



Europe's Industrial Ambition



Author: Philippe Camus

Cradle of the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century, industrial Europe has gradually been caught up and then taken over by other geographic areas - yesterday it was North America, tomorrow it will be Asia. Is this an inevitable development? Should we fear it, resign ourselves to it or fight it? Can we turn it to our advantage? What can and must Europe and the States which make it up do? What responsibility does business have in this? The European Issue written by Philippe Camus, Chairman of the Board of Alcatel-Lucent, reviews the EU's industrial policy; the author lists the ingredients we need to guarantee the success of Europe's industrial policy.

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Front page! :

Europe as viewed by China and India since the crisis



How do China and India view the European Union and its Member States? What are their views of the public debt crisis? What do they think of the euro? What political developments do they see for Europe? The Robert Schuman Foundation, together with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and the Global Policy Institute have published a study by Karine Lisbonne de Vergeron on the view the Chinese and Indian elites have of the political and economic situation in Europe. This paper can be ordered on the Foundation's internet site... [Read more](#)

Seminar on Smart Power in Europe



The Robert Schuman Foundation and the INHES (Institute for Higher Security and Justice Studies) are organising a seminar entitled "Le smart power: une voie pour l'Europe?" on 24th January. Leading personalities from the academic, political and diplomatic world will be taking part in the debate. It is obligatory to enrol... [Read more](#)

France-Germany: the hour of truth Conference



The Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation Jean-Dominique Giuliani will be participating in a debate on 23rd January organised by the Heinrich Heine House and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, together with the Association Réalités et Relations Internationales and the Fédérations des Associations Franco-Allemandes, on the theme of "France-Germany: the hour of truth. Motor, executive board or new partnership?" Jean-Dominique Giuliani will be debating, notably with Bernard de Montferrand, former French Ambassador in Germany and MEP Dr Andreas Schockenhoff (CDU)... [Read more](#)

The European Union's Foreign Policy



The Robert Schuman Foundation is the partner in the 4th issue of the "Jeu de l'Oie" (Winter 2011), the first student publication devoted to international issues that was created by the students of the IEP of Lille. This issue is devoted to the EU's external means, two years after the signature of the Lisbon Treaty. The various articles analyse the challenges that the Union's external action faces to increase European power... [Read more](#)

Elections :

Presidential election in Finland



On 22nd January 4,402,622 Finns will be going to ballot to appoint the successor to Tarja Halonen as President of the Republic. Eight people are standing: Sauli Niinistö, Conservative Assembly (KOK); Paavo Väyrynen, Centre Party (KESK); Paavo Lipponen, Social Democratic Party (SPD); Timo Soini, True Finns (PS); Pekka Haavisto, Greens, (VIHR); Sari Essayah, Christian Democratic Party (SKL); Paavo Arhinmäki, Left Alliance (VAS); Eva Biaudet, Swedish People's Party (SFP). According to the most recent poll Sauli Niinistö is the favourite with 37% of the voting intentions. Pekka Haavisto follows has 8.3%, then comes Paavo Väyrynen 8.2%, Timo Soini 7%, Paavo Lipponen and Paavo Arhinmäki 4% each, Eva Biaudet 2% and Sari Essayah 1%. Around three people in ten (29%) say however they still have not made their choice... [Read more](#)

Referendum in Croatia on EU Membership on 22nd January



On 22nd January, 4.2 million Croats are being called to answer "yes" or "no" to the following question during a referendum: "Do you agree to Croatia becoming a member of the European Union?" According to the most recent poll undertaken by the CRO-Demoskop Institute, 55.1% of Croats are about to vote in support of their country joining the EU, one third (33%) are due to vote against. One Croat in ten (11.6%) say they have not decided... [Read more](#)

Financial Crisis :

