

Letter n°1125 of Tuesday 30th September 2025

Europeans and Trump: dishonour, impotence or influence?

Maxime Lefebvre - 30 Sep 2025

The Turnberry trade agreement was widely perceived as a humiliation for Europeans, perhaps even the beginning of a 'century of humiliation'. Yet Europeans acted skilfully with the US administration. They secured changes in the US position on Ukraine and on the role of NATO. The trade agreement is not even unfavourable to European interests when one takes the trouble to analyse the details. But while the Europeans have saved the transatlantic relationship and gained some time, they must use this time to strengthen themselves and adapt their approach to the geopolitical and geo-economic changes in the world.



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■ Front Page! :



Some lessons from Moldova

The Moldovans have overwhelmingly confirmed their wish for a European future, despite Russia's interference and destabilising manoeuvres. The vote on 28 September is a clear rejection of Moscow's influence. Transnistria remains a point of tension, but the motivations for secession appear doomed to failure. This election serves as a reminder that Europe continues to embody hope and sends a strong message to both the Kremlin and Western democracies. [Read more](#)

■ Foundation :



'Towards a new Europe?' The Schuman Report 2025 is now available!

The 27 Member States of the European Union have faced increasing challenges in recent years. Between the prospects of enlargement, European competitiveness and the need for investment in the space sector, these are just some of the topics presented and analysed in the Schuman Report 2025. It is currently available in bookshops in French and on the Foundation's website and the websites of major bookshops in digital format, in French and English. It brings together leading contributions, original maps and annotated statistical studies. Order your copy now! [Read more](#)

■ Commission :



Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and Indonesia

After nine years of negotiations, the European Union and Indonesia concluded a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and an Investment Protection Agreement (IAP) on 23 September in Bali. This free trade agreement follows the political agreement reached on 13 July by European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen and Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto. The CEPA removes nearly 80% of customs duties between the European Union and Indonesia. It also opens up opportunities for European farmers, whose dairy products, meat, fruit and vegetables, and certain processed foods are exempt from taxes. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Parliament :



Nominations for the Sakharov Prize

On 23 September, the European Parliament announced the nominees for the 2025 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, which recognises outstanding individuals and organisations that defend human rights and fundamental freedoms. Among the nominees are Andrzej Poczobut, a journalist from the Polish minority in Belarus, journalists from the Palestinian Press Association, the Palestinian Red Crescent and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), Boualem Sansal, a writer critical of the Algerian government, and Serbian students. The Sakharov Prize award ceremony will take place in Strasbourg on 16 December. [Read more](#)

■ Council :



Meeting of Ministers for Agriculture and Fisheries

On 22 and 23 September, ministers for agriculture and fisheries discussed the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) after 2027 and the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). They discussed the agreements currently being negotiated or finalised with Mercosur, Mexico, the United States, Ukraine and Indonesia. They then examined the European Pact for the Oceans. Finally, ministers adopted a set of updated rules to better combat unsustainable fishing practices authorised by third countries (the United Kingdom, Norway, North-East Atlantic coastal states) concerning fish stocks of common interest. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



Simplification and competitiveness for chemicals

On 24 September, Member State representatives approved the European Council's position on the Commission's proposal for a 'suspensory mechanism', which aims to simplify EU rules and strengthen its competitiveness in the field of chemicals. The proposal is part of the 'Omnibus VI' package adopted by the Commission in early July 2025 to simplify European legislation on chemicals. The Danish Presidency has given this proposal top priority with a view to providing EU companies with the necessary legal certainty regarding their obligations. [Read more](#)

■ Trilogues :



Strengthening Europol

On 25 September, negotiators from the Council and the European Parliament reached a provisional agreement on strengthening Europol to better support Member States in their fight against migrant smuggling and human trafficking. The agreement places particular emphasis on improving information sharing between Member States and Europol with a view to boosting cooperation at EU level. Both sides agreed that a European centre against migrant smuggling would be set up as a permanent structure within Europol. [Read more](#)



InvestEU: a simpler and more effective programme

On 23 September, negotiators from the Council and the European Parliament reached a provisional agreement to simplify the InvestEU programme with a view to strengthening the European Union's competitiveness. The aim is to increase the European Union's investment capacity to mobilise additional public and private investment. The revised legislation aims to facilitate Member States' contribution to the programme and simplify administrative requirements. This agreement is part of the 'Omnibus II' package, designed to simplify legislation in the field of European Union investment programmes. [Read more](#)



