

Letter n°1154 of Tuesday 5th May 2026

The Declaration of 9 May 1950

[Robert Schuman - 05 May 2026](#)

Five years after the end of the Second World War, against the backdrop of the emerging Cold War, Robert Schuman, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, proposed placing Franco-German coal and steel production under a common authority to cement European reconciliation. This pooling of resources made any new war materially impossible and laid the practical foundations for economic solidarity, intended to expand into a genuine European community, transforming the former drivers of the arms industry into instruments of peace and lasting prosperity for the continent. The Declaration of 9 May 1950 is regarded as the founding act of European integration and the first milestone of the current European Union.



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■ Front page! :



And ... well done King Charles II!

King Charles III's state visit to the United States marks a diplomatic turning point, during which British humour and elegance provided an opportunity to criticise the US President's isolationism. By emphasising the importance of multilateralism and support for Ukraine, the King spoke for a united Europe in the face of power politics. This success symbolises the UK's strategic reintegration into the European bloc, which is now determined to defend its shared democratic values. [Read more](#)

■ Elections :



Cyprus: traditional parties face off against extremists and newcomers

On 24 May, Cypriots are set to go to the polls to elect 56 of the 80 seats in Parliament; the remaining 24 seats are allocated to the Turkish-controlled part of the island, which has been occupied since 1974. The race for first place pits the DISY (centre-right) and AKEL (left) parties against each other, both polling at 21–22 per cent. This election could see a surge for the populist ELAM party (13.8 per cent) and the emergence of new players such as the ADK party led by YouTuber Fidias (10 per cent) or the ALMA party (9 per cent). This could upset the island's political balance and make forming a coalition more difficult. [Read more](#)

■ Foundation :



Join us in celebrating Europe Day on 9 May

On 9 May, Europe Day will be celebrated in Paris and across all Member States with activities, festivities and events, in tribute to the declaration made by Robert Schuman. Seventy-six years ago, in the Salon de l'Horloge at the Quai d'Orsay, the former French Foreign Minister called for the creation of a European organisation to pool French and German coal and steel production, a decisive step in setting these countries on the path to peace and solidarity. Thus was created the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the first step in European integration, which would later give rise to the European Union. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



NextGenEU: Green light for Italy's ninth payment request

On 29 April, the European Commission gave a positive assessment of Italy's ninth payment request for €12.8 billion under the NextGenerationEU recovery plan. The Commission found that the 16 milestones and 34 targets had been satisfactorily met. Italy had submitted its application on 30 December 2025 as part of its €194.4 billion recovery plan. The payment, now approved, will fund measures covering public administration, tax modernisation, judicial efficiency and transparency in public procurement. 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](#)

■ Commission :



Towards a simplification of European rules

On 28 April, the European Commission presented a plan aimed at improving the European Union's legislative process, with a view to clarifying it and ensuring its effective and transparent implementation. The Commission has therefore identified five areas for action: simplicity, strengthening the framework for better regulation, streamlining the existing legislative framework, combating regulatory overreach, and ensuring faster and more rigorous enforcement. Through this simplification, the Commission is committed to producing legislation within shorter timeframes and reviewing existing laws to identify potential redundancies. [Read more](#)



Public consultation on mergers and concentrations

On 30 April, the European Commission launched a public consultation to gather comments on the new draft EU merger guidelines. This is the most significant reform of merger control within the EU in two decades. Any interested stakeholder may contribute by completing the questionnaire provided by the Commission before 26 June. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Mixed results for the Common Fisheries Policy

On 30 April, the European Commission published its assessment of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation covering the period 2014–2024. The assessment is mixed, noting some progress in reducing overfishing and improving fisheries management, but showing that gains in sustainability remain insufficient. This assessment will help shape future reforms as well as the Commission's vision for fisheries and aquaculture up to 2040. [Read more](#)

■ Parliament :



Protecting businesses and jobs from unfair competition

On 29 April, MEPs adopted a resolution calling on the Commission to protect EU businesses from unfair competition from manufacturers in third countries, in order to strengthen the EU's strategic independence and ensure compliance with European safety, environmental and labour law standards. Noting the rapid growth of non-European online retailers within the single market, they are calling for the use of targeted trade defence instruments, such as anti-dumping and anti-subsidy investigations, as well as rules to strengthen product traceability and identification. [Read more](#)