The ECB maintains its main interest rate at 1%



On 12th January the President of the European Central Bank Mario Draghi announced that the main interest rate would be held at 1% after two 0.25 point reductions in November and December 2011. He also said that forecasts for inflation were above 2% for the time being but that this may soon decline. Mario Draghi also said he was pleased with the "extraordinary progress" made by the countries that are struggling but he called on the States to accelerate the pace of reform. He then said that he was extremely worried about the recent Hungarian constitutional reforms which have deprived the country's central bank of a major share of its

independence... [Read more](#)

Downgrading of the sovereign rating of several euro zone countries



On 13th January the credit ratings agency Standard & Poor's decided to downgrade the sovereign rating of France and Austria by one notch from AAA to AA+. The long term ratings of Malta, Slovenia and Slovakia were also downgraded a notch whilst those of Cyprus, Spain, Italy and Portugal were taken down by two. The ratings of Germany, Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands stay the same. These decisions were accompanied by a "negative" outlook, except with regard to Germany which retains its triple A with a "stable" outlook. This decision is justified, according to the agency, because of the risk of greater recession than forecast, because of "rising lassitude" in the face of business reform, and because of a lack of measures taken across Europe to settle the crisis... [Read more](#)

Slowing of Economic Activity



In most OECD countries and the major non-member countries economic output will be down over the next few months according to an assessment of economic dynamics presented by the OECD on 12th January. Based on OECD advanced composite indicators and in line with the forecasts of the past few months, experts say that economic output in the euro zone, in the UK and in China are approaching a long term trend, and even fall below this. At the same time the USA, Japan and Russia 'are showing strong signs of positive dynamic change" in economic activity... [Read more](#)

Belgium: Budgetary deficit reviewed upwards



Belgian Budget Minister, Olivier Chastel announced on 13th January that the 2011 public budgetary deficit totalled 4% instead of the expected 3.6%. This news came just as the Belgian government has to come up with further savings strategies and that the expected growth rate of 0.8% is due to be reviewed downwards, thereby reducing the government's room to manoeuvre... [Read more](#)

Spain : adoption by parliament of austerity measures



The initial austerity measures decided upon by the Rajoy government were approved by the Spanish parliament on 11th January, 197 votes in favour, 138 against and 4 abstentions. Totalling nearly 9 billion euros they are designed to reduce the Spanish budgetary deficit. They notably involve the freezing of salaries and the recruitment of civil servants, an increase in taxes on income and property. The Spanish budgetary deficit totalled 8% of the GDP in 2011... [Read more](#)

Greece: suspension of negotiations with the Banks of Athens



On 13th January, the International Financial Institute announced that the banks were suspending their negotiations with Greece on the means of restructuring the public debt. They may come back to the table this week if things develop on the Greek side. Moreover they plan to review their commitment to the voluntary suspension of part of the debt. In spite of the taxes established by the austerity measures, Greece's public deficit grew by 0.8% in 2011, according to the budgetary accounts made public on 11th January. To date the participation on the part of private creditors is below 70% which prevents Greece from maintaining the goals set by the euro zone as part of its second rescue plan... [Read more](#)

Italy: towards an improvement in public finances

According to data published by the Italian National Statistics Institute (Istat) on 11th January, in the first nine months of 2011 Italian public finances recorded their best performance since the fourth quarter of 2008. Hence in the third quarter of 2011 the deficit/GDP ratio was



2.7% (below the 3% specified by the EU), whilst over the first nine months the public deficit totalled 4.6% (ie a reduction of 0.3 points in comparison with the same period in 2010). The primary balance has also improved since it is now positive: 1.7% of the GDP... [Read more](#)

Portugal: economic recovery uncertain in 2013



According to forecasts published on 10th January by the Bank of Portugal the Portuguese economy is due "almost to stagnate" in 2013 with growth limited to 0.3% of the GDP. The Central Bank is forecasting recession of 3.1% of the GDP this year, especially because of the impact of the austerity measures planned for in the State budget... [Read more](#)

Commission :

