



## "They are highly aware that the responsibility of Europe's future and that of the Euro depends on them [France and Germany]."



Author: Bernard de Montferrand

On this day, the 49th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, the Robert Schuman Foundation has published a European Interview by Bernard de Montferrand, Ambassador for France in Berlin 2007-2011. This paper is being published on the occasion of the publication of his most recent book "France-Allemagne, l'heure de vérité" which he wrote together with Jean-Louis Thiériot. In this interview Bernard de Montferrand explains that the Franco-German couple is decisive for the future of the European Union.

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#### Front page! :

##### Seminar on Gender Equality



The Jean Monnet Association is organising a seminar on 27th January entitled "Gender Equality: a kind of equality?" Review, success stories and outlook post 2013". Pauline Massis-Desmarest, editor in chief of the Letter and Internet Communications Manager, will present the project "Women for Europe, Citizens' Initiative" launched by the Robert Schuman Foundation together with the Commission's DG Education and Culture, the Karamanlis Institute and the Polish Robert Schuman Foundation... [Read more](#)

##### The rise of populism in Europe

The University of Paris III- Sorbonne Nouvelle are organising a

seminar on 26th and 27th January on "the rise of populism in Europe". Magali Balent and Thierry Chopin, both lecturers at Sciences Po and respectively Projects Manager and Studies Director for the Robert Schuman Foundation will take part in the debate... [Read more](#)

### Which borders for the EU of the future?



The Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in Rennes is organising a new round of conferences as part of its "Rendez-vous d'Europe 2012" of which the Robert Schuman Foundation is a partner. The theme this year is "Which borders for the European Union?". Eight conferences will take place at the Faculty of Law and Political Science of Rennes. The first will take place on 23rd January... [Read more](#)

### Europe 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](#)

## Elections :

### Results of the first round of voting in the presidential election



Sauli Niinistö (KOK) easily drew ahead with 37% of the vote in the first round of the presidential election in Finland on 22nd January, announced the Justice Minister. He beat Pekka Haavisto 18.8%, Paavo Väyrynen 17.5%, Timo Soini 9.4%, Paavo Lipponen 6.7%, Paavo Arhinmäki 5.5%, Eva Biaudet 2.7% and Sari Essayah 2.5%. Turnout totalled 72.7% ie 1.2 points less in comparison with the figures recorded in the previous presidential election on 15th and 29th January 2006. The second round will see Saulo Niinistö and Pekka Haavisto running against one another... [Read more](#)

### The Croatians approve the entry of their country into the European Union



The Croatians approved by a wide majority the entry of their country into the European Union during the referendum that took place on 22nd January. Two thirds of the electorate (66.67%) voted in support of membership whilst 3.33% voted "no" to the question put to them: ("Do you approve of the accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union?") Turnout was low however: it totalled 43.54%.. [Read more](#)

## Financial Crisis :

### Greece: negotiations



Discussions on the cancellation of part of the Greek debt continued on 21st January between the Greek government and banking experts (IIF), representing private creditors who have to consent to the cancellation of 100 billion euros of the country's private debt. After three days of negotiations the two sides, the Greek government and the IIF, say they are optimistic about progress but point out that there are still some "technical details" to settle... [Read more](#)

### Ireland: conclusions of the quarterly troika examination

On 19th January in Dublin the troika (IMF, Central Bank and EU) delivered the results of its quarterly examination. The conclusions are positive: for the troika the budget and the working programme to reform the Irish economy have been implemented. The country will continue to face significant challenges in the future though... [Read more](#)



### Further reform to the economy in Italy



Mario Monti's government adopted a deregulation plan for the Italian economy on 20th January designed to remove the obstacles preventing the country's growth that has been plunged into a debt crisis. However many companies are not pleased with this idea. After a council of ministers meeting that lasted over eight hours, Mr Monti announced to the press in Rome the adoption of structural reforms to revive growth, which has been impeded for decades in Italy, particularly because a lack of competition... [Read more](#)

### Unemployment up in the UK



The unemployment rate rose again in November in the UK where the number of people without a job has not been as high in 17 years according to official figures published on 18th January, which confirm the downturn in the British economy. The unemployment rate has reached 8.4% of the working population, in comparison with 8.3% in October announced the Office for National Statistics, a decline that is worse than anticipated by economists. 2.68 million people are now looking for a job, the highest level since 1994... [Read more](#)

