



Is the fragility of democracy in certain Central and Eastern European Member States a test for Europe?



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Infringements of the principles of the rules of law and of democratic values observed in certain new EU Member States are causing a wave of concern amongst European institutions as well as amongst their populations. What is Europe doing in terms of this situation? Governance tools are available to it; it must use them with both discernment and firmness, in order to avoid any rise in euroscepticism. The question is all the more relevant with the approach of the May 2014 elections.

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Elections :

Icelandic Parliamentary Elections on 27th April



On 27th April, Icelanders will vote in their parliamentary elections to return the 63 members of the Althing, Iceland's single Parliamentary chamber. Iceland is run by a left-wing government that brings together the Social-Democratic Alliance Party of outgoing Prime Minister Johanna Sigurdardottir and the Left-Green Movement (Vg). A month before the Parliamentary elections, the right-wing opposition is the big favourite in the polls. According to the latest public opinion survey carried out by the Market and Media Research Institute (MMR) and published on 27th March, the Progressive Party is set to win with 29.5% of the vote ahead of the Independence Party with 24.4%. The Social-Democratic Alliance Party of Iceland would win 12.5% of the vote and the Left-Green Movement, 8.7%. The Bright Future party is set to win 12% of the vote... [Read more](#)

Financial Crisis :

The OECD calls on the euro zone to be more flexible



A report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), published on 28th March 2013, confirms that the growth surge in the first half of 2013 is stronger than forecast in the United States (0.9%) and Japan (0.8%), whereas big countries in the euro zone, such as France and Italy, are either stagnating or actually in recession. The OECD has called on the euro zone to show proof of greater flexibility in deficit reduction and to avoid taking further budgetary restriction measures for the time being, even if this "means" "not meeting" the targets set. The OECD also strongly exhorts the European Central Bank (ECB) to compensate for the lack of budgetary margins for manoeuvre. "There is every reason to make monetary policy more flexible in view of weak demand and inflation that is well below the ECB objective", close to 2%, says the organisation... [Read more](#)

The council of 5 "wise men" reduces its economic forecasts for Germany



On 25th March 2013, the economic council of five "wise men" reduced its 2013 economic forecasts for Germany. "This reduction by 0.5 point compared to our November 2012 forecast (0.8 point) can be explained mainly by the clear reduction in GDP over the course of the fourth quarter (of 2012)" explain the experts in a press release. Forecasts of an unemployment rate of 6.9% for 2013, compared with 6.8% in 2012 are maintained, however. According to the council, growth for 2013 can come only from the country's domestic market, notably from private consumer spending. The council also forecasts a 3% increase in exports in 2013, compared with 3.7% in 2012. Imports should be up by 4%, compared with 1.8% in 2012... [Read more](#)

The IMF calls on Belgium to make budgetary efforts



In its annual report on Belgium published on 27th March 2013, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is calling on the Belgian government to make budgetary efforts, in view of the persistent vulnerability of the financial sector and the country's loss of competitiveness compared to its neighbours. After two years of almost nil growth in Belgium "the economy's ability to bounce back and create jobs is hampered by structural rigidities and a loss of competitiveness", writes the institution. "The financial sector has been transformed and reduced following the financial crisis, but vulnerabilities persist. Combined with the fragile position of public finance, these vulnerabilities could (...) wear down macroeconomic stability", warns the IMF... [Read more](#)

Easing of Cyprus bailout terms and commission of enquiry



On 2nd April 2013 the Cypriot authorities set up a commission of enquiry to identify responsibilities for the scandals linked to the financial turbulence that has rocked the country, and to establish any possible offences. That same day, Cyprus also announced an easing of capital movement controls. The Cypriot authorities have also decided, in agreement with the country's international financial backers, to unblock a quarter of the assets frozen on accounts held by the Bank of Cyprus with a balance of more than 100 000 euros. The Cyprus bailout agreement states that 37.5% of deposits of over 100 000 euros will be converted into shares in the bank and that an additional 22.5% may be converted, if necessary. The troika is also allowing Cyprus more time in which to achieve the deficit reduction objectives set for it. Cyprus now has until 2018 to achieve a primary budget surplus of 4%... [Read more](#)

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New forecasts for the Spanish economy



On 26th March 2013, the Spanish Central Bank published its new economic forecasts. According to these figures, GDP should fall by 1.5% this year with the unemployment rate reaching 27.1% compared with the current level of 26%. With regard to the budget deficit, GDP, which was 10% in 2012, should fall to 6% in 2013, a level at which it should remain in 2014. The objective set by Europe was 4.5% for 2013. For 2014, the Spanish Central Bank forecasts a "modest recovery", with 0.6% growth and an unemployment rate slightly down at 26.8%... [Read more](#)

The economic situation in France



On 26th February 2013, the French Labour Ministry published unemployment figures for February. The number of job seekers with no activity (category A) came out at 3 187 700 in February, i.e. an increase of 18 400 people (+0.6%) over one month. When all categories are taken into account (unemployed with no activity and unemployed working part time), there were 4 997 600 people, including French overseas departments. The historic record of January 1997 (3 195 500 registered, for continental France alone) was not reached in February however. INSEE also published on 27th March 2013, French growth figures for 2012. According to these results, growth fell back by 0.3% in the fourth quarter 2012 and GDP saw nil growth in 2012, after increasing by 1.7% in 2011. Spending power also fell back during the fourth quarter 2012 (-0.8 %) and over the year (-0.4 %)... [Read more](#)

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Annual IMF report on Hungary



Increased "interference" by the Hungarian government in the country's economy by means of "frequent and unforeseeable changes of policy" has undermined investor confidence and affected growth that will remain weak, regretted the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on 29th March 2013. "The State has increased its interference in the economy by means of frequent and unforeseeable changes of policy. Combined with a weakening of national institutions, this has affected the investment climate", indicated the IMF in its annual report on Hungary... [Read more](#)

Italy: the recession means a "risk" weighs on the banking system



In a report published on 26th March 2013, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) states that the banking system in Italy has shown "remarkable signs" of resistance but that it is still under the threat of recession and an aggravation of the debt crisis. In the last three months of 2012, the euro zone's third largest economy saw its gross domestic product (GDP) contract for the sixth quarter in succession, at a time when the country is still deep in political uncertainty, since the parliamentary elections of 24th-25th February. "The recession is resulting in low profitability for the banks and a deterioration in the quality of loans" said the IMF, pointing out that the "prolonged weakness of the real economy and the link between financial sectors and [Italy's] debt are still the main risks"... [Read more](#)

New forecasts for the Portuguese economy



According to the new economic forecasts of the Portuguese Central Bank, published on 26th March 2013, the country's GDP should contract by 2.3% in 2013, compared with the previous forecast of 1.9%. This fall is above all due to a "strong fall in domestic demand, within a context of a reduction in income prospects". Exports should increase by 2.2%, a positive although reduced increase. For 2014 however, the Portuguese Central Bank forecasts a 1.1% increase in GDP and a 4.3% increase in exports... [Read more](#)

Slovenia: new governor at the Central Bank and banking sector in difficulty



An IMF advisor, Bostjan Jazbec, is set to replace at the head of the Slovenian Central Bank, current governor Marko Kranjec, whose mandate expires in mid-July. Bostjan Jazbec was put forward by the Head of State Borut Pahor and his candidacy is supported by most Parliamentary parties. It will be put to the vote during the first week of April. If it wants to avoid a European aid plan, Slovenia must find solutions to get its banking system out of crisis. The amount of bad debts held by Slovenian establishments represents 7 billion euros, i.e. 20% of GDP. Public deficit was reduced to 3.7% of Gross Domestic Product in 2012, announced the Statistics Office on 29th March. Slovenian public deficit was 6.4% of GDP in 2011... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

Trade mark protection



On 27th March 2013 the European Commission presented its proposal to make the registration of trade marks easier, quicker, safer and less expensive. The proposed reform should also mean support for corporate innovation, whilst protecting them against counterfeit. Michel Barnier, European Commissioner for the internal market underlined the importance of protecting "trade marks [that] have been the European Union's first success in terms of intellectual property rights". The proposal, which amends two regulations and one directive, concerns harmonisation of national procedures, better combat against counterfeit, cooperation between competent national and European bodies and a reduction of registration fees... [Read more](#)

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More powers for Europol



On 27th March 2013, the European Commissioner for internal affairs, Cecilia Malmström, presented a Commission proposal aimed at making Europol an essential centre for police cooperation and training. The new regulation provides notably that Member States should share their data more fully at European level. The European police college and Europol would also be merged in order to develop synergies. The new grouping would have its head office in The Hague, in the Netherlands. Finally, the text proposes an increased role for the European Parliament and national parliaments, which will be consulted on the setting up of Europol's strategic work programme... [Read more](#)

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Launch of a justice scoreboard in the European Union



On 27th March 2013, the European Commission presented a new instrument, intended to improve the efficiency of justice systems in the European Union. This "EU justice scoreboard" will provide objective, easily comparable data on the judicial systems in the 27 Member States. Its objective is to improve the quality, independence and efficiency of justice systems, in order to restart growth, investments and job creation. The scoreboard is part of the European Semester to inform the annual growth examination and recommendations by country. The Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for justice, Viviane Reding, believes that the attraction of a country for investors is "definitely increased when it has an independent and efficient justice system".. [Read more](#)

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CO2 and renewable energies: more efforts must be made



On 27th March, the European Commission presented its projects in terms of carbon capture and storage in Europe, underlining that objectives are a long way from being achieved. The increasing share of fossil fuels in the energy mix goes against climate protection policy and solutions must therefore be found. The Commission believes that there is still a margin for manoeuvre for the implementation of these carbon capture and storage projects, and that the latter could have positive fallout in economic and environmental terms. The Commission has published its report on progress with renewable energies, in which it underlines the fact that the proportion of renewable energies has increased strongly in most Member States, although efforts must be continued, notably in terms of land-based wind energy production... [Read more](#)

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Council :

Agreement found on banking sector regulation



On 27th March 2013, the Committee of Permanent Representatives of EU Member States (COREPER) confirmed the agreement found with the European Parliament on banking regulations. This agreement referred to a legislative package aimed at strengthening banking sector regulations, in accordance with commitments made in the "Basel III" agreement. It covers notably the improvement and diversification of capital, cash requirements, limits set on bankers' bonuses and improved governance and transparency within the sector. The European Parliament and the Council should vote in favour of this text within the next few weeks... [Read more](#)

The Council requests greater flexibility in CAP reform



On 27th March 2013, the European Union Council published the main elements of its position on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). With regard to direct payments, it requested more flexible measures, whether in terms of the new system, convergence objectives, "greening" efforts or even the introduction or not of specific grants for small scale or young farmers. With the exception of several zones or products, the Council also declared its support for the Commission's proposal on rural development and the common market... [Read more](#)

EIB :

The EIB increases its loans in Italy



The contract for financing the BREBEMI Motorway (Brescia-Bergame-Milan) was signed on 25th March 2013 between the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti group and five Italian banking groups. In all, 1.520 billion euros will be made available to finance completion of the 62km motorway link between Brescia, Bergamo and Milan. This new road will relieve traffic congestion on the existing Lombardy motorway network, a key link in the country's transport system, thus cutting the length of journeys and their costs. Two days later, the EIB granted a multicurrency loan to STMicroelectronics (ST), amounting to 350 million euros, a loan which will help Europe's leading group in the semi-conductors sector to finance its multi-annual research and development programmes (R&D)... [Read more](#)

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Bulgaria :

Bulgaria requests Brussels for aid to reform its energy sector



On 27th March 2013, the Bulgarian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Marin Raykov, went to Brussels for meetings with NATO General Secretary Anders Fogh Rasmussen, and the President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy, about the Bulgarian political situation. The matters of European funds and the liberalisation of energy markets were addressed and Marin Raykov asked for the European Commission's expertise in reforming his energy sector. The country is, in fact, threatened with sanctions by the European Commission and a case is set to be brought before the European Union Court of Justice for incomplete transposal of EU rules on the energy market... [Read more](#)

Cyprus :

Cyprus: Harris Georgiades replaces Michalis Sarris as Finance Minister



Cypriot Finance Minister Michalis Sarris resigned on 2nd April 2013, a decision due to the fact that, up until August 2012, he was Chairman of Laiki Bank, which has been made bankrupt within the context of the island's economic bailout plan. Michalis Sarris said that he had decided to leave his job because the enquiry started by the Cypriot government to identify the causes of the banking crisis is to look at the period during which he ran Laiki Bank, which is currently in liquidation. His resignation has been accepted by the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicos Anastasiades. On 3rd April 2013, Harris Georgiades, currently Labour Minister, was appointed as the new Finance Minister. The presidency indicated that the position of Labour Minister will go to a top civil servant in the Ministry of Trade, Zeta Emilianidou... [Read more](#)

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Spain :

Hollande and Rajoy believe that Cyprus must remain an exception



At a press conference on 26th March 2013, French President François Hollande and the head of the Spanish government, Mariano Rajoy, stated that the Cyprus aid plan, which imposes significant losses on big depositors, was an exception and not a model to be reproduced for other countries. They also referred to "excellent" bilateral relations... [Read more](#)

France :

Interview with the President of the Republic on France 2



On 28th March 2013 French President François Hollande defended his first ten months in power during a televised interview on France 2. This was his first televised interview since last September. He endeavoured to explain his policy, hammering home the fact that "[his] priority [is] jobs, and that [his] direction is growth" in front of 8 million viewers... [Read more](#)

Italy :

Foreign minister Giulio Terzi resigns



On 26th March 2013, Italian foreign minister Giulio Terzi resigned in protest against the government that had sent back to India two Italian soldiers accused of murder. On 15th February 2012 the soldiers had fired on two Indian fishermen acting as security guards on an Italian oil tanker off the Indian coast, thinking that they were pirates. This case has poisoned relations between the two countries since last year. Mario Monti, who is dealing with business until the formation of a new government and who was strongly criticised for this decision, will speak about the case before Parliament on 3rd April... [Read more](#)

Bersani fails in attempts to form a government in Italy



The leader of the democratic party, Pier Luigi Bersani, announced on 28th March 2013 that he had failed to form a government since he was unable to bring together a stable parliamentary majority to support him. "Discussions [with the other political parties] have not succeeded", Mr Bersani declared to the press, just after meeting Italian president Giorgio Napolitano. The latter gave up on forming a government on 30th March, preferring to create working groups in order to force the political parties to cooperate and unblock the political impasse. He decreed the establishment, on 2nd April, of "two small groups of political figures" who will have to make "specific proposals for a programme" that can be adopted by a majority of political forces. The first group will concentrate on political-institