

Letter n°1105 of Tuesday 1st April 2025

Thirty years after the Dayton-Paris Agreement: the European Union must get involved in Bosnia and Herzegovina

[Željana Zovko - 01 Apr 2025](#)

Thirty years after the Dayton-Paris Agreement ended the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the international community, and especially the Europeans, are concerned about the country's political situation. The institutional system that resulted from these agreements was the only means of satisfying the Croats, Bosniaks and Serbs, but it now appears vulnerable. According to Željana Zovko, 'The European Union has a major role to play. Everything that happens in the Western Balkans significantly affects peace in the rest of Europe.'



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■ **Foundation :**



The Schuman Network, a think tank for Europe

Supported by the Robert Schuman Foundation, the Schuman Network brings together 22 think tanks from 13 European countries. This network facilitates cooperation between researchers specialising in European affairs, promoting the exchange of analyses on various issues: social questions, economic integration, neighbourhood policy and EU external relations. Since its creation, it has enabled the distribution of 162 publications, enriching the debate on the future of Europe. [Read more](#)

■ Ukraine :



Meeting in Paris on peace and security for Ukraine.

On 27 March, after talks the previous day with the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the French President Emmanuel Macron hosted the 'coalition of the willing' summit in Paris, bringing together nearly 30 countries. The summit resulted in strong commitments of support for Ukraine, with discussions centred on the mobilisation of resources and international solidarity in the face of Russian aggression. The conclusions indicate a collective will to maintain pressure on Russia while supporting the Ukrainian resistance. On this occasion, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron announced the deployment of a Franco-British mission to Ukraine. This will make it possible to identify the needs of the Ukrainian armies and the strategic locations where the forces of the allied countries could position themselves in order to dissuade Russia. The two leaders indicated that this 'reassurance force' would be deployed in the coming days. [Read more](#)



Visit of the Czech President Petr Pavel to Ukraine

The Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy welcomed his Czech counterpart Petr Pavel on 21 and 22 March in Odessa, to discuss defence cooperation and European support for Ukraine. The two heads of state announced concrete projects, including the supply of ammunition, the reconstruction of six hospitals and the opening of a Unity Centre in Prague for Ukrainian refugees. The Czech Republic reaffirmed its support for Ukraine's accession to the European Union and NATO. This diplomatic visit concluded with a joint declaration of strategic partnership. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



First visit of the Special Envoy for the situation of children in Ukraine

Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, appointed Special Envoy of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for the situation of children in Ukraine in February 2025, made her first fact-finding visit to Ukraine on 19 and 20 March. During her trip, she undertook to publicly document the situation of Ukrainian children and to keep the issue of their protection at the centre of international attention. [Read more](#)

■ Commission :



Young people share their hopes and concerns for the future

On 25 March, the European Commission launched an online debate on the citizen participation platform, in the context of the publication of the 2024 report on youth and the results of the Eurobarometer survey. According to this survey, 61% of young Europeans are optimistic about the future of the European Union, and 60% believe that Europe has a positive impact on society. However, concerns remain, particularly about the cost of living (41%) and world peace (30%). As such, the Commission plans to continue involving young people in the development of European policies in the years to come. [Read more](#)



Strategy for threat and crisis preparedness

The European Commission presented its strategy on preparedness and prevention of emerging threats and crises on 26 March. This strategy is intended as a response to the rise in the number and complexity of crises and challenges, whether geopolitical or hybrid in nature. It follows on from the Niinistö report on the subject in 2024. This strategy includes 30 actions and an action plan, and has several objectives, namely to protect the essential societal functions of the European Union, to promote the preparedness of the population and to strengthen the coordination of crisis response and civil-military cooperation. [Read more](#)



Selection of 47 strategic projects for raw materials

On 25 March, the European Commission adopted a list of 47 strategic projects with the aim of strengthening capacities for strategic raw materials. These projects constitute an important stage in the legislation on the subject. The aim of this legislation is to guarantee that European extraction, processing and recycling of strategic raw materials correspond to 10%, 40% and 25% of European Union demand respectively by 2030. The projects on this list are spread across 13 Member States, cover one or more segments of the raw materials value chain and should benefit from a total capital investment of €22.5 billion. [Read more](#)

■ Parliament :



Changes to driving licences by 2030

On 25 March, MEPs and the Council agreed on the introduction of a digital driving licence by the end of 2030, accessible on a mobile phone and equivalent to the physical licence. It will be valid for 15 years and new drivers will have a probationary period of two years. A medical examination or self-assessment will also be required to obtain this licence. [Read more](#)

■ Council :



Meeting of the Ministers for Agriculture and Fisheries

The European ministers of agriculture and fisheries met on 24 March to discuss food and the future of the common fisheries policy (CFP). They emphasised the need for an appropriate and separate budget for the CAP. Finally, they discussed the importance of reducing bureaucracy and simplifying policies. [Read more](#)



Meeting of the environment ministers

The environment ministers, meeting on 27 March, discussed the Clean Industry Deal, presented by the Commission on 26 February. The discussions focused on methods to allow companies to be competitive while ensuring their transition to the zero-emission objective, as well as recognising the need for adequate funding to achieve this objective. Other topics discussed concerned global environmental policies, with an emphasis on better cooperation to ensure the proper implementation of multilateral agreements. [Read more](#)



New European sanctions against Belarus

On 27 March, the European Union imposed additional restrictive measures against 25 individuals and 7 entities in Belarus responsible for the deterioration of democratic functioning, violations of the rule of law and internal repression. These sanctions target, in particular, the members of the Electoral Commission, judges and companies benefiting from the Lukashenko regime, as well as actors involved in military cooperation with Russia. The European Union reiterates its support for the Belarusian people in their quest for freedom and democracy, as well as for Ukraine. [Read more](#)

■ Diplomacy :



20th ministerial meeting with Central Asia

On 27 March, the foreign ministers of the countries of Central Asia (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) and the EU High Representative, Kaja Kallas, met in Ashgabat for their 20th ministerial meeting. They emphasised their commitment to deepening their partnership, highlighting the progress made in key areas such as political and economic cooperation and security. They also prepared for the EU-Central Asia Summit and reiterated their support for peace and sustainable development initiatives. [Read more](#)



Border security summit in London

The summit on organised crime was held in London on 30 and 31 March. Bringing together more than 40 countries including the United States, France, Vietnam and Iraq, the discussions focused on strengthening border security, particularly on dismantling the networks of smugglers and traffickers. The government representatives were thus able to address the issue of financing these networks through illicit contributions or advertising on social networks. [Read more - Other link](#)



Petersberg Climate Dialogue

The 16th Petersberg Climate Dialogue was held in Berlin on 25 and 26 March, bringing together the climate ministers of more than 40 states. The meeting identified ways to develop international cooperation and accelerate the implementation of a climate-neutral economy. The Petersberg Dialogue thus set out the challenges of the next World Climate Conference, COP30 in Brazil, such as strengthening the Paris Agreement. [Read more](#)

■ Court of Justice :



Appointment of 13 judges to the General Court of the European Union

On 26 March, the representatives of the Member States appointed 13 judges to the General Court of the European Union. These appointments are part of the partial renewal of the General Court: the term of office of 26 judges expires on 31 August 2025. The term of office of these new judges is for a period of 6 years, starting from 1 September 2025. [Read more](#)

■ Germany :



New meeting of Bundestag

The inaugural session of the Bundestag took place on 25 March. Julia Klöckner (CDU), former Minister of Agriculture, was elected president, succeeding Bärbel Bas. At the same time, Chancellor Olaf Scholz was tasked by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier with handling current affairs until a new coalition government between the CDU/CSU and the SPD is formed. [Read more - Other link](#)

■ Spain :



National defence plan

On 26 March, the Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez announced a national plan to boost the security and defence industry in Spain, in response to the Russian threat and American disengagement. Addressing the lower house of the Spanish Parliament, he stressed that Spain would honour the commitment made to the European Union in 2014 to allocate 2% of gross domestic product to investment in security and defence. [Read more](#)

■ Estonia :



Parliament votes on restrictions for Russian nationals

On 26 March, the Estonian Parliament adopted a constitutional amendment revoking the right of third-country nationals residing in Estonia to vote in local elections. This measure, supported by a very large majority of MPs, mainly targets the 80,000 Russian citizens living in the country. Motivated by security concerns related to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, this decision has yet to be validated by the Estonian President, Alar Karis, who has expressed reservations. It is part of a series of restrictions targeting Russian citizens, due to growing tensions between the Baltic States and Russia. [Read more - Other link](#)

■ France :



3rd Nutrition for Growth Summit in Paris

On 27 and 28 March in Paris, the Nutrition for Growth summit was held, bringing together various international actors to discuss innovative solutions to food insecurity. The President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, opened the conference by emphasising the importance of the commitment of the private sector and philanthropists, particularly through school meals. This summit aims to obtain new commitments to improve the quality of food on a global scale. [Read more](#)

■ Sweden :



Increase in defence spending to 3.5% of GDP and support for Ukraine

Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson presented the government's proposals on defence at a press conference on 26 March. Among these proposals, the Swedish government has announced that it wants to increase its defence spending to 3.5% of its GDP by 2030. In addition, Sweden will increase its aid to Ukraine in 2025 with an increase of €3.5 billion to support the country against the Russian invasion. [Read more](#)

■ Armenia :



Vote on the launch of the accession process in Armenia

On 26 March, the Armenian Parliament adopted a text allowing the launch of the country's candidacy for the European Union, in the final reading, by 64 votes to 7. The text calls on the Armenian government to launch the EU accession process and is part of a series of gestures of defiance towards Russia, Armenia's historical ally, particularly due to the lack of support during Azerbaijan's recapture of Nagorno-Karabakh. [Read more](#)

■ Bosnia and Herzegovina :



International arrest warrant against Milorad Dodik

On 27 March, the Bosnian State Court issued an international arrest warrant against the political leader of the Republika Srpska (RS), Milorad Dodik. He is suspected of attacking the constitutional order because of legislation by the Parliament of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia which prohibits the country's central justice system and police from operating in the Serbian entity. The request will now be examined by Interpol for validation. [Read more](#)

■ UK :



Budget review

Rachel Reeves, the UK Chancellor of the Exchequer, presented the updated budget to the House of Commons on 26 March. She indicated that social welfare spending would be halved and that an additional £2.2 billion would be allocated to the Ministry of Defence in order to deal with 'growing global uncertainty'. The UK Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has revised downwards its growth forecasts for 2025. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Turkey :



The demonstrations in Türkiye continue

Since 19 March, the demonstrations protesting the arrest of Ekrem İmamoğlu, the main opponent of the current Türkiye President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, have continued to grow. The Turkish government has banned the rallies and arrested more than two thousand demonstrators, including journalists and members of the opposition. Despite the ban, several million people protested on 29 March. Several European states, including France, have denounced these serious attacks on democracy and have expressed their concerns. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Council of Europe :



Reports on the fight against corruption in Denmark

On 25 March, the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) published two reports deploring the low level of implementation of the recommendations made by the institution to Denmark in 2014. None of the measures planned for parliamentarians has been applied, and only two out of fourteen recommendations have been implemented for senior executive and law enforcement positions. GRECO is calling for urgent action and planning a high-level mission to encourage progress. [Read more](#)



Congress concerned about the situation in Georgia and Turkey

On 26 March, the Congress of the Council of Europe noted with concern the rapid decline of democracy observed in Georgia over the past two years. It urged the Georgian authorities to resume political dialogue at all levels and with all stakeholders, including local authorities, the opposition and civil society, with a view to re-establishing the essential balances in a pluralist democracy and the rights of the opposition in the run-up to the local elections of 2025. On 27 March, the Congress called on the Turkish authorities to stop prosecuting and detaining elected representatives of opposition parties, to release those detained, to guarantee the rights of the defence and to refrain from excessive use of pre-trial detention in the absence of clear evidence of suspicion. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Eurobarometer :



The European Union: an asset for citizens

According to the latest Eurobarometer survey published on 25 March, 74% of Europeans consider that their country's membership of the European Union is an asset, a record figure since 1983. Defence, economic competitiveness and inflation are among citizens' major concerns, and the majority of Europeans would like to see the European Parliament play a greater role, particularly in combating the rising cost of living. [Read more](#)

■ Studies/Reports :



The European Patent Office publishes its Index 2024

On 25 March, the European Patent Office published the Patent Index 2024, in which it highlights the maintenance of the high level of patents filed compared to 2023. In 2024, 199,264 patent applications were filed with the Office, a variation of -0.1% compared to 2023, after 3 years of strong growth. The field of information technology occupies first place in the ranking of patent applications filed for the first time with 16,815 applications. Machines and electrical energy, together with digital communication, are the other two areas occupying the top three places. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Report on simplified customs procedures

In a report published on 24 March, the Court of Auditors considers that the financial interests of the European Union and the single market are not sufficiently protected against VAT fraud on imports when simplified customs procedures are used. In particular, they have noted several cases of the value of certain products being underestimated by importers. The checks carried out by the Member States, which do not cooperate enough with each other, are seriously flawed. The Court therefore recommends harmonising the rules on simplified procedures for imports. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Labour market report

The European Court of Auditors reveals that the labour market reforms financed by the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) have only partially addressed the structural challenges of the Member States, despite a budget of €650 billion. Almost half of the recommendations have not been taken into account, leaving significant problems unresolved. The Court calls for a more rigorous assessment of the impact of these reforms. [Read more](#)

■ Culture :

ALBERTINA

Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer in Vienna

Until 9 June, the Albertina Museum in Vienna is exhibiting the works of Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer. The exhibition creates a dialogue between the drawings of the two Renaissance artists. While in Italy these works served as sketches and studies in the artistic process, in German-speaking countries they tended to be devoted to religious and mythological subjects. On occasion, the museum also presents the work of other artists from the same period, such as Raphael, Titian and Holbein. [Read more](#)



Victor Hugo's drawings in London

The Royal Academy of Arts in London, in collaboration with the Maison Victor Hugo and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, is showing drawings by the writer Victor Hugo until 29 June. His ink and wash drawings depict imaginary castles, monsters and seascapes, inspired by his many travels. Rarely exhibited to the public, they echo the writings of Victor Hugo, which themselves influenced many artists of Romanticism, Symbolism and Surrealism. [Read more](#)



Optical and digital art in Nantes

The Nantes Museum of Art is presenting the exhibition Electric Op until 31 August. The exhibition explores optical and kinetic art through works by Vasarely, Morellet and Molnar, and highlights the interaction between light, movement and visual perception. By presenting iconic and interactive pieces, the exhibition invites visitors to experience fascinating visual illusions. Electric Op reveals the impact of these artists on the development of artistic technologies. [Read more](#)



Chris Ware in Barcelona

Until 9 November, the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona is presenting an exhibition devoted to Chris Ware, one of the most innovative artists in modern comic strip art. The exhibition reviews the work and artistic thinking of the cartoonist. Through original pieces, animations, objects, sculptures and drawings, highlighting the invention of language and dealing with human existence with great depth, the presentation invites visitors to take a chronological look at the work of a master of the comic strip. [Read more](#)



Alice's World in Madrid

From 4 April to 3 August, Madrid's CaixaForum is presenting the first exhibition to offer a broad overview of the impact of Lewis Carroll's Alice books. Almost 160 years after the writing of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, this story and its protagonist have become part of the collective imagination of many generations. Its influence spans generations, artists and disciplines: fashion, theatre, cinema, photography and science. The exhibition offers various answers as to why a Victorian character who gave birth to her writings is so important, and how relevant the themes and ideas she raises are today. [Read more](#)

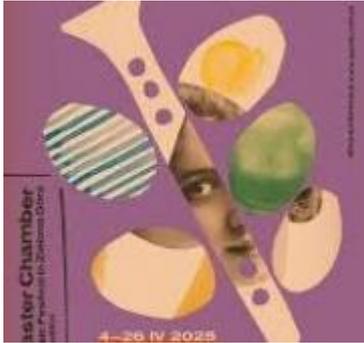


Art Paris 2025

Art Paris 2025 will take place from 3 to 6 April at the Grand Palais, bringing together 170 exhibitors from 25 countries. The exhibition highlights two main themes: 'Immortal', on contemporary figurative painting, and 'Off Limits', exploring cultural cross-fertilisation. New platforms are devoted to emerging art, particularly with the category 'Promising' artists. This 27th edition promises a rich programme, with monographic exhibitions. [Read more](#)

Contemporary art fair in Cologne

The Discovery Art Fair will be held from 3 to 6 April in Cologne and will present a wide range of emerging contemporary artworks. The event brings together numerous local and international galleries that will be presenting the works of artists in a variety of media: sculpture, graphic prints, painting and mixed media. [Read more](#)



Zielona Góra Easter Chamber Music Festival

From 4 to 26 April, the 5th Easter Chamber Music Festival is being held in Zielona Góra. This event, supported by the Polish Presidency of the Union, is offering free concerts with renowned artists, as well as emerging talents. The programme includes works by composers such as Chopin and Bacewicz. The festival also highlights the V4 quartet, representing the Visegrad Group countries. The concerts are taking place at the Stary Kisiel Palace. The programme includes works by composers such as Chopin and Bacewicz. The festival also highlights the V4 quartet, representing the countries of the Visegrad Group. The concerts take place at the Stary Kisielin Palace and the Artistic Exhibitions Office. [Read more](#)

■ Agenda :

 31 March - 3 April 2025

Plenary Session of the European Parliament (Strasbourg)

 3 April 2025

First EU-Central Asia Summit

 7 April 2025

Foreign Affairs Council (Trade)



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