### The IMF needs resources to counter the economic crisis



On 17th January Christine Lagarde, General Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) declared that the institution's leaders would look into options that will help raise its resources. In her opinion "it is vital to ensure that the IMF has enough resources to address present weaknesses in the world economy and regional problems." The IMF's financial capabilities total around 385 billion \$. Euro zone Member States promised during the European Council on 9th December last, to provide it with 192 billion \$. Sources close to the IMF indicated that it needed to find 308 billion more dollars... [Read more](#)

### World Growth is due to slow to 2.5% in 2012



In its "World Economic Outlook" for 2012 published on 18th January the World Bank reduced its growth forecasts to 2.5% for 2012 and to 3.1% for 2013. More precisely growth is due to rise to 5.4% this year in developing countries and to 1.4% in developed countries. This represents a significant decrease in comparison with forecasts made last June by the Bank, which was then counting on 6.2% growth in developing countries and on 2.7% in developed countries. The World Bank explains that economic slowing is already visible in the contraction of world trade and the fall of raw materials' prices. It advises developing countries to prepare financially to face a decline in the situation" whilst there is still time"... [Read more](#)

### European Council :

#### Mr Monti hosts the President of the European Council, H. van Rompuy



The President of the Italian Council, Mario Monti, was host to the President of the European Council, Herman van Rompuy on 16th January as they discussed Italian and European economic policies. During the joint press conference Mr Monti recalled the positive action undertaken by the Italian government to progress the Italian economy. Herman Van Rompuy repeated that an agreement on the budgetary pact would come in January and would be signed at the beginning of March and that the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), the permanent euro zone rescue fund, would enter into force in July 2012... [Read more](#)

### Spain is planning sanctions to limit its public deficit



Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy received the President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy on 17th January. During their discussions Mariano Rajoy said that it intended to have a bill approved on the reduction of deficits and other reforms deemed vital in the labour market and for banks. The next day the Spanish Budget Minister Cristobal Montoro said that this new law aimed to limit the public deficit and included "a sanction procedure" and State intervention in the management of the regions which did not adhere to the goals that had been set. According to a government estimation, the 17 autonomous regions of Spain accumulated a deficit of around 2.3% of the GDP in 2011 ie nearly double the goal of 1.3%... [Read more](#)

### Draft Treaty on strengthened Economic Union



A provisional version of the draft treaty on strengthened economic Union was written on 19th January. This document aims to "strengthen the coordination of economic policies" and "improve the governance" of the euro zone. It sets a maximum 0.5%/GDP limit on structural deficit except in "exceptional circumstances". If this rule is not respected a corrective mechanism would "automatically" be triggered. Moreover the States whose debt exceeds 60% of the GDP would be forced to reduce it. A qualified majority at the Council of the Union would now be necessary for a State not to be sanctioned for an excessive deficit. Finally "euro summits" bringing together the Heads of State and government in the euro zone are due to take place regularly and the coordination of the economic policies of the various countries in the euro zone would then be facilitated... [Read more](#)

## Commission :

### Internet



European Commissioner for Justice, Viviane Reding laid out her proposals to protect European citizens' data on the internet better during a conference in Munich on 22nd January. In a few days she will present her proposals to "replace the present patchwork of laws by one European law that will apply to all Member States, to all businesses which offer their goods and services to consumers even if their servers were based outside of the EU". The European Commissioner wants to prevent businesses, and also giants of the net, Facebook and Google for example, from collating personal data in Europe and then removing these from European legislation by stocking them abroad... [Read more](#)

### Commissioner Neelie Kroes writes to the Hungarian Government



On 18th January the Commissioner for Digital Strategy and Vice President of the Commission Neelie Kroes sent a letter to the Hungarian Administration and Justice Minister, Tibor Navracsics in which she expressed her concern over the freedom of the media and pluralism in Hungary. Although no infringement procedure is being planned at the moment with regard to this, Ms Kroes recalls the need to apply these fundamental rules "in practice" and not just to pay lip service to European legislation. She also encouraged the Hungarian government to fall in line with the recent decision delivered by the Constitutional Court which guaranteed journalists the protection of their sources and fostered competition in the media sector by creating new audiovisual licences... [Read more](#)