Common definition of rape based on the absence of consent

On 29 April, MEPs called on the Commission to propose legislation establishing a common definition of rape based on the absence of free, informed and revocable consent. In a report adopted by 447 votes to 160, with 43 abstentions, MEPs called for a new legal framework, stating that silence, lack of resistance or a previous relationship should not be interpreted as consent. They also called for a victim-centred approach, including specialist support and prevention measures. The report also recommends the introduction of compulsory training for professionals in contact with victims. [Read more](#)



Accountability and justice for Ukraine

On 30 April, MEPs adopted a resolution strongly condemning Russia's systematic attacks on civilian targets in Ukraine and calling for the establishment of a Special Tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine. The text, adopted by 446 votes to 63, with 52 abstentions, states that accountability must extend to all those directly or indirectly involved in the crime of aggression. Finally, they supported the establishment of an international claims commission for Ukraine, which should enable civilian victims to be compensated during the war. [Read more](#)



Position on the 2028–2034 financial framework

On 28 April, MEPs voted in favour of increasing the 2028–2034 multiannual financial framework, ahead of negotiations with the Member States. Adopted by 370 votes to 201, with 84 abstentions, this proposal sets the EU budget at 1.27% of the European Union's gross national income (GNI), representing a nominal increase of €175.11 billion at constant prices, excluding debt repayment costs. On the funding front, MEPs support the inclusion of defence and competitiveness alongside cohesion, agriculture and external action. They confirm their intention to introduce new sources of revenue, generating around €60 billion per year, to repay the debt linked to NextGenerationEU. [Read more](#)



Digital Markets Act: the need for more determined enforcement

On 30 April, MEPs called on the Commission to ensure the swift and effective implementation of the Digital Markets Act (DMA). Stating that this legislation is a fundamental tool for safeguarding user choice within the EU, as well as competition and market fairness, they warned against external pressures, which must not compromise the EU's sovereignty in setting its own rules. As generative artificial intelligence and cloud services pose new challenges, they emphasised the need for stricter oversight of these practices. [Read more](#)

■ Council :



Meeting of Ministers for Agriculture and Fisheries

On 27 April, the Ministers for Agriculture and Fisheries discussed proposals relating to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) after 2027, forest fire prevention and the market situation following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Regarding the CAP, they discussed support mechanisms for farmers and the right balance between a common regulatory framework and greater flexibility. On the subject of forest fire prevention, they emphasised the strategic importance of agriculture, arguing that this issue should be a priority in the Union's future financial framework. Finally, the ministers discussed the challenges currently facing the European agricultural sector. [Read more](#)

■ Diplomacy :



G7 Development Ministers' Meeting

On 29 and 30 April, G7 ministers met in Paris to examine the weaknesses in the international development architecture, which is currently characterised by recurring crises, structural vulnerabilities and persistent dependencies for many countries. In a joint statement, they reconfirmed their commitment to the fundamental principles of international law, state sovereignty and geopolitical stability. The ministers emphasised the need for a coordinated response, particularly in the areas of security, energy and economic resilience. In this context, they underlined the importance of multilateralism and the role of international institutions, calling for strengthened global cooperation in the face of growing strategic tensions and rivalries. [Read more](#)



25th Ministerial Meeting with ASEAN countries

On 27–28 April, High Representative Kaja Kallas co-chaired, alongside Brunei's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof, the 25th meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In their joint statement, the leaders reiterated the values shared between the EU and ASEAN throughout their 49-year diplomatic relationship. They committed to deepening the strategic partnership, particularly in the run-up to the 50th anniversary of relations in 2027, when it is expected to be elevated to the status of a comprehensive strategic partnership. Kaja Kallas highlighted maritime security, the fight against terrorism and cyber defence as priority areas for cooperation. [Read more](#)



Provisional entry into force of the agreement with the Mercosur countries

On 1 May, the trade agreement between the European Union and the Mercosur countries entered into provisional force. Following 25 years of negotiations and its signing in January 2026, customs duties on European products exported to Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay will be abolished or significantly reduced. Provisional application means that provisions falling within the exclusive competence of the EU, including the trade provisions, can begin to apply without waiting for the final vote of the European Parliament – which has lodged an appeal with the Court of Justice – or ratification by the 27 Member States. [Read more](#)



