulfil its obligations**

On 17 October, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe once again called on the Georgian authorities to reverse recently adopted legislation that violates human rights and to refrain from further threatening political pluralism. European concerns persist in the run-up to the parliamentary elections on 26 October. [Read more](#)

## ■ Iceland :



### **The coalition breaks up and early general elections have been called**

On 13 October, Iceland's Prime Minister Bjarni Benediktsson announced the break-up of the coalition in office since November 2021, and called early general elections for 30 November. Ongoing political disagreements over the last few months, notably on issues relating to the conduct of foreign policy and the management of immigration, are at the root of this political crisis. The Prime Minister tendered his resignation on 15 October to President Halla Tómasdóttir, who accepted it and asked that the government manage current affairs until the elections. [Read more](#)

## ■ Moldova :



### **Results of the first round of the presidential election and the referendum on accession to the European Union**

On 20 October, outgoing President Maia Sandu came out ahead in the 1st round of the presidential election in Moldova, with 42.2% of the votes cast. She will face Alexandr Stoianoglo, backed by the Socialists, in the second round on 3 November. In the referendum on EU membership, voters approved the inclusion of the European objective in the Constitution by a very narrow margin, with 50.4% of the vote. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

## ■ UN :



## Meeting of European countries that contribute to the UNIFIL

On 16 October, the 16 European contributors (including France, Italy, Ireland and Spain) to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) reiterated their support for the peacekeepers involved in the mission following the Israeli operations in southern Lebanon, which resulted in 5 UN peacekeepers being wounded. [Read more](#)

## ■ NATO :



## Meeting of Defence Ministers

On 17 and 18 October, NATO defence ministers reiterated their commitment to supporting Ukraine, strengthening ties with Asia-Pacific partners and reinforcing the Alliance's deterrence and defence. Their Japanese, Korean, Australian and New Zealand counterparts took part in meetings on the first day. [Read more](#)

## ■ IMF :



## Speech on the world economic outlook

On 17 October, ahead of the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which begin on 22 October in Washington, Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the IMF, highlighted the current good economic news, such as falling inflation and global growth that has returned close to its pre-Covid-19 levels but which remains insufficient to support high public debt and poverty. She argues that tensions, both domestic and international, are creating the conditions for a world that is more fragmented than ever, and stresses the need for international cooperation to meet these challenges. [Read more](#)

## ■ Studies/Reports :



## The Court of Auditors warns about the EU's climate adaptation

In a report published on 16 October, the European Court of Auditors warns that the EU risks being left behind in the race to adapt to climate change. The Court estimates the economic cost of extreme weather events at €26 billion a year. It calls for an improvement in the implementation of European action, the legal framework being judged to be solid overall, but the local level, considered to be the foundation of adaptation, is still poorly informed. [Read more](#)





## Annual report on Justice in Europe

On 16 October, the Council of Europe published its report on the efficiency and quality of justice in Europe. Among its main conclusions, the Council notes that the proportion of the budget that European countries allocate to justice remains low (0.31% of GDP on average). There are disparities in the number of judicial staff, due in particular to the specific national characteristics of judicial systems. A downward trend in the number of courts has also been observed, with the existence of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms appearing at the same time to be a good way of improving justice. Finally, the report highlights a significant improvement in the efficiency of the courts, which are gradually returning to their pre-Covid levels. [Read more](#)

## ■ Culture :



### Le Petit Prince in Strasbourg

Until 4 May 2025, the exhibition 'Antoine de Saint Exupéry. The Little Prince among Men' is opening its doors to the public in Strasbourg. The exhibition presents the philosophical tale as well as the life of its author, and is complemented by an interactive workshop to shed light on the foundations of his work and his own experiences. [Read more](#)



### Dubuffet in Milan

In partnership with the Collection de l'Art Brut in Lausanne, the Milan Museum of Culture is presenting the exhibition 'Dubuffet and Art Brut' until 16 February 2025. The first theorist of this artistic movement, the French painter is being honoured, with the revelation, through a historical perspective, of his works, documents and writings on this art described as pure, because far removed from art museums and refined salons. [Read more](#)



## The Louvre presents the figures of the madman

Until 3 February 2025, the Musée du Louvre will be presenting the exhibition 'Figures du Fou' (Figures of the Fool), a chronological and thematic collection of more than 300 works exploring the medieval figure of the madman from a variety of angles. The exhibition provides an insight into society's changing view of madness. [Read more](#)



## Photographs from the Prix Pictet in Luxembourg

Until 19 January 2025, the Ratskeller exhibition space in Luxembourg will be showcasing photos from the Prix Pictet Humain, the world's largest photography prize dedicated to sustainable development. In its 10th year, the Prix Pictet will highlight the work of the 12 finalists, including Indian laureate Gauri Gill, in a unique and contemporary exploration of humanity. The Prix Pictet, created in 2008, rewards photographers who seek to raise public awareness of environmental issues through photography. [Read more](#)

# National Portrait Gallery

## Francis Bacon in London

The National Portrait Gallery in London is presenting an exhibition of over 50 works by the British painter Francis Bacon until 19 January 2025. This exhibition offers an opportunity to explore Francis Bacon's special relationship with portraiture, and to discover how the artist broke free from traditional definitions of the genre. [Read more](#)



## Marina Abramovic in Zurich

From 25 October to 16 February 2025, the Kunsthaus Zürich presents Marina Abramović's first major retrospective in Switzerland. The exhibition includes works from every period of the artist's career, as well as a number of historic performances. [Read more](#)

## Fundació Joan Miró



## Miro-Matisse in Barcelona

The Joan Miró Foundation is presenting the Miró-Matisse exhibition in Barcelona until 9 February 2025. Although the association of the two artists may seem paradoxical, given that they belonged to different generations and artistic movements, the exhibition presents the lasting, profound and constructive relationship between these two painters, and their conceptions of art. [Read more](#)

## ■ Agenda :

 21-24 October 2024

**Plenary Session of the European Parliament** (Strasbourg)

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 21-22 October 2024

**"Agriculture and Fisheries" Council** (Luxembourg)

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 20 October 2024

**Presidential Election** (Moldova)



## The Letter n°1084

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