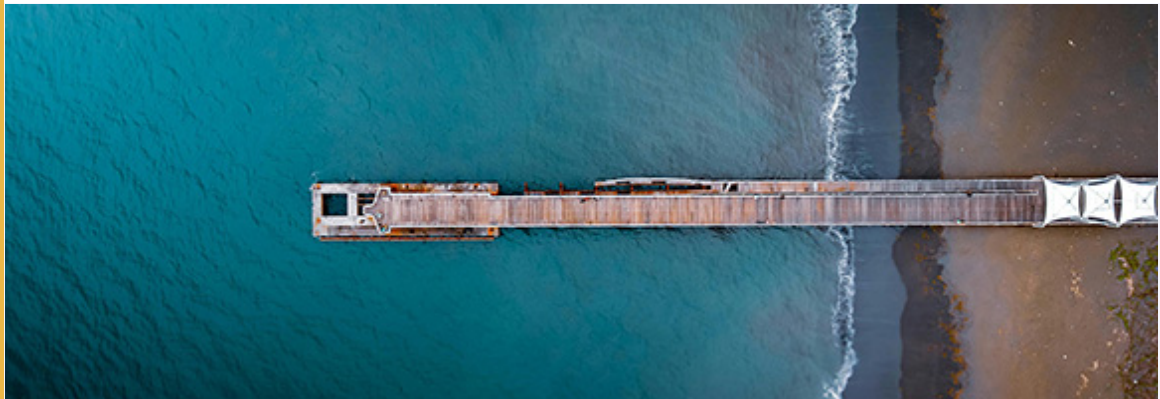


What does the future hold for relations between the EU and the islands?

Laurent Lacroix - 28 Apr 2026

The outermost regions and overseas territories now occupy a central geostrategic and maritime position, providing the European Union with the world's largest exclusive economic zone and levers of technological, space and military power. These vulnerable areas are becoming laboratories for ecological transition and hubs of regional diplomacy, enabling them to counter imperialist ambitions whilst renegotiating their status towards greater autonomy. The future of this euro-insular relationship rests on a sovereign co-construction in which the islands' unique identity strengthens the continent's global influence and security in the face of new global centres of influence.



[Front page!](#) | [Foundation](#) | [European Council](#) | [Commission](#) | [Diplomacy](#) | [Court of Justice](#) |

[Germany](#) | [Cyprus](#) | [France](#) | [Poland](#) | [Portugal](#) | [Romania](#) |

[Slovenia](#) | [Montenegro](#) | [Norway](#) | [UK](#) | [Ukraine](#) | [Council of Europe](#) |

[Culture](#) |

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

■ **Front page! :**



European Defence needs a new treaty

On 23 and 24 April, European Union leaders met in Cyprus for a summit on security and defence. Against the current geopolitical backdrop, they discussed Article 42.7 TEU, which provides for a mutual defence clause in the event of an armed attack against a Member State. These discussions sparked a debate on the actual scope of this commitment and how it is implemented. Several stakeholders raised the prospect of a European defence treaty, aimed at strengthening and formalising the continent's collective defence. This development thus highlights the need for Member States to adapt the model of European integration in the face of contemporary challenges, with collective defence emerging as a central issue for ensuring peace in Europe. This article was published by Ouest France. [Read more](#)

■ Foundation :



The European Union and Asian countries: towards sustainable cooperation

The European Institute of Romania (EIR), a member of the Schuman Network, has published a report entitled 'The European Union and Asian countries: towards sustainable cooperation'. Bringing together experts from fourteen countries, this publication analyses Euro-Asian relations at a time of global realignment. Pascale Joannin, Director General of the Foundation, highlights France's leading role in the European Union's engagement in the Indo-Pacific, emphasising how much French impetus has contributed to strengthening Europe's strategic ambition in the region. [Read more](#)



