

Letter n°1114 of Tuesday 3rd June 2025

Europe: acceleration

Jean-Dominique Giuliani - 03 Jun 2025

The European Union, which has long been in political stagnation, is now experiencing a period of acceleration in the face of recent geopolitical upheavals. The war in Ukraine, the health crisis and transatlantic uncertainties have prompted Member States to cooperate more closely, particularly in the areas of security and defence. This dynamic is based on the founding principle of concrete solidarity between nations. This text, signed by Jean-Dominique Giuliani, is the preface to the Schuman Report on Europe, the state of the Union in 2025, to be published on 3 June by Hémisphères.

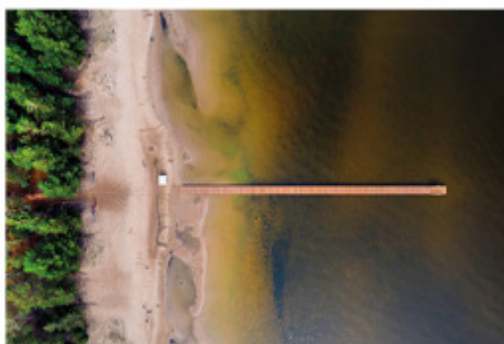
RAPPORT SCHUMAN SUR L'EUROPE L'ÉTAT DE L'UNION 2025

... et l'Europe s'affirme face à une accélération de l'histoire.

Dans un monde marqué par de profonds bouleversements géopolitiques, l'Union européenne se transforme afin de devenir une véritable puissance mondiale. Les enjeux auxquels elle fait face sont cruciaux : quels instruments de sécurité et de défense pour développer une souveraineté européenne, entre la Russie qui poursuit sa guerre sur le continent, et les États-Unis, qui se désengagent de ses responsabilités mondiales ? Comment garantir la compétitivité et la croissance en Europe et réaliser les innovations technologiques et numériques indispensables ? Quelles réponses apporter aux défis internes et institutionnels ?

Les objectifs des auteurs de la 19^e édition du Rapport Schuman sur l'Europe sont sans équivoque : il s'agit de défendre le modèle européen sur la scène internationale, ce qui implique l'émergence d'une Europe de la défense promouvant l'autonomie stratégique avec une préférence européenne. L'Union européenne doit simplifier sa réglementation pour renforcer sa position de puissance.

JR L'EUROPE | L'ÉTAT DE L'UNION 2025



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■ Elections :



Conservative Karol Tadeusz Nawrocki wins Polish presidential election

Karol Tadeusz Nawrocki, the conservative candidate backed by the Law and Justice party (PiS) and director of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), the body responsible for prosecuting Nazi and Soviet crimes against Poles, won by a very narrow margin the run-off presidential election in Poland on 1 June. With 50.89% of the vote - only 369,591 votes out of a total of 19,603,784 separated the two men - over the centrist candidate and current mayor of Warsaw, Rafal Kazimierz Trzaskowski. He largely won in rural areas, where he obtained 63.40% of the vote, and benefited greatly from the transfer of votes from the far-right candidate, Slawomir Jerzy Mentzen, who had obtained almost 15% of the vote in the first round. [Read more](#)

■ Foundation :



Follow the progress of the European recovery plan with the Robert Schuman Foundation

The European recovery plan, known as NextGenerationEU, is an exceptional €750 billion instrument launched in 2020 to support the post-Covid recovery. It is based on grants (€390 billion) and loans (€360 billion) financed by joint debt. The aim is to stimulate green growth, digital transformation and the resilience of European economies. Follow the distribution of recovery plan grants in real time, country by country, on a dedicated page on the Robert Schuman Foundation website. [Read more](#)

■ Commission :



Strategy for start-ups and scale-ups

On 28 May, the European Commission unveiled a strategy called 'Choose Europe to Start and Scale', which aims to make the European Union a fertile ground for start-ups and growing businesses. The five-pillar plan aims to remove barriers to innovation, improve financing, accelerate time to market, attract talent and facilitate access to infrastructure. The initiative is part of Ursula von der Leyen's broader 'Choose Europe' vision to strengthen the EU's competitiveness and strategic autonomy. [Read more](#)



EU on track to meet 2030 climate targets

According to the European Commission's assessment of national energy and climate plans, published on 28 May, Member States have significantly strengthened their climate and energy plans, bringing the European Union closer to its 2030 targets. The planned measures should enable a 54% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared with 1990 levels, and a 42.5% share of renewable energies. The EU is thus asserting its determination to make a success of the energy transition, while strengthening its resilience, industrial competitiveness and social justice. [Read more](#)