Three Seas Initiative Summit in Dubrovnik

On 28 and 29 April, the heads of state and government of the Three Seas Initiative (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia), meeting in Dubrovnik, adopted a declaration aimed at increasing cohesion and interconnectivity in transport and energy, as well as strengthening the EU's energy security and competitiveness. They also reaffirmed their support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. In addition, a partnership worth nearly €2 billion was signed with the European Investment Fund to support infrastructure projects in Central and Eastern Europe. [Read more](#)

■ ECB :



Monetary Policy Decision by the Governing Council

On 30 April, the Governing Council of the European Central Bank announced its decision to leave the Bank's three key interest rates unchanged. In the face of soaring prices, the deposit rate remains at 2%, the rate on main refinancing operations at 2.15% and the marginal lending facility rate at 2.40%. With the war in the Middle East having led to high inflation and a deteriorating economic climate, the ECB may be forced to review its position at its next meeting in June in order to take action to "bring inflation back to 2%". [Read more](#)

■ European Agencies :



Ariane 6 places 32 satellites into orbit

On 30 April, Arianespace successfully launched mission VA268 of the Ariane 6 programme from the European spaceport in Kourou. The Ariane 64 rocket, the most powerful version of the Ariane 6, lifted off to place 32 new Amazon Leo satellites into low Earth orbit. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)



Report on organised cybercrime

On 28 April, Europol published a new edition of its Internet Organised Crime Threat Assessment (IOCTA) report. The report provides an in-depth analysis of the latest trends and developments in cybercrime affecting the European Union. The report highlights the increasing pace and sophistication of cyber threats, particularly via the dark web, cryptocurrencies and the use of automation and artificial intelligence, emphasising the need to strengthen law enforcement capabilities and international cooperation. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Estonia :



Statement by the Nordic and Baltic countries

On 29 and 30 April, the foreign ministers of the Nordic and Baltic countries (NB8) met in Kuressaare, Estonia, to discuss Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine and its impact on European security. They renewed their support for Ukraine's integration into the European Union and NATO, emphasising the need for long-term assistance and security guarantees. The ministers repeated their commitment to sanctions against Russia, the reconstruction of Ukraine and the strengthening of regional security through cooperation between NATO and the European Union. [Read more](#)

■ France :



Emmanuel Macron's visit to Andorra

On 27 and 28 April, French President Emmanuel Macron visited the Principality of Andorra. Seven years after his last visit, this trip aimed to support Andorra's economic, social and European modernisation and to confirm the unique historical bond between France and the principality. On this occasion, the Head of State came to support cooperation projects relating to the green transition through Franco-Andorran energy partnerships, and to encourage Andorra's continued rapprochement with the European Union. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Hungary :



Peter Magyar visits Brussels

On 29 April, Peter Magyar, who could become Hungary's Prime Minister on 9 May, travelled to Brussels, where he held talks with the leaders of the European institutions. Discussions focused in particular on the release of European funds earmarked for Hungary, amounting to around €18 billion, which the EU had frozen due to the policies of his predecessor, Viktor Orbán. An agreement is expected to be reached with the Commission by the end of May. Furthermore, Peter Magyar pledged that his country would be a loyal member of the EU and announced his intention to see it join the European Public Prosecutor's Office. [Read more](#)

■ Malta :



Early general election on 30 May

On 27 April, the Maltese President, Myriam Spiteri Debono, officially dissolved Parliament, paving the way for an early general election on 30 May. This decision follows her meeting with Prime Minister Robert Abela, which, in accordance with the Constitution, allows her to call a new election. The vote will take place nearly a year ahead of schedule and has been justified by the need to provide the country with a renewed mandate in an uncertain international context and in the face of upcoming economic challenges. Candidates have until 11 May to stand [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ UK :



The King's visit to the United States

From 27 to 30 April, King Charles III and the Queen visited the United States to mark the 250th anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence. On 28 April, the King addressed the US Congress, during which he emphasised the special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States, whilst stressing that this alliance cannot rest on past achievements. Furthermore, he called on Congress to show unwavering determination in defending Ukraine. He is only the second British monarch to address Congress, 35 years after the speech given by his mother, Queen Elizabeth II. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Kosovo :



Another failed attempt to elect a president and new parliamentary elections on 7 June