NextGenerationEU: new payments to Slovenia, Greece and Poland

On 21 April, three Member States received new payments under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (NextGenerationEU). Slovenia received €230 million, Greece €1.18 billion and Poland €7.2 billion. These funds will be allocated to common priorities such as healthcare and pension systems, transport, the energy transition, the digitalisation of public services and the strengthening of cyberspace. The Foundation provides a summary of the various national recovery plans on its website, setting out the amounts, timetables and priorities. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)

■ European Council :



'One Europe, One Market' Roadmap

On 24 April, the President of the Republic of Cyprus, together with the Presidents of the European Parliament and the European Commission, signed the roadmap entitled 'One Europe, One Market'. This document sets out the specific actions and objectives to be implemented by the end of 2027 in order to strengthen Europe's competitiveness. This agreement gives concrete form to the five objectives presented by the Council in March 2026, namely: simplifying regulation, strengthening the integration of the single market, promoting dynamic trade, reducing energy prices and decarbonising the economy, and fostering digital transformation and that linked to artificial intelligence. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Aid to Ukraine, sanctions against Russia and the Middle East

On 23 and 24 April, the 27 leaders of the European Union met in Cyprus. In a joint statement with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, they reaffirmed the need to maintain a coordinated and sustained response to Russian aggression. Member states approved a €90 billion financial support package for Ukraine and endorsed the 20th package of sanctions against Russia, targeting the energy, defence, trade and financial services sectors, including assets linked to cryptocurrencies. Finally, European leaders welcomed the recent ceasefire in the Middle East and discussed the prospects for diplomatic de-escalation with their Gulf partners. They also indicated that a coalition of more than 50 countries was preparing a defensive mission aimed at restoring freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Commission :



AccelerateEU: a response to the energy crisis

On 22 April, the European Commission presented AccelerateEU, aimed at protecting Europeans from the energy price crisis whilst accelerating the EU's energy transition. To cushion the impact of the conflict in the Middle East, the plan sets out to regulate support measures for households and industry, ensuring they remain exceptional, targeted and temporary. The Commission hopes to strengthen the coordination of national energy reserves, notably through the creation of a new fuel observatory. Finally, to accelerate the EU's energy independence, the Commission will present an action plan for electrification. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Critical minerals: EU–US partnership

On 24 April, the Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security, Maros Šefčovič, and the US Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, signed a memorandum of understanding in Washington formalising a strategic partnership on critical minerals. It aims to strengthen cooperation across the entire value chain, from production to extraction, processing and refining, recycling and recovery. At the same time, they presented an action plan for the resilience of the critical minerals supply chain. [Read more](#)

■ Diplomacy :



Meeting of Foreign Ministers

On 21 April, the Foreign Ministers considered new restrictive measures targeting two Russian entities and the extension of certain measures in the Republic of Moldova. Regarding the situation in the Middle East, the ministers held talks with the Lebanese Prime Minister, Nawaf Salam, and also discussed the situation in Iran. Finally, in the South Caucasus, a new European Union civilian mission to Armenia was approved with a view to strengthening the country's democratic resilience. [Read more](#)



Meeting of the Coalition of 7 against organised crime

On 20 April, the Coalition of 7 countries (C7), an entity established in 2021 by the European Union to strengthen its action against organised crime, met in Paris. It comprises Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Germany, Sweden and France. The aim of this annual meeting is to identify common approaches to combating organised crime and drug trafficking. This sixth meeting focused in particular on strengthening public-private partnerships to combat port infiltration and on cooperation with digital sector stakeholders. [Read more](#)



G7 Environment Meeting

From 23 to 24 April in Paris, as part of the French G7 Presidency, environment ministers met for a new round of discussions on multilateral action in the environmental field. Several working sessions were devoted to France's priorities: biodiversity financing, the security challenges posed by combating desertification, ocean conservation, resilience to natural disasters and the conservation of water resources. However, climate issues and fossil fuels were not addressed during the summit, as they were too contentious for the United States. [Read more](#)

■ Court of Justice :



Hungary has infringed EU law

On 21 April, the Court of Justice of the European Union ruled that Hungary had infringed EU law, including Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, which sets out the Union's values, through its 2021 law designed to protect minors. In this case, the Court had to answer the following question: can a Member State prohibit or restrict access to LGBTI+ content for the purported purpose of protecting children? [Read more](#)

■ Germany :



17th Petersberg Climate Dialogue

On 21 and 22 April, the 17th Petersberg Climate Dialogue, chaired by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, brought together more than 30 delegations as well as representatives from the European Union and the United Nations to prepare for upcoming environmental deadlines. At the end of the summit, participants reiterated their commitment to accelerating the phase-out of fossil fuels in favour of renewable energy and to upholding the 1.5°C target. Discussions also focused on raising climate ambitions for 2030, increasing funding for vulnerable countries and mobilising more private capital for the energy transition. This meeting marked a decisive step ahead of COP31, scheduled for November in Antalya, Turkey. [Read more](#)

■ Cyprus :



Migration issues in the Middle East

On 24 April, the Cypriot President, Nikos Christodoulides, the President of the Italian Council, Giorgia Meloni, the Greek Prime Minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, and his Maltese counterpart, Robert Abela, met in Cyprus, on the sidelines of the European Council, to coordinate their joint response to migration challenges linked to the destabilisation of the Middle East. In a joint statement, the four Mediterranean states called for tighter controls at the EU's external borders, increased action against people-smuggling networks, and enhanced cooperation with countries of origin and transit. [Read more](#)

■ France :



French President's visit to Cyprus and Greece

From 23 to 25 April, the President of the Republic, Emmanuel Macron, visited Cyprus and then Greece. In Cyprus, he held talks with President Nikos Christodoulides on strengthening the bilateral partnership, stability in the Eastern Mediterranean and regional crises in the Middle East. In Greece, the Head of State met with the Greek Prime Minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, to renew the defence and security partnership signed in 2021, and to extend it to new strategic sectors such as energy, the economy, and research and innovation, thereby confirming the high level of alignment between Paris and Athens. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Poland :



1st Franco-Polish Summit

On 20 April in Gdańsk, France and Poland held their first bilateral summit under the Treaty of Nancy, signed on 9 May 2025 to strengthen their strategic cooperation. Emmanuel Macron and Donald Tusk reiterated their commitment to strengthening their partnership in areas such as defence, space and the fight against foreign interference. This meeting marks a new stage in the rapprochement between the two countries, now underpinned by a lasting institutional framework. Three agreements were signed on satellite telecommunications, energy and preparations for the 2027 Poland-France season, which will promote cultural exchanges between the two nations. [Read more](#)

■ Portugal :



Portugal and Brazil strengthen their strategic partnership

On 20 April, in Lisbon, Portuguese Prime Minister Luís Montenegro hosted Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at a meeting focused on strengthening the strategic partnership between the two countries. They highlighted the strength of Portuguese-Brazilian relations and their shared commitment to deepening economic cooperation, particularly in the areas of investment, innovation, energy and trade. [Read more](#)



Portuguese President's visit to Spain

On 20 April, the Portuguese President, António José Seguro, made his first official overseas visit to Spain. He was received by King Felipe VI, before holding talks with Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez. Discussions focused on strengthening the bilateral partnership, coordination within the European Union and the defence of shared democratic values. Both sides reiterated their commitment to strengthening economic cooperation to generate mutual benefits, whilst deepening their collaboration on specific issues such as forest fire prevention and joint preparations for the 2030 FIFA World Cup. [Read more](#)

■ Romania :



Collapse of the coalition government

On 23 April, the six ministers from the Social Democratic Party (PSD) – the largest party in Ilie Bolojan's coalition government, holding 130 of the 465 seats – announced their resignation, thereby depriving the Prime Minister of his parliamentary majority. On 25 April, the Romanian president signed a decree terminating their appointments and appointing new interim ministers to the relevant portfolios. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Slovenia :



Robert Golob gives up on forming a government due to a lack of coalition partners