The Commission suggests sanctions against Hungary for its excessive deficit



In a press release published on 11th January the European Commission said it believed that Hungary had not done enough to correct its excessive deficit sustainably. It is asking Member States to sanction Hungary which may be deprived of over one billion euros in European aid. By this the European Commission is employing for the very first time its new prerogatives in terms of budgetary discipline adopted in the autumn (the six pack). The Commission has also announced that it will look into the new Hungarian constitutional measures since these are deemed incompatible with European values and law. It is notably concerned about the independence of the Hungarian Central Bank, of the judges and the national data protection supervisor... [Read more](#)

Cross Border VAT



On 13th January the European Commission announced the establishment of a one- stop-shop to undertake formalities with regard to cross border VAT, which will be fully effective by 2015. This one-stop-shop aims to simplify red-tape and limit the costs that businesses face due to differences between Member States... [Read more](#)

Revision of the early warning system



On 12th January the European Ombudsman, Nikiforos Dimandouros asked the European Commission to guarantee that his Early Warning System, designed to identify people who might threaten the EU's financial interests, was in line with the fundamental laws that all European institutions should respect. The Ombudsman notably believes that all people and businesses who feature on this register should be informed of this fact and have the chance to respond to it... [Read more](#)

SME's create 85% of the new jobs



According to a study published by the Commission on 16th January SMEs had led to 85% of the jobs created in the EU between 2002 and 2010. This figure is clearly higher than the share of SME's in employment overall which lies at 67%. Over the period in question the net creation of jobs by the EU's economy rose sharply 1.1 million new jobs were created on average every year... [Read more](#)

Doubling the Volume of Electronic Trade in Europe by 2015

On 11th January Commissioners Michel Barnier, responsible for the Internal Market, Nellie Kroes, responsible for Digital Strategy and John Dalli, responsible for Consumers presented a European action plan during a joint press conference which aims to double the volume of



European electronic trade by 2015. The aim is to stimulate growth and employment in the area of the internet and to better serve consumers by offering them more choice, more information and better protection. This project also plans to overcome the legal obstacles that come from differences between national legislation, as well as the establishment of a joint legal framework that will lead to the more effective settlement of disputes... [Read more](#)

Study of Internet Sites that offer Consumer Credit



On 10th January the European Commission published the results of a sweep operation undertaken in 27 Member States, as well as in Iceland and Norway, regarding 562 internet sites offering consumer credit. This was to check to see if they were in line with European legislation. Around 70% of the sites did not meet the required standards, notably because there was insufficient information in the advertising, vital information was omitted in the offer and the cost was presented badly. Contractual conditions were also the focus of in depth investigation on the part of six Member States. Bulgaria, Ireland, Iceland and Greece, as well as Slovenia were the countries in which legislation was best applied, no site was found to contain any irregularities... [Read more](#)

Arbitration over the border with Croatia and Slovenia



European Commissioner for Enlargement, Stefan Füle met the Croatian and Slovenian Foreign Ministers on 10th January to settle the old border conflict between the two countries. Mr Füle believes that talks about the next steps to take were very useful and constructive. The countries agree to form an arbitration tribunal comprising five experts. Each country will individually appoint a member to the tribunal. The Chair of the Tribunal and the other two members are to be chosen jointly by Croatia and Slovenia from a list of 15 candidates established by the European Commission. If the countries cannot agree then the Commission will appoint the three remaining experts... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Negotiations for the Treaty on "reinforced economic union"



This week important negotiations took place in view of the drafting of the treaty on reinforced economic Union. In a joint press release on 11th January the MEPs who are in charge of the negotiations said that the provisional version put forward by the Member States was unacceptable as it stood. Elmar Brok (EPP, Germany), Roberto Gualtieri (S&D, Italy), Guy Verhofstadt (ALDE, Belgium) and Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Greens/EFO, France) notably criticised the procedures that had been drafted - which they believe would not be in line with the European treaties and secondary community law. They also denounced the exclusion of the community method and other European institutions, notably the European Parliament, which would not be able to exercise democratic control. A compromise seems to have been found, even though there is still doubt about the Commission's role and its prerogatives in terms of national budgetary supervision. Finance Ministers are due to discuss the final text at the end of the month... [Read more](#)

Examination of Hungarian Laws by the Civil Liberties Committee



The European Parliament's Civil Liberties Committee discussed the compatibility of the new Hungarian laws with European legislation on 11th January. On this occasion MEPs expressed their concern both about the new Constitution as well as the law on Churches and the electoral law. Some MEPs believe that it was not necessary to wait for the European Commission's conclusions planned for 17th January, and that the Lisbon Treaty granted the Parliament adequate power to "take steps" against Hungary. Others wanted to wait for the conclusions. During this discussion, it was also recalled that the problem was just as political as it was

legal and that the EU's credibility depended on this since it was under threat if a State did not respect the fundamental laws... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Herman van Rompuy meets Mario Monti



On 16th January, the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, travelled to Rome to meet the President of the Italian Council, Mario Monti. They spoke of the economic and financial crisis in the EU, the Italian austerity plan set in place to reassure the financial markets and the response the EU is due to put forward on 30th January to revive growth... [Read more](#)

ECB :

The number of financial establishments declined by 4% in 2011 in the euro zone



The number of financial establishments in the euro zone declined by 4% in 2011 in comparison with 2010, according to statistics published on 16th January by the European Central Bank. In all the euro zone comprised 7,533 banks on January 1st 2012 ie 332 less than on January 1st 2011. The greatest percentage decline was seen in Ireland (-15%), followed by Luxembourg (-8%), Cyprus (-6%), France (-5%) and Greece (-5%). In numbers of institutes Ireland still leads with 106 lost banks followed by France (59), Luxembourg (48), and Germany (43). As a whole the European Union lost 332 financial institutions last year. In all 9,587 institutions are still at work in the EU... [Read more](#)

Germany :

German Growth Totalled 3% in 2011



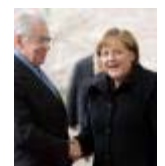
In 2011 Germany achieved 3% growth according to figures published by the German Statistics Office, Destatis, on 11th January. The public deficit has dropped to 1% of the GDP. For the first time since 2008 Berlin has respected the European budgetary discipline criteria with a public deficit under 3% of the GDP. During 2011, as a whole consumption and investments enabled Germany to withstand the crisis. Household spending has risen by 1.5% whilst until recently it had been at an all time low. Extremely low unemployment rates and net income growth per worker at 2.2% have both contributed to this situation in spite of tax increases. At the beginning of 2012 the German Central Bank's forecast for growth is very low at 0.6%... [Read more](#)

The Population has increased slightly after 8 years of decline



According to an estimate made by the Federal Statistics Institute (Destatis) published on 13th January, the German population increased by more than 50,000 people in 2011, after eight years of continual decline. According to Destatis the German population has benefited from a wave of immigration from Central European countries which joined the EU in 2004, notably from Poland. The number of migrants settling in Germany was 240,000 more than the number of people leaving the country, notably thanks to the dynamism of the employment market that had attracted a new workforce... [Read more](#)

Angela Merkel receives Mario Monti in Berlin



On 11th January the President of the Italian Council Mario Monti met the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel in Berlin to discuss the future of the euro zone. During a joint press conference Ms Merkel expressed her "greatest respect" for the rapidity of the reforms that were taking place in Italy, whilst Mr Monti lauded German budgetary discipline. Moreover Mr Monti announced that he would present a wide ranging reform programme to bring greater deregulation to his country, and asked the European Union to reduce the interest rates on the Italian debt. He also pleaded for greater intervention on the part of the European Central Bank in terms of eurobonds and a strengthening of the EFSF. The two leaders will meet again on 20th January...

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Cyprus :

Meeting of Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders prior to negotiations



The Cypriot and Turkish leaders of Cyprus, the Cypriot President Demetris Christofias and the Turkish leader of the northern part of the island, Dervis Eroglu, spoke together in Nicosia on 9th January prior to discussions that are planned for the end of January with the aim of reunifying the island. "They spoke of their next meeting on the occasion of the fifth tripartite summit with the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon which will take place on 22nd to 24th January in New York," announced the UN spokesperson Martin Nesirky, during press conference... [Read more](#)

The Netherlands :

International Panel responsible for settling differences associated with financial issues



The international panel that has been asked to settle disputes over complex financial issues opened its doors on 16th January in The Hague. "This panel will help settle differences involving complex financial issues," declared Jeffrey Golden, professor at the London School of Economics and chairman of the board of the foundation P.R.I.M.E. Finance created notably to host the panel... [Read more](#)

UK :

Scotland is fighting for its independence



Since 10th January the battle over the referendum on the independence of Scotland by 2014 is growing in ferocity and may degenerate into a constitutional crisis in the UK. British Prime Minister David Cameron wants to organise a referendum with regard to the country staying in the UK within the next 18 months. However the central government in London and the regional authorities in Edinburgh disagree on nearly everything: the timing, the electoral body, the terms and even on the question that is to be submitted to the 5 million Scots who have belonged to the crown of England since 1707. To date the Scottish Parliament has competence with regard to education, healthcare, environment and justice but Foreign Affairs and Defence lie in the realm of the British government... [Read more](#)

Slovenia :

The Slovenian Parliament rejects the appointment of Zoran Jankovic as Prime Minister



On 11th January the Slovenian parliament refused to approve the appointment of Zoran Jankovic as Prime Minister. After his surprise success in the general elections on 4th December, Zoran Jankovic was appointed Prime Minister on 5th January by President Danilo Turk. During the vote at the National Assembly 42 MPs voted in support, 43 abstained and 1 voted against - 4 votes were invalidated. The Slovenian President regretted the way the vote had taken place. Now the parties which sit in Parliament and the Slovenian President have 14 days to put a new candidate forward... [Read more](#)

Bosnia-Herzgovina :

Vjekoslav Bevanda : new Bosnian Prime Minister



The Bosnian Parliament invested Vjekoslav Bevanda , member of the main political party of the Croats of Bosnia (HDZ) as Prime Minister on 12th January. An expert in finance and a former banker he recently said "I shall try to bring the economy beyond the petty political quarrels, hoping that this will be the gesture that will push the others to do the same..." [Read more](#)

Switzerland :

Resignation of the Chairman of the National Swiss Bank



The Chairman of the National Swiss Bank, Philipp Hildebrand announced on 9th January that he was resigning "immediately". This decision follows a scandal that broke last month with the revelation that his wife had undertaken private financial transactions in August 2011, just before a reduction in the rate of the Swiss franc. Although he was cleared after an inquiry made by the bank, Mr Hildebrand declared during a press conference that he was unable to prove that the transaction had been made without his knowledge and that he would withdraw in order to protect the Central Bank's credibility. Whilst his successor is being appointed the interim is being ensured by the establishment's Vice-President Thomas Jordan... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Surplus of 6.9 billion euros in the euro zone's external trade



According to figures published by Eurostat on 13th January the euro zone recorded a trade surplus of 6.9 billion euros in November 2011, clearly up over one year, thanks to an increase in exports and a stabilisation of imports. The EU did however record a deficit of 7.2 billion euros, which is much less than a year ago when it totalled 16.8 billion. The surplus increased with the USA, Switzerland and Turkey and the deficit declined with China and Japan, but not with Russia and Norway. Germany is the country with the highest trade surplus, whilst the UK and France face trade deficits of over 70 billion euros... [Read more](#)