Enhanced protection of surface water and groundwater

On 23 September, representatives of the Council and the European Parliament reached a provisional political agreement to review and update the lists of pollutants affecting surface water and groundwater. This agreement updates the environmental quality standards for a number of pollutants and adds new ones. To help Member States develop new methods and monitor the increased number of priority substances, the agreement provides for the possibility of establishing a joint monitoring mechanism at European Union level. Member States will have until 2039 to comply with the new standards. [Read more](#)

■ Diplomacy :



Reinstatement of sanctions against Iran's nuclear programme

Due to Iran's 'nuclear escalation', Germany, France and the United Kingdom have activated the 'snapback' mechanism to reinstate economic sanctions in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231. These sanctions came into force on 27 September and can be divided into four categories: the freezing of Iranian financial assets and a ban on the supply of nuclear technology, a partial embargo on arms exports, financial and travel restrictions on individuals involved in Iran's nuclear programme, and the strengthening of all these sanctions. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Extension of sanctions regime in Sudan

On 22 September, ministers extended the European Union's restrictive measures against those responsible for activities destabilising Sudan and hindering its political transition for a further year. The persons and entities on the list are subject to a travel ban throughout the European Union, an asset freeze and a ban on making funds or economic resources available to them, either directly or indirectly. [Read more](#)



Joint statement on cooperation with the Indo-Pacific

On 23 September, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the foreign ministers of Australia, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, South Korea and the United Kingdom discussed the mutual interests of Europe and the Indo-Pacific. The countries reiterated their support for maintaining peace, prosperity and economic growth in the region. They also highlighted the growing links between the European Union and the Indo-Pacific in terms of security and resilience, emphasising the need for advanced cooperation in addressing these common issues. [Read more](#)

■ ECB :



Innovation platform for a digital euro

On 26 September, the European Central Bank (ECB) presented the results of the innovation platform for a digital euro and announced a second phase of experimentation. A digital euro could stimulate innovation in the European payment system and strengthen financial inclusion. The innovation platform brought together nearly 70 market participants, including merchants, fintech companies, start-ups, universities, banks and other payment service providers, to explore possible applications for the digital euro. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ European Agencies :



Dismantling of drug trafficking, cryptocurrency and gold trading networks

On 23 September, Eurojust coordinated a major operation across Europe to put an end to widespread investment fraud involving cryptocurrencies. Five locations were searched in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Romania and Bulgaria, where bank accounts and financial assets were frozen. The alleged perpetrator is suspected of large-scale fraud and money laundering. On 24 September, a joint Franco-Italian investigation team dismantled two interlinked organised crime groups involved in illicit drug trafficking and money laundering. In a series of coordinated actions, 12 suspects were arrested and nearly 100 kilograms of pure gold bars were seized. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Germany :



Proposal to mobilise Russian assets without confiscating them

On 25 September, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz proposed using frozen Russian assets as collateral for a €140 billion interest-free loan to Ukraine, which Kyiv would not have to repay until Russia had compensated it for war-related damages. Pending this compensation, 'Russian assets will remain frozen'. This proposal will be presented on 1 October in Copenhagen at the informal European Council meeting. [Read more](#)

■ Denmark :



Airspace violated by unidentified drones

Since 22 September, the incursion of unidentified drones into the airspace of certain countries bordering the Baltic Sea has caused the temporary closure of airports in Oslo, Aalborg and Sønderborg, but especially in Copenhagen. On 27 September, drones also flew over certain Danish military bases. Neither Norway nor Denmark are accusing Moscow, which denies any involvement, but a Russian connection remains a possibility. While these attacks are ambiguous, previous Russian violations of European airspace have provoked strong condemnation from NATO members, who have stated that all means will be used to 'defend themselves and ward off any threats'. In anticipation of the informal European Council meeting on 1 October in Copenhagen, all civilian drone flights have been banned to facilitate the work of securing the meeting. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ France :



Framework agreement between Safran and Rheinmetall

Safran Electronics & Defence and Rheinmetall Electronics announced on 24 September that they had signed a framework agreement in London to strengthen their cooperation in the defence sector. This partnership follows on from France and Germany's wish to work together to build a competitive and innovative European Union. The agreement will allow the two companies to reorganise their procurement processes and provide support for future joint projects. Ultimately, it will mean they can pool their expertise to develop advanced technologies such as navigation systems for GNSS-denied areas and state-of-the-art vehicles and portable equipment. [Read more](#)

■ Ireland :



Three candidates in the 24 October presidential election

Three candidates, two women and one man, are running in the Irish presidential election on 24 October. Jim Gavin, former manager of the Dublin GAA football team, is representing the Fianna Fáil party. Fine Gael will be represented by Heather Humphreys, a former minister. The opposition parties have joined forces to put forward the name of Catherine Connolly, an independent politician. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Lithuania :