New strategy for a stable and connected Black Sea

On 28 May, in response to current geopolitical challenges, the European Union launched a strategy to strengthen security, prosperity and resilience in the Black Sea region. This approach is based on three pillars: maritime safety, the development of regional connections and environmental protection. The EU will work closely with its regional partners (Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan) to stimulate trade, prepare coastal territories for climate change and promote peace and sustainable development. [Read more](#)

■ Council :



Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture and Fisheries

At their meeting on 26 May, ministers discussed the future of agriculture and food in a tense geopolitical context. There was a debate on simplifying agricultural policies while respecting national differences. The situation on agricultural markets, which showed signs of stability but also faced persistent challenges (high costs, disease, weather), was analysed. The repercussions of the war in Ukraine and US tariff policy were also discussed. The Ukrainian Minister for Agricultural Policy and Food, Vitaliy Koval, attended the meeting, enabling Member States to reaffirm their support for Ukraine and discuss a balanced long-term trade solution. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Meeting of European Affairs Ministers

On 27 May, ministers adopted the SAFE (Security Action for Europe) instrument, a new €150 billion programme to strengthen European defence. They also approved the simplification of the carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM). They continued to examine the request to include Catalan, Basque and Galician in the language regime of the European Union. A new hearing on the rule of law in Hungary took place. They discussed the democratic resilience of the Union and the funding of Radio Free Europe. [Read more](#)



Meeting of ministers responsible for development

On 26 May, development ministers called for reform of the international financial architecture ahead of the Seville conference on financing for development. The European Union reiterated its commitment to supporting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Discussions also focused on strengthening EU-Africa relations, aid to Ukraine and external action post-2027, with an emphasis on the visibility of investments and support for SMEs in the Global Gateway strategy. [Read more](#)

■ Diplomacy :



Joint declaration of solidarity with Georgia

On the occasion of Georgia's Independence Day on 26 May, French President Emmanuel Macron, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz issued a statement conveying a message of solidarity and support for Georgia's territorial sovereignty. In this declaration, the three heads of state and government condemned the Georgian authorities' abandonment of democracy and deplore the laws that contradict European values, which must be amended or abolished with a view to future membership of the European Union. [Read more](#)

■ Spain :



Meeting with the President of the European Commission

The Spanish Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez, travelled to Brussels on 28 May to meet with the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen. The two leaders discussed various issues, including the need to maintain a common European response to US customs duties and the obligation to strengthen Spain's electricity interconnections with Europe. Pedro Sánchez emphasised Spain's unwavering support for Ukraine and its concern about the humanitarian disaster in Gaza. [Read more](#)

■ Finland :



Nordic Summit in Turku

Meeting in Turku, the leaders of the Nordic countries demonstrated their strengthened unity in the face of geopolitical tensions, particularly Russian provocations in the Baltic Sea and American ambitions in Greenland. For the first time, Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland participated in the discussions. On the economic front, the Nordic countries emphasised their collective weight on the world stage. The Nordic prime ministers, joined by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, stressed the need to strengthen regional resilience, energy security and competitiveness. A joint statement calls for greater cooperation on defence, cyber security and crisis management. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)

■ France :



Strengthening strategic ties in Southeast Asia

From 26 to 30 May, Emmanuel Macron made a state visit to Vietnam, Indonesia and Singapore. This trip was part of France's strategy in the Indo-Pacific, which aims to strengthen partnerships in sectors such as defence, energy and transport. In Jakarta, a joint declaration was signed with President Prabowo Subianto on 28 May to mark 100 years of diplomatic relations between France and Indonesia. Similar commitments were made with the other countries visited. France is sending a clear message regarding its strategic role in the region. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Greece :



Meeting on green growth and competitiveness

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis welcomed Wopke Hoekstra, European Commissioner for Climate, Green Growth and Carbon Neutrality, on 27 May. He reaffirmed his country's commitment to achieving the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets set by the European Union. He highlighted the progress made in renewable energy in Greece, while emphasising the transitional role of natural gas. He also denounced price distortions in the EU electricity market, calling for stronger interconnections and a truly integrated energy market. [Read more](#)

■ Ireland :



Ministry of Justice report on the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice

On 26 May, the Irish Ministry of Justice published its report on Protocol 21, annexed to the European Union treaties. This protocol allows Ireland to opt out of European measures relating to the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ) on a case-by-case basis. The report recommends that Ireland continue to use Protocol 21 while participating as much as possible in European measures relating to the AFSJ and that opt-out decisions become the exception rather than the rule. In addition, the Ministry of Justice report recommends that Ireland be allowed to join the European Public Prosecutor's Office, in which 24 of the 27 Member States participate. [Read more](#)