Employment levels of the over 55's up clearly rising between 2000 and 2010



According to figures published by Eurostat on 13th January the employment rate of the over 55's rose strongly between 2000 and 2010 in the EU. It rose from 50% to 61% for the 55-59 age group and by 23% to 31% for the 60-64 year olds. For the 55-64 year olds the employment rates are highest in the countries of Northern Europe - Scandinavia and in the Anglo-Saxon countries - with Sweden in the lead, whilst figures are lower in several of the most recent Member States. Conversely the employment rate of the over 65's is highest in most of the new Member States and in Mediterranean countries; this age group is the one that works least in France and Slovakia (1.6% each)... [Read more](#)

Eurobarometer :

Study on Ageing



Eurobarometer published a study on 13th January on active ageing, analysing the results obtained in a survey undertaken from September to November 2011. Europeans believe that we cease to be considered young as of 42 and that we become elderly after 64. More than 40% of those interviewed are concerned about the ageing population, but most believe that society is ready to face the challenge. 53% of those interviewed are against an obligatory retirement age and more than 70% would like to continue their professional activities once the minimal retirement age has been reached. Finally the survey highlights the commitment and the acknowledgement of the elderly person's commitment to the benefit of society as they undertake volunteer work, join associations and involve themselves in politics... [Read more](#)

Europeans and the European Parliament



On 11th January the European Parliament's Eurobarometer for autumn 2011 was published. According to this survey the way citizens see the European Parliament is mainly still neutral; the share of those interviewed with a positive image of Parliament has decreased and those with a negative image has increased. The policy that should be focused on as a priority by Parliament is, in the eyes of 49% of those interviewed, the fight to counter exclusion and poverty; the coordination of economic, budgetary and fiscal issues comes second (42%). Moreover 40% of Europeans would like to have more information from the European Parliament with regard to the means to counter the

crisis... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Quarterly report on employment and the social situation in the EU



On 10th January the European Commission published the results of its quarterly study on the social situation and employment. It appears that in spite of a slight improvement in 2011 unemployment rose sharply in the EU, notably long term unemployment. It is mainly affecting young people, those with few qualifications and migrants. Moreover poverty has also increased in all countries. According to forecasts the tertiary and building sectors are not going to generate new jobs in the next few months and some may even be destroyed, whilst in industry employment has remained stable. This study reveals that Europeans are increasingly concerned about the social situation... [Read more](#)

Post Lisbon European Defence: illusion or challenge?



The Military School's Strategic Research Institute (IRSEM) has published an overview of European Defence after the Lisbon Treaty under the management of General Jean-Paul Perruche. This study is called "L'Europe de la Défense post-Lisbonne: illusion ou défi?" Since the treaty the debate over European Defence has been lively, ranging from being "a dangerous illusion" for some and "the future of Europe" for others. The IRSEM research team attempts to answer this dual question : Is European Defence necessary to defend Europe? Is it a credible and achievable project?... [Read more](#)

Tax on Financial Transactions



European bishops support a tax on financial transactions "firstly in the euro zone" to share out the "burden" of debt reduction more fairly, they said on 12th January as they met at the Commission of Bishops' Conferences of the European Community - Comece. "Sharing the burden in reducing the debts contracted during the present financial crisis must take into account the responsibility of the governments as well as that of the banks and other financial institutions. It may for example "apply a financial tax on the latter," say the Bishops of the COMECE, which brings together of all the bishops' conferences in the EU, in a 20 page text... [Read more](#)

Budgetary Federalism, the American Example



Bruegel has just published an essay entitled "Fiscal federalism: US history for architects of Europe's fiscal union" by C.Randall Henning and Martin Kessler. This paper presents the way that responsibilities are shared between the Central State and the Federal States with regard to public debt management in the US, as well as the way the rules govern the distribution of tasks have been gradually defined over time. Using this experience the authors pinpoint the lessons that the EU can use to learn from the American example to build its own budgetary federation... [Read more](#)

Analysis of Economic Relations between the EU and Eastern Asia during the Crisis



The Foundation for international relations and external dialogue (FRIDE) has published a study entitled: "EU-Asia trade relations: getting through the crisis". Its author analyses the effects of the international financial crisis on economic relations between the EU and Asia. He suggests that European and Asian governments review their partnership and step up work to come to new trade agreements... [Read more](#)

Publications :

France/Germany - the hour of truth

Tallandier publishing has released a book written by Bernard de Montferrand, a diplomat and former Ambassador of France in Berlin from 2007 to 2011 and Jean-Louis Thiériot, a lawyer. The work



focuses on Franco-German relations and the crisis. This book entitled "France Allemagne - L'Heure de vérité" shows that "convergence is both necessary and an opportunity. (...) "Behind the feverishness of the markets, the Franco-German couple still lies at the heart of Europe and of our fate."... [Read more](#)

Cyprus between Europe and Turkey



Karthala publishing has released a book by Jean-François Drevet on Cyprus. This EU Member State, 37% of whose territory is occupied by a third country which has imposed its army, its currency and inhabitants, finds itself in an extremely specific position. As the meeting planned for 22nd and 24th January in New York is about to take place, this book reviews the disputes between Cyprus and Turkey. The author explains the development of the problem since 1999, notably the drafting of the Annan Plan and the reasons for its failure... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Guercino



Until 20th April the National Gallery of Ancient Art, which is in the Barberini Palace in Rome, is devoting a major exhibition to the genius of Francesco Barbieri, otherwise known as, Guercino - an Italian 17th century baroque painter. The exhibition, which also pays tribute to Sir Denis Mahon, brings many works together from the museums of Rome and Cento... [Read more](#)

Giorgio Vasari - Drawings at the Louvre



Until 8th February the Louvre is paying tribute to Giorgio Vasari, Italian painter, architect and writer, on the occasion of the fifth centenary of his birth, thanks to an exhibition of the most beautiful of his drawings owned by the museum. Around fifty pieces of work help to highlight the diversity of Vasari's artistic fields of interest... [Read more](#)

Europe meets the World



An exhibition entitled "Europe meets the World" is being held until 3rd June at the National Museum of Copenhagen (Nationalmuseet) Denmark. Inaugurated on 12th January as part of the Danish presidency of the Council of the European Union by the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso and Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt, this exhibition is devoted to the cultural, military and trade relations between Europe and the rest of the world during Ancient times, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and colonisation... [Read more](#)

Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki?



On 10th January the Solomon R Guggenheim Foundation announced that it was going to build a new Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki, ie the sixth in the world. The town of Helsinki has to decide within the next few weeks whether it will give the greenlight to the project. In the affirmative the Museum's representatives in Bilbao will also have to give their agreement to the project. Indeed, according a European anti-trust clause the latter can place their veto on the project... [Read more](#)

Take part in the Franco-German journalism competition!



The competition for the 2012 Franco-German Journalism Prize is now open. Competition application is possible until March 1st inclusive. All articles that were broadcast or published on a Franco-German or European subject for the first time between March 2nd 2011 and March

1st 2012 are eligible. Application to the competition is only possible on-line... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



16th-19th January
Strasbourg
Plenary Session at the European Parliament



22nd January
Presidential Election in Finland (1st round)
Referendum on Croatia's membership of the European Union



23rd January
Brussels
"Agriculture and Fisheries" Council

Brussels
Eurogroup Meeting

"Foreign Affairs" Council

Paris, Maison Heinrich Heine
France-Germany Conference : the hour of truth. Motor, executive board or new partner?"



24th January
"Economy/Finance" Council

Paris, Ecole Militaire
Smart Power Seminar



26th-27th January
Copenhagen
Informal Meeting of Interior and Justice Ministers



27th January
"General Affairs" Council



30th January
Brussels
European Council

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Chief Editor: Pauline Massis Desmarest
Publishing Director: Pascale Joannin

Contact/Suggestions
info@robert-schuman.eu

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