On 28 April, the Kosovo Parliament once again failed to elect a head of state within the allotted time, failing to reach the required two-thirds quorum of MPs. The acting president, Albulena Haxhiu, announced, after holding consultations with representatives of the political parties, that new elections will be called on 7 June, for the third time in just over a year. [Read more](#)

■ Studies/Reports :



STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL

Rise in global military spending

On 27 April, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute published new data on global military spending. According to the report, global military spending in 2025 is projected to reach \$2,887 billion, an increase of 2.9% compared to 2024, marking the eleventh consecutive year of growth. Military spending has fallen in the United States, but has risen by 14% in Europe and by 8.1% in Asia-Pacific. Three countries (the United States, China and Russia) account for \$1,480 billion, or 51% of total global military spending. [Read more](#)



Report on the state of the European climate

On 28 April, the European Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) and the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) published a report on the state of the European climate for the year 2025. According to the report, globally, 2025 was the third warmest year on record. Since the 1980s, Europe has been warming at twice the global average rate, becoming the fastest-warming continent, with at least 95% of Europe experiencing above-average annual temperatures in 2025. Consequences: increasingly frequent and intense heatwaves, extreme rainfall leading to flooding, and melting glaciers affecting biodiversity, particularly in the seabed and forests. [Read more](#) - [Other link](#)

■ Culture :



Riga Photography Biennial

Until 3 July, the Riga Photography Biennial presents a vibrant celebration of contemporary photography. Ten years after its first event, it attracts artists from Latvia, the Baltic region and around the world to explore the challenges of existence and coexistence in a variety of contexts, ranging from the impact of technology on human nature to the relationship between humans and nature. [Read more](#)



Boros Contemporary Art in Berlin

On 3 May, the Boros Collection reopened its doors with a new presentation of its contemporary art collection. Housed in a converted former bunker in the centre of Berlin, this private collection brings together works by international artists from 1990 to the present day. This new exhibition features a new selection of works from the collection and aims to offer fresh perspectives on major artists from the contemporary scene. [Read more](#)



Córdoba's Patio Festival

From 4 to 17 May, the city of Córdoba in Spain hosts the latest edition of its Patio Festival, which has been held since 1921. For two weeks, residents adorn their homes with floral decorations in preparation for the patio competition, and the city comes alive with the festival, featuring numerous performances of traditional songs and dances. In 2012, this festival was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. [Read more](#)



Hilma af Klint in Paris

Until 30 August, the Grand Palais in Paris is hosting the first major exhibition in France dedicated to Hilma af Klint, a pioneering figure of modern abstraction. The exhibition highlights the visionary work of the Swedish artist and brings together a major collection of her works, notably the cycle of Temple Paintings and the iconic series of the "Ten Greatest", revealing a unique visual language blending colours, shapes and organic motifs. [Read more](#)



Marina Abramović in Venice

Until 19 October, the Galleria dell'Accademia in Venice is hosting an exhibition dedicated to Marina Abramović, a leading figure in contemporary art, entitled "Transforming Energy". Held in an iconic venue for Venetian art, this exhibition offers an immersion into a world where energy becomes both artistic material and a vehicle for experience, inviting visitors to rethink the boundaries between body, mind and creation. The exhibition brings together historical works and recent experiments, revealing the processes of physical and mental transformation central to the artist's practice. [Read more](#)



Lucerne Pulse Festival

From 8 to 17 May, the Lucerne Festival presents Pulse, a programme designed and organised by the Icelandic piano star Víkingur Ólafsson. Over two long weekends, the programme features a series of concerts, ranging from Bach to the present day, centred on the theme of 'Time and Space'. [Read more](#)



200th Annual Exhibition in Edinburgh

Until 14 June, the Royal Scottish Academy in Edinburgh is presenting a new edition of its annual exhibition, marking its 200th anniversary. This year, it is dedicated to contemporary art, with works from Scotland and around the world on display in the Academy's neoclassical galleries. Hundreds of works are also available for purchase. [Read more](#)

■ Agenda :

 04/05/2026

Meeting of the European Political Community

 04/05/2026

 04/05/2026

EU-Armenia Summit

 05/05/2026

"Economic and Financial Affairs" Council

 09/05/2026

Europe Day

 11/05/2026

"Education, Youth, Culture and Sport" Council

 11/05/2026

Foreign Affairs Council



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