New government led by Prime Minister Inga Reguniene

On 25 September, Inga Reguniene was sworn in with her government and took office as Prime Minister of Lithuania. Her government comprises 15 ministers, of whom six are women. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Czech Republic :



Polls one week before the general election

According to several polls, Andrej Babiš's populist ANO ('Yes') party is set to win the general election scheduled for 3 and 4 October, with around 30% of voting intentions. It is ahead of the centre-right SPOLU ('Together') coalition, which is credited with 20%. Next come the far-right SPD party (12%), the liberal STAN party (Mayors and Independents - 11%), the Pirate Party (9.8%) and the Motorists (5%). The question is: which of these parties could ANO ally with to form a majority coalition? [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Bosnia-Herzegovina :



OECD assessment of the reform agenda in Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 26 September, the OECD published a report produced as part of the European Union's initiative to develop the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a candidate country for EU membership. It assesses the measures set out in the country's reform programme and makes recommendations based on OECD best practices to accelerate reforms and prepare for future monitoring. The report focuses on five areas: governance of state-owned enterprises, administrative simplification, transparency of commercial practices, financial support for businesses, and better alignment of vocational training with private sector needs. [Read more](#)

■ Moldova :



Extension of the transport agreement with Moldova

On 22 September, the European Commission and Moldova decided to extend the validity of their current road transport agreement until 31 March 2027. The agreement aims to support Moldova's access to global markets by facilitating transit through European Union countries and strengthening the country's links with the common market. The agreement with Moldova was first established after the loss of important transport routes through Ukrainian Black Sea ports and export markets in eastern Ukraine due to Russia's war of aggression. [Read more](#)



Legislative elections: voters have clearly chosen Europe

The Action and Solidarity Party (PAS), led by President Maia Sandu, won the 28 September legislative elections in Moldova, which were marked by numerous instances of interference. According to the official results published by the Electoral Commission on 29 September, PAS won 50.16% of the vote and an absolute majority of the 101 seats in Parliament (55), well ahead of the pro-Russian Patriotic Bloc, which won 24.19% (26 seats). Three other parties will be represented in Parliament (BEA, 7.9%, 8 seats; PN, 6.2% and 6 seats; and DA, 5.6% and 6 seats). Voter turnout was 52.2%. [Read more](#)

■ Ukraine :



Systematic use of torture by Russian authorities according to the UN

On 22 September, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine published new evidence proving that Russian authorities are using torture against Ukrainian civilians and prisoners of war in the territories they occupy in Ukraine, as well as in Russia. The Commission stated that 'The geographical diversity of the locations and the similarity of the methods demonstrate that torture has been employed by the Russian authorities as a common and acceptable practice.' [Read more](#)

■ UN :



Entry into force of the United Nations High Seas Treaty

On 23 September, during the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, French President Emmanuel Macron, together with United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, brought together representatives from 68 states to ratify the agreement regarding the high seas known as 'BBNJ', which will enter into force on 17 January 2026. The Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction will establish a binding legal framework for the protection and sustainable use of marine biodiversity on the high seas. [Read more](#)



80th session of the United Nations General Assembly

The general debate of the 80th United Nations General Assembly took place from 23 to 29 September. Among the highlights, several Western countries, including France, Belgium and Luxembourg, officially recognised the State of Palestine on 22 September. The following day, US President Donald Trump surprised observers by declaring that Ukraine was capable of 'reconquering all of its territory'. He threatened Russia with customs sanctions and called on Western countries to break away from Russian oil for good. On the sidelines of the session, on 21 September, leaders of the African Union (AU), the European Union and the UN reasserted their commitment to multilateralism and sustainable development in Africa. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Studies/Reports :



OECD Economic Outlook Interim Report

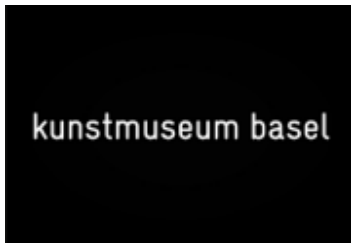
According to the OECD report published on 23 September, global GDP growth is expected to slow from 3.3% in 2024 to 3.2% in 2025 and 2.9% in 2026, as tariffs and uncertainty surrounding public policy dampen global investment and trade. Although growth proved more resilient than expected in the first half of 2025, this can be explained by the anticipatory effects of US tariffs. In addition, inflation is expected to decline across all G20 countries due to slower global growth. However, inflationary pressures could re-emerge. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Culture :



Leonora Carrington at the Palazzo Reale

The Leonora Carrington exhibition is being held at the Palazzo Reale in Milan until 11 January 2026. More than 60 works reconstruct the life and career of the British surrealist artist. They blend art, mythology, ecology, feminism and spirituality. The exhibition highlights Carrington's connection to Italy, beginning with her discovery of Renaissance art in Florence during her formative years. [Read more](#)



"Ghosts: in the footsteps of the supernatural" in Basel

Until 8 March 2026, the Basel Art Museum (Kunstmuseum) is presenting the exhibition "Ghosts: On the trail of the supernatural". It explores the visual culture of the last 250 years, with some 160 works and objects. If the 19th century was the age of rationality, it was also the age of belief in the supernatural, and this is what this exhibition highlights. [Read more](#)



Gauguin in Rome

Until 25 January 2026, Rome's Museo Storico della Fanteria is hosting the exhibition 'Gauguin. The Noa Noa Diary and Other Adventures'. More than a hundred works are on display, including drawings, lithographs and diary pages, through which visitors can retrace Paul Gauguin's travels and discover the artist's most intimate thoughts. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Sargent in Paris

An exhibition of the painter John Singer Sargent's work is being held at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris until 11 January 2026. The exhibition presents Sargent's vibrant artistic world, which blends naturalism and impressionism. With his unrivalled technical skill, vibrant touch and bold compositions, Sargent quickly established himself as the worthy heir to Velázquez, redefining the art of portraiture in the late 19th century. [Read more](#)



'Van Gogh and the Roulins' in Amsterdam

Until 11 January 2026, the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam is hosting the exhibition 'Van Gogh and the Roulins. Finally Together'. For the first time, portraits of the Roulins family and other works by Van Gogh are being exhibited together. This is the first time that works created by Van Gogh during his stay in Arles have been brought together. [Read more](#)



Art(t)CHIPEL Festival in Centre-Val de Loire

Until 2 November, Centre-Val de Loire is hosting the 2025 edition of the AR(t)CHIPEL festival on contemporary creation. This collaboration between the Centre Pompidou and the region is based on five basic principles: opening the doors of creative venues in all departments of the region, providing access to private collections, circulating artists from one edition to the next, involving young people in artistic creation, and welcoming works from the Centre Pompidou to new venues. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Lee Miller in London

From 2 October to 15 February, Tate Britain in London is hosting the exhibition 'Lee Miller'. This exhibition is the largest in the United Kingdom on the artist and brings together a large number of photographs ranging from French surrealism to fashion and war photography. It highlights some of her lesser-known collections, such as her photographs of Egyptian landscapes in the 1930s. [Read more](#)



Kyiv Biennial: a transnational event across Europe

The 6th Kyiv Biennial is taking place across Europe until 8 January 2026, in the form of a series of interconnected exhibitions. The main presentation is organised at the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, while parallel versions are on display at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp and the Lentos Art Museum in Linz. With a strong historical awareness, the biennial questions the injustices linked to contemporary imperialism. It explores these dynamics along the axis of the Middle East and Europe. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



19th edition of the Chopin Competition in Warsaw

The 19th Frédéric Chopin International Piano Competition will run until 23 October, with the traditional winners' concert. Held every five years at the National Philharmonic in Warsaw, the Chopin Competition is one of the oldest music competitions of its kind in the world. The 2025 edition marks the beginning of the centenary celebrations for this iconic event, which continues to reveal the greatest piano talents on an international scale. [Read more](#)



'Semana Cervantina' in Alcalá de Henares

Until 12 October, Alcalá de Henares, a city located in the Madrid region, is hosting 'Semana Cervantina'. This is an opportunity to honour the baptism of Miguel de Cervantes, author of 'Don Quixote de La Mancha'. This week of festivities includes gastronomic days, conferences, readings and theatrical performances. [Read more](#)

■ Sports :



Europe retains the Ryder Cup

On 28 September, Europe successfully retained the Ryder Cup trophy against the United States in Farmingdale, near New York, a first on American soil since 2012. This major biennial golf competition, launched in 1927, originally pitted the United States against Great Britain, which was then expanded to include Ireland in 1973 and Europe in 1979. Since then, the Europeans have dominated the United States with 13 wins to 9. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Agenda :



29-30 September 2025

"Competitiveness" Council (Brussels)



29 September - 3 October 2025

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



1 October 2025

Informal Summit of Heads of State and Government (Copenhagen)



2 October 2025

European Political Community Meeting (Copenhagen)



3-4 October 2025

General Election (Czech Republic)



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