## Parliament :

### Danish Prime Minister's Speech at the European Parliament



On 18th January Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt, whose country is currently chairing the Council of the European Union, delivered a speech in the European Parliament. In her speech she recalled Denmark's commitment to Europe as well as the priorities set by the Danish presidency: budgetary responsibility, economic growth and dynamism, sustainable development and security. She confirmed

the need to move forwards in spite of the present difficulties that are a "test" for the European Union and listed the three challenges that the Union faces today: to use its rules and fundamental institutions ie "cooperation, rule of law, democracy" and "the community method"; and prove that the Union is part of the answer to the crisis and not the problem; and protect its values in this difficult time... [Read more](#)

#### Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament



On 17th January MEPs elected their president in replacement of Jerzy Buzek (EPP, PL). The candidates were Martin Schulz, (S&D, DE), Diana Wallis (ALDE, UK) and Nirj Deva (ECR, UK). Martin Schulz was elected 387 votes in support out of 670 votes cast and he will preside over the European Parliament until the next European elections in June 2014. In a speech he insisted on the Europe's shared future, and therefore the need to have greater cooperation. Apart from their new President, MEPs elected 14 Vice-Presidents and 5 questeurs. The new questeurs are Astrid Lulling (EPP, LU), Jim Higgins (EPP, IE), Lidia Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D, PL), Bogusław Liberadzki (S&D, PL), and Jiri Mastalka (GUE/NGL, CZ)... [Read more](#)

#### Directive on Electronic Waste



On the occasion of the European Parliament's plenary session MEPs approved a reform of the directive on electric and electronic waste on 19th January. This directive aims to limit the waste of raw materials, as well as the pollution that is produced by the non-recycling of products that are made of electric or electronic components. Consumers, intermediaries and manufacturers will be asked to help in order to guarantee the collection and recycling of these products. The share of recycled products must increase gradually and then comprise between 65% and 85% minimum in a few years time... [Read more](#)

#### Diplomacy :

##### Sanctions/Iran



On 23rd January the European Union decided to apply unprecedented sanctions against Iran because of its nuclear programme, by targeting the strategic oil sector and the central bank in order to dry up financial supplies. The Europeans are tired of seeing Teheran continue to avoid any kind of negotiation with regard to its nuclear programme; increasingly it is suspected by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of having military objectives. The measures are notably designed to weaken the Iranian central bank in order to deprive the nuclear programme of its funding and to make it impossible to conclude any further contracts in the oil sector... [Read more](#)

#### Germany :

##### 0.7% GDP increase in 2012



On 18th January, in its annual economic report, the German Federal government forecast a GDP increase of 0.7% this year. "We cannot really speak of recession, it is quite the contrary," declared the German Economy and Technology Minister, Philip Rösler. According to the report growth is weak at present but it may revive during the year. "Long term growth is not possible in Germany without growth in Europe and the opposite is also true," confirms the Federal Government on its website... [Read more](#)

#### Bulgaria :

##### Rossen Plevneliev, new Bulgarian President



The new Bulgarian President Rossen Plevneliev, 47, elected on 30th October 2011 was sworn in before Parliament on 19th January and took office on the 22nd, promising to help Bulgaria become "a worthy member of the European Union". Entering politics two years ago this former business man has taken over from Gueorgui Parvanov who, having undertaken two five year terms in office, could no longer stand. "I shall work towards Bulgaria becoming a worthy member of the European



Union,"with "a developed economy", "good education" and prospects for young people," declared Mr Plevneliev after a military ceremony... [Read more](#)

## Denmark :

### Arctic



Denmark, which is claiming the seabeds of the North Pole, appointed its first Arctic Ambassador on 17th January - this region is the increasing focus of attention because of its wealth of resources. This was announced in a press release on the part of the Danish Foreign Ministry. Klavs A Holm will have to "guarantee the Danish community (Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands) a visible place in the growing international debate over the Arctic," declared the Danish Foreign Minister, Villy Soevndal. In August last, in a document entitled "Strategy for the Arctic" Denmark announced that it would formally claim the seabeds of the North Pole by 2014, Greenland since it is a Danish territory... [Read more](#)

## France :

### Mr Sarkozy awarded the Golden Fleece



On a trip to Madrid on 16th January French President Nicolas Sarkozy was guest to the President of the Spanish Council, Mariano Rajoy. During a joint press conference Mr Sarkozy called again to reduce deficits and to revive growth. The French president was also guest to King Juan Carlos, who awarded him with the Golden Fleece, the highest Spanish sign of distinction in thanks for his "firm and effective" fight against the Basque separatist group ETA... [Read more](#)

### Franco-German Economic Council



On 23rd January German and French Finance Ministers, Wolfgang Schäuble and François Baroin met to review the situation in Greece and also the second aid plan for the latter, which might be adopted in March. France and Germany looked into a draft treaty that aims to bring greater discipline and solidarity to the euro zone and which also includes a provision for making sanctions. The tax on financial transactions was also discussed. The two ministers said that they wanted to reach a common position if possible with the 27 EU members during the first quarter. Finally, the two men addressed the issue of harmonising company tax between the two countries. The two tax regimes were looked into and common points have now been found; some issues still have to be discussed but a proposal will be made on 6th February... [Read more](#)

## Greece :

### Borders/Bulgaria



Greece and Bulgaria are to inaugurate the sixth border crossing between their two countries, announced the Greek and Bulgarian Foreign Affairs Ministers Stavros Dimas and Nikolay Mladenov on the occasion of the Bulgarian Minister's working visit to Athens. "We shall inaugurate a border crossing at Komotini in the region of Makaza, in the north east of Greece within the next few months," indicated Mr Dimas. This is the sixth crossing point between the two countries, the fifth was inaugurated last year. Mr Mladenov also lauded the close cooperation between the two nations in terms of infrastructures and energy and said that Bulgaria supported its neighbour in the face of the economic difficulties it is facing... [Read more](#)

## Hungary :

### Infringement Procedure launched against Hungary - Viktor Orban at the European Parliament



With the dispatch of three warning letters on 17th January the European Commission decided to launch infringement proceedings against Hungary. The litigious points are the reduction in the independence of the Hungarian National Bank, the reduction of the retirement age of judges, notaries and prosecutors from 70 to 62, and

the statutes of the new national agency for data protection. These reforms may infringe several articles of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and of the statute of the European Central Banks System, as well as several European directives. On 18th January Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban spoke to MEPs. He said that the problems could easily be resolved and justified the policies undertaken by the difficult economic situation his country found itself in... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

Italy :

#### Mr Monti in the UK supporting the Single European Market



The President of the Italian Council, Mario Monti was guest to British Prime Minister David Cameron on 18th January. During a joint press conference Mr Monti pleaded in favour of a deepening of the single European market as a means to revive growth in Europe. Mr Cameron said he wanted the EU to "take on the issue of competitiveness seriously", notably by establishing a specific programme to increase trade with emerging countries with high growth rates... [Read more](#)

Latvia :

#### Latvian Population Declining



According to figures published on 18th January by the Central Statistics Bureau of Latvia the population has decreased by 13%, ie 309,000 people between 2000 and 2011. Hence the country now has just over 2 million inhabitants. The statistics institute explains this development both by a natural deficit, deaths being higher in number than births, and by a negative migratory balance. The proportion of non-Latvian citizens living in Latvia has also declined, since they represented 14.1% of the population in all in 2011 against 21.1% in 2000... [Read more](#)

Portugal :

#### Reform of the Labour Law



On 18th January as part of the austerity measures being taken to consolidate the financial situation, the Portuguese government and its social partners signed an agreement which reforms the labour laws greatly by making working time more flexible and by simplifying dismissal procedures. Some of the measures are notably a reduction in dismissal compensation from 20 to 12 days, this may even be reduced to 8 per year worked; a reduction in the number of days holiday and also a reduction to a maximum of 18 months with regard to unemployment benefit payments... [Read more](#)

Slovenia :

#### Croatian/Slovenian Border: agreement on the constitution of an arbitration tribunal



On 17th January, in order to settle the border conflict, Croatia and Slovenia agreed to appoint the president and the two international members of the arbitration tribunal which will include five members in all. By choosing from a list of fifteen candidates put forward by the European Commission, the two countries appointed Frenchman Gilbert Guillaume as chair and German Bruno Simma as well as Briton, Vaughan Lowe as the international members of the tribunal. Before this, each country had already appointed a national member, Slovenian Jernej Sekolec and Croatian Budislav Vukas. Croatian Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic lauded the diplomatic work undertaken by the European Commission... [Read more](#)

#### New Prime Minister in View?



The Slovenian political parties have until 25th January to agree on a new Prime Minister. Slovenian President Danilo Türk put forward Marko Voljc on 18th January, to take the post of Prime Minister after the rejection of Zoran Jankovic, winner of the general elections on 4th December last. However the proposal to accept Marko Voljc is not finding adequate support in Parliament. A four party centre-right coalition has rallied behind Janez Jansa, Slovenian Prime Minister from 2004 to 2008 on 19th January...

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## Ukraine :

### Movement for the liberation of political prisoners



More than 3,000 Ukrainians, including the famous boxer Vitali Klitschko, demonstrated on 22nd January in Kyiv against Viktor Yanukovich's government and in support of opponent Yulia Tymoshenko, who is in prison for abuse of power. Demonstrators defied the snow and icy temperatures to rally in the central square after an appeal by several opposition parties including those of Ms Tymoshenko and Mr Klitschko, on the occasion of the 93rd anniversary of the reunification of the East and West of Ukraine. The boxer, holder of the WBC heavy weight title and town councillor in Kyiv, called on the authorities to free their opponent and to let her take part in the general elections in October later this year... [Read more](#)

## Council of Europe :

### Complaints against Hungary at the European Court of Human Rights



The European Court of Human Rights that answers to the Council of Europe announced this week that it was facing an exceptional flow of complaints on the part of Hungarian citizens who believe that they have been illegitimately wronged by the retirement reform undertaken by Prime Minister Viktor Orban. More than 8000 complaints have already been lodged. In order to process them quicker and more effectively the Court has asked the Hungarian unions to gather together similar complaints and to present them to it... [Read more](#)

## NATO :

### Kaliningrad



On 19th January NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen called on Russia to give up its project to step up its military presence in Kaliningrad, the Russian enclave on the borders of the transatlantic alliance. He wondered about Russia's interest in strengthening Kaliningrad, a vestige of the Cold War on the borders of Poland and Lithuania, who are both NATO members. "Russia's declarations are of course a reason for concern for the alliance," he declared to the press as he visited Lithuania. "Building an offensive, military system oriented against a fictitious enemy, an enemy that does not exist, is a total waste of Russian financial means," he added... [Read more](#)

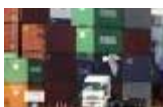
## Eurostat :

### The Annual Inflation Rate in the Euro Zone and the EU declining



According to a Eurostat publication on 17th January the annual inflation rate in the euro zone in December declined slightly in comparison with November, dropping from 3% to 2.7%. Likewise it dropped from 3.4% to 3% in the EU. The inflation rate declined over one month in 21 of the 27 EU Member States. It is higher though than one year ago when it lay at 2.2% in the euro zone and 2.7% in the EU. The country where the rate is lowest is Sweden (0.4%) whilst it has risen most sharply in Slovakia (4.6%) and Poland (4.5%)... [Read more](#)

### The EU records a deficit in its current account



On 19th January Eurostat indicated that the EU's external current account was in deficit in the third quarter of 2011 by 21.4 billion euros. It rose to 22.3 billion one year ago. Moreover the balance of payments for services is in surplus, with a surplus of 29.8 billion euros. The EU has recorded its biggest surpluses with Switzerland (15.8 billion euros) and the USA (13.9 billion euros) and its highest deficits are with China (35.7 billion euros), followed by Russia (9.9 billion euros) and Japan (5.4 billion euros)... [Read more](#)



## Studies/Reports :

### The Arab Spring: Overview and Outlook



The Centre for Applied Policy Research of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität of Munich has just been published a study by Michael Bauer and Thomas Schiller entitled "The Arab Spring in 2012". This document assesses the situation in the Arab world in the wake of the political changes that occurred there last year, then it analyses the geopolitical implications of this upheaval for Iran, Turkey and Israel. The authors then put forward some recommendations for European leaders: they believe that the EU should rapidly implement changes to the European Neighbourhood Policy which have been decided, strengthen its cooperation with the countries in transition, and more generally, review its policy with regard to the Near East... [Read more](#)