On 20 April, the outgoing Slovenian Prime Minister, Robert Golob, announced that he was giving up on forming a new government, having failed to secure an absolute majority following the general election on 22 March. Despite his party, the Movement for Freedom, securing a narrow lead with 29 out of 90 seats, negotiations with the Social Democrats, the radical left and the Democrats have failed. Former Prime Minister Janez Janša, leader of the SDS, who came in just behind with 28 seats, will attempt to negotiate an alternative coalition. The President, Nataša Pirc Musar, now has 14 days to nominate a new candidate ahead of a fresh vote in Parliament. [Read more](#)

■ Montenegro :



Establishment of the working group to draft Montenegro's accession treaty

On 22 April, the ambassadors of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) approved the establishment of an ad hoc working group tasked with preparing Montenegro's accession treaty. This group will be responsible for coordinating the final legal and technical aspects of the text, in particular the transition periods and safeguard mechanisms. [Read more](#)

■ Norway :



5th Security and Defence Dialogue with the European Union

On 22 April, the European Union and Norway held the fifth edition of their Security and Defence Dialogue. In a joint statement, both parties reiterated their commitment to strengthening cooperation in several areas: support for Ukraine, maritime security, critical infrastructure protection, countering hybrid threats and the development of the defence industry. It highlights a growing convergence between Brussels and Oslo in the face of current geopolitical challenges and the need to strengthen Europe's strategic resilience. [Read more - Other link](#)

■ UK :



Renewal of the Franco-British treaty on migration

On 22 April, France and the United Kingdom renewed the Sandhurst Treaty for a further three years. This agreement, concluded in 2018 and already renewed once in 2023, governs Franco-British cooperation in the fight against illegal immigration by seeking to prevent migrants from making illegal crossings of the English Channel. [Read more](#)

■ Ukraine :



40 years after Chernobyl

On 26 April, Ukraine hosted a conference to mark the 40th anniversary of the tragic accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. A joint statement reconfirms the shared commitment to nuclear safety, environmental protection and international cooperation. This commemoration also has a strategic dimension: to make Chernobyl a symbol of today's requirements for safety, transparency and international cooperation in the nuclear field, including in the context of the current war in Ukraine. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)



Defence cooperation with Spain

On 22 April, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky held talks with Spanish Defence Minister Margarita Robles regarding joint arms production and the strengthening of defence support. [Read more](#)



New funding for Ukraine

On 22 April, the European Commission signed two guarantee agreements with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), as well as a financing agreement with the European Investment Bank (EIB) aimed at supporting small businesses by establishing an innovative mechanism to cover losses caused by the war. The agreement with the EIB aims to finance transport and energy projects as part of Ukraine's reconstruction. On 24 April, the EBRD announced support to strengthen Ukraine's energy security through new solar power generation capacity. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Council of Europe :



Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

From 20 to 24 April, the spring plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe provided a forum for debate on the need to uphold international law and the establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine. Violence and hate speech against elected representatives, as well as the universal abolition of the death penalty, were central to the discussions, as was the protection of freedom of religion and belief in Europe. A joint debate was also held on improving the implementation of the Istanbul Convention on violence against women. [Read more](#)

■ Culture :



**Berliner
Philharmoniker**

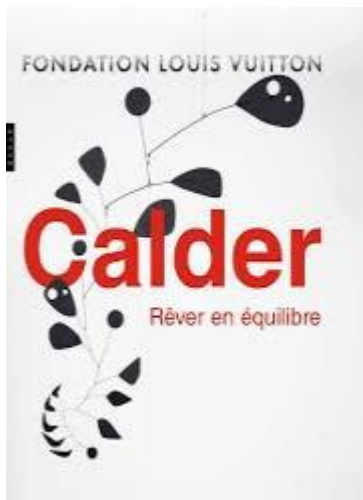
Europe's music celebrated on 1 May

The Berlin Philharmonic's "Europakonzert" is not linked to the founding of the European Union, but has celebrated European culture – particularly music – every 1 May since 1991, at a different venue each year. This year's concert takes place in the Haydn Hall at Esterházy Palace in Eisenstadt, Austria. The conductor Kirill Petrenko, who was born in Russia and has become an Austrian citizen, will lead a programme featuring works by Haydn, Tchaikovsky (with the French cellist Gautier Capuçon) and Beethoven. The concert will be broadcast live on 1 May in 80 countries on Mezzo and ARTE. [Read more](#)

MODERNA MUSEET

Anna Casparsson in Stockholm

Until 27 September, the Stockholm Museum of Modern Art is hosting an exhibition devoted to the artist Anna Casparsson, a unique figure in the history of Swedish art. For the first time since 1960, the museum is staging a solo exhibition of this artist, who was also a pianist and translator, and whose textile creations reveal a rich and varied world inspired by fairy tales, biblical stories and musical works. Entitled 'The Island of Bliss', the exhibition features magnificent embroidery, screens, tapestries and everyday objects transformed into truly poetic compositions. [Read more](#)



Calder in Paris

Until 16 August, the Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris is celebrating the sculptor Alexander Calder in the exhibition 'Calder: Dreaming in Balance'. To mark the centenary of Calder's arrival in France and the 50th anniversary of his death, the Foundation has brought together nearly 300 works. Calder's creations interact with the spaces designed by architect Frank Gehry, spilling out onto the outdoor lawn for the first time. [Read more](#)



35th Milan Music Festival

The 35th edition of the Milan Music Festival, one of Europe's leading events devoted to contemporary music, will run until 6 June. Organised together with La Scala, the festival programme is spread across the city, taking place in a host of iconic venues. Entitled "Creative Distances", this edition pays tribute to two major figures of the 20th century, both born in 1926: Morton Feldman and György Kurtág, brought together to mark the centenary of their births. [Read more](#)



Olomouc Documentary Film Festival

Until 3 May, the city of Olomouc in the Czech Republic is hosting the 61st edition of its International Festival of Scientific Documentary Films. Founded in 1966 by Palacký University, this event is one of the most important of its kind in Europe. The programme showcases documentary films and innovative factual works, as well as debates and conferences on various topical scientific subjects. [Read more](#)



Francisco de Zurbarán in London

Until 23 August, the National Gallery in London is hosting the UK's first major solo exhibition dedicated to the Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbarán. A leading figure in 17th-century Spanish art, he is renowned for his religious paintings, monumental altarpieces and still lifes. The exhibition features around fifty paintings tracing the artistic and thematic evolution of his career. [Read more](#)



Charlotte Perriand in Salzburg

Until 13 September, the Salzburg Museum of Modern Art is hosting a retrospective showcasing French artist Charlotte Perriand, a leading figure of 20th-century modernism. Entitled Living Modernism: Design, Photography, Architecture, this exhibition, organised in cooperation with the museums of Krefeld and the Joan Miró Foundation, traces the entirety of her work, from architecture to furniture and photography. [Read more](#)

■ Agenda :

 27-30 April

Plenary Session of the European Parliament (Strasbourg)

 27 April

"Agriculture and Fisheries" Council (Luxembourg)

 29-30 April

Informal meeting of transport and telecommunications ministers (Cyprus)



The Letter n°1153

PDF

in English -- Edition of Tuesday 28th April 2026

 **I download**

The Letter is also available in:



 I love the Robert Schuman Foundation's Letter

The Letter's Editorial Team :

Helen Levy ;

**Catherine d'Angelo, Justin Couteaud,
Malo Chanfray, Elodie de La Vaissière**

N° ISSN: **2729-6482**

A question, a suggestion ?

Contact us!

info@robert-schuman.eu

Editors-in-chief :

Juliette Bachschmidt

Publishing Director :

Pascale Joannin

[Click here if this email is not displayed correctly.](#)

**FONDATION ROBERT
SCHUMAN**

You no longer wish to receive our letters. {LINK}