■ Lithuania :



Transport ministers' meeting

On 27 May, transport ministers from twelve Eastern and Northern European countries, accompanied by representatives of the European Union and NATO, met in Vilnius to strengthen military mobility in Europe. In the face of growing geopolitical tensions, they called for increased investment in strategic infrastructure to facilitate the movement of armed forces. The Rail Baltica project, originally planned for civilian transport, is now considered a key element of European security. The ministers urged the European Union to recognise these initiatives as priorities and to support them within the 2028–2034 multiannual budget. This approach aims to strengthen the continent's resilience to current and future threats. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Portugal :



Prime Minister Luis Montenegro reappointed

On 29 May, the Portuguese president, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, reappointed his head of government, Luis Montenegro, after he came out ahead in the snap legislative elections held on 18 May. The Social Democrat party leading the centre-right Democratic Alliance holds a majority, but it is not absolute. The Prime Minister has declared that he will hold talks with all the political groups. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Kosovo :



The European Union and Kosovar civil society urge MPs to form a government

The European Union's ambassador to Kosovo, Aivo Orav, called for the formation of a new government on 28 May. He said that the European Union needed a stable partner with whom to discuss steps towards the country's integration. He added that the lifting of measures against Kosovo, announced by the head of European diplomacy, Kaja Kallas, on 23 May, required close cooperation with a new government. In recent days, several demonstrations have taken place outside the Assembly, with Kosovar citizens demanding that their deputies appoint a president and future ministers for the country. [Read more](#)

■ Ukraine :



Closer cooperation between Germany and Ukraine

After announcing at the WDR European Forum on 26 May that Germany and its British and French allies were lifting restrictions on the supply of long-range weapons to Ukraine, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz welcomed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to Berlin on 28 May. The two leaders agreed on their wish to strengthen their cooperation and the need to negotiate a ceasefire. Germany pledged to continue its military support, and the defence ministers of the two countries signed a declaration of intent to help Ukraine produce long-range weapons. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Finland and Ukraine launch coalition to build civil shelters

On 28 May, in Kyiv, the Prime Ministers of Finland, Petteri Orpo, and Ukraine, Denys Shmyhal, announced the creation of an international coalition to support the construction of civil protection shelters in Ukraine. In the face of continuing threats, the aim is to build 2,300 shelters by 2027 and a further 3,000 by 2030. Finland, renowned for its expertise in civil defence, will play a leading role in this project. The two countries have also signed cooperation agreements in the fields of energy and education, strengthening their strategic partnership. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Ukraine and Sweden strengthen their partnership in agriculture and food

On 27 May, Ukraine and Sweden signed a memorandum of understanding to step up their cooperation in the agricultural, food, fisheries and irrigation sectors. Signed in Kyiv, the agreement is valid for three years and is automatically renewable. It provides for the reconstruction of agricultural value chains in Ukraine, the development of infrastructure, the exchange of expertise and the harmonisation of standards with the European Union. This partnership is part of Sweden's ongoing support, notably via the "Buy Ukrainian Products" programme. [Read more](#)



Exchange of prisoners between Russia and Ukraine

On 24 May, Russia and Ukraine exchanged 307 prisoners of war, as part of a wider agreement reached during negotiations in Istanbul on 16 May. This exchange represents the second phase of a plan to free 1,000 prisoners from each side. Among the Ukrainians released were 27 soldiers captured during the siege of Marioupol in 2022. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky confirmed that the exchange would continue over the following days, stressing that this was the only tangible result of the Istanbul talks. The released Russian prisoners were transferred to Belarus for medical treatment. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ NATO :



Strengthening support for Ukraine

On 28 May, NATO and the European Union held an informal joint meeting at the Egmont Palace in Brussels to reiterate their support for Ukraine. Political and military leaders from both organisations participated in the meeting. The aim was to strengthen coordination of military, financial and humanitarian assistance in response to Russian aggression. This meeting demonstrates the commitment to maintaining close cooperation in defence of Ukrainian sovereignty and Euro-Atlantic security. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Parliamentary Assembly in Dayton

The spring session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly was held in Dayton, Ohio, from 22 to 26 May. Secretary General Mark Rutte spoke about the priorities for transatlantic cooperation in the run-up to the summit to be held in The Hague in June. He invited the countries of the Alliance to increase their defence investments on an equitable basis and to contribute to strengthening NATO, as Canada and the European countries have already begun to do. As part of the 30th anniversary of the Dayton Accords, Mark Rutte addressed the subject of peace, strongly condemning Russia's attacks and reaffirming unwavering support for Ukraine and for a just and lasting peace. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Culture :



Lygia Clark: Restrospective in Berlin

Until 12 October, the Neue Nationalgalerie is hosting the first retrospective exhibition in Germany of the Brazilian artist Lygia Clark, bringing together around 150 of her works produced between the 1950s and the 1980s. The artist belongs to the neo-concretist movement, born in Rio de Janeiro in 1959. Lygia Clark pushes back the boundaries of art, forging a new relationship between herself and the viewer. [Read more](#)



Paris-Brussels: the Baucher-Feron duo in the Art Deco era

From 6 June to 2 November, the Design Museum Brussels is hosting an exhibition dedicated to the Art Deco period of the Baucher-Feron couple, who were trained by Paul Follot, one of the movement's leading figures. Sylvie Feron and René Baucher, both active in Paris and Brussels from the 1920s onwards, worked for Atelier Pomone and Magasins Vanderborght, among others. The exhibition showcases their textile designs, lighting, carpets and furniture, drawn from previously unseen archives. It offers an insight into the decorative effervescence of an era and the beginnings of a duo that became indispensable. [Read more](#)



Florence and Europe at the Uffizi

The Uffizi Gallery in Florence presents the exhibition "Florence and Europe. Arts of the Eighteenth Century", an immersion into the European eighteenth century through almost 150 works, some of which have never been shown before or have remained unseen for over a decade. The exhibition, which runs until 28 November, highlights masterpieces by Goya, Tiepolo, Canaletto and Vigée Le Brun, as well as decorative objects such as furniture, porcelain and tapestries. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Les Nuits de Fourvière 2025

The Les Nuits de Fourvière festival in Lyon is presenting more than 140 shows combining music, theatre, dance, circus and cabaret until 26 July. The performances will mainly take place at the Fourvière ancient theatre and in various venues across the city of Lyon. [Read more](#)



WORLD PRESS PHOTO

World Press Photo in London

The World Press Photo exhibition in London is being held until 25 August at the MPB Gallery in the Here East building. Featuring the award-winning photos from the 2025 competition, it offers a striking insight into major world events through the lens of the best photojournalists. More than 59,000 images from 141 countries are on display this year. This unmissable event offers a different perspective on current affairs through the power of visual storytelling. [Read more](#)



Primavera Festival in Barcelona

The Barcelona Primavera Sound Festival 2025 is being held in the city's Parc del Forum from 4 to 8 June. With its innovative, cutting-edge programme, bringing together some of the best international rock, pop and electro artists on a single stage, Primavera Sound is one of Barcelona's most eagerly awaited festivals. [Read more](#)



Plásmata 3: open-air exhibition in the heart of Athens

Pedion tou Areos Park in Athens is undergoing a transformation thanks to Plásmata 3, a major open-air exhibition organised by Onassis Stegi until 15 June. Blurring the lines between illusion and reality, this third edition invites visitors on a poetic and unsettling journey through 25 hybrid works by Greek and international artists. [Read more](#)



White Night in Paris

White Night takes place on the night of 7 to 8 June, from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m., in Paris and the Île-de-France region. This free event invites visitors to discover art installations in museums, cultural venues and public spaces. French and international artists will present a variety of works, ranging from video projections to outdoor performances. [Read more](#)



Cabinet of Curiosities in Valletta

Until 28 June, Mongolian artist Otgonbayar Ershuu will be revealing his unique world in the exhibition Cabinet of Curiosities at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Valletta. Otgonbayar Ershuu, who has lived in Germany for the past twenty years, draws inspiration from his Mongolian cultural heritage, which he blends with a contemporary European sensibility. [Read more](#)



Charlemagne Prize in Aachen

On 29 May, Ursula von der Leyen received the Charlemagne Prize, hailed as a visionary leader guiding the European Union in times of crisis. In her speech, she called for an independent, strong, democratic and united Europe. She called for the creation of a 'Pax Europaea', investment in innovation and the enlargement of the Union to include neighbouring countries that share its values. On 27 May, MEPs and the Foundation of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen also awarded the Charlemagne Prize 2025 to three European initiatives with a strong social impact. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Agenda :

 2nd-3rd June 2025

"Justice and Home Affairs" EU-US Ministerial Meeting (Warsaw)

 5th June 2025

ECB Governing Council: monetary policy meeting

 5th June 2025

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council



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