### Piracy hit record levels in 2010



According to the International Maritime Bureau, the number of acts of piracy and especially hostage taking reached record levels in 2010. A report published by this organisation points to a constant increase in the number of attacks against ships over the last four years. Hence in 2010, 445 attacks of this type were recorded, which represents a 10% rise in comparison with 2009. Moreover 1,181 crew members were taken hostage in 2010, in comparison with 1050 in 2009 and only 188 in 2006... [Read more](#)

### A study of relations between Norway and the European Union



A report entitled "Outside and Inside" analyses relations between Norway and the EU. It was submitted to the Norwegian government on 17th January. This study reveals how European this country has become; it has been a member of the European Economic Area since 1992 without belonging to the EU. The study highlights the "frustration" caused by this particular situation which according to the authors gives rise to real "democratic deficit", with Norway finding itself forced to fall in line with European rules without being able to influence the decisions that affect it. This document is to be used as a starting point for the drafting of a White Paper and the launch, next year, of a national debate on Norway's relations and the EU... [Read more](#)

## Publications :

### Fight to counter discrimination based on sexual preference and gender identity



The Council of Europe has published a report that shows the results of the widest ranging socio-legal study ever devoted to discrimination founded on sexual preference and gender identity in the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe. This study provides an overview in preparation for future action in the legislative and political domain so that everyone can really enjoy their fundamental rights to the full... [Read more](#)

## Culture :

### Van Gogh and Gauguin's Travels



Until 15th April 2012 the Palazzo Ducale of Genoa is devoting an exhibition to Van Gogh and his links with travel. Thirty-five paintings by the Dutch artists are on show including 25 paintings and 10 drawings but in all there are 80 masterpieces of European and American painting from the 19th and 20th centuries that have been lent by museums from around the world... [Read more](#)

### Franco-German Week in Yvelines



On the occasion of the 49th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty the Maison de l'Europe in Yvelines is organising an exhibition at the town hall in Saint-Germain-en-Laye from 23rd January to 4th February 2012 devoted to the German cartoonist Rainer Ehrt. Entitled "Welcome to Europe: Rainer Ehrt's caricatures" - the exhibition displays 50 of the artists pieces of work on Franco-German and European themes... [Read more](#)

### Europe draws itself



On the occasion of the 39th International Comic Strip Festival in Angouleme on 26th to 29th January a major exhibition of work by around fifty European authors is being organised. Each has illustrated in his own style the themes that make Europe modern - and these are totally opposite to the preconceived ideas we might have of Europe and its inhabitants. The exhibition which is both playful and educational focuses on three main points: the origins and founding ideas of Europe; Europe from a daily point of view; the future of Europe... [Read more](#)

### The Franco-German Couple as seen by Plantu



Until 29th February the Heinrich Heine House in Paris is showing a selection of drawings by the famous cartoon-strip artist of the Monde and the Express, Jean Plantureux, aka PLANTU, on the Franco-German couple. Entitled "Drôle de peuple!-Komisches Volk!" the exhibition reveals the relations between France and Germany... [Read more](#)

### David Hockney at the Royal Academy of Arts



Until 9th April the Royal Academy of Arts is devoting an exhibition to David Hockney's landscapes. This unique exhibition brings together many pieces of work that are part of the landscapes painted by this English artist. It enables the visitor to appreciate the studies and exploration David Hockney made of landscape painting. On show with the work, are films which help visitors see into artist's vision of the world... [Read more](#)

### Premier: Bertolt Brecht at the Viennese Opera



For the first time in the history of the Viennese Opera (Staatsoper) and 72 years after its creation "Grandeur and Decadence of the Town of Mahagonny" - one of Bertolt Brecht's major works will be played from 24th January to 5th January in a production by Frenchman Jérôme Deschamps. "Grandeur and Decadence of the Town of Mahagonny" was created on 9th March 1931 in Leipzig based on the 1927 "Mahagonny Songspiel" to music by Kurt Weill, Brecht's official composer. It was the director general of the Viennese Opera, Frenchman, Dominique Meyer, in office since 2010 who brought this "omission" to an end... [Read more](#)

### Agenda :



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?"

Franco-German Meeting, proposals regarding the convergence of their company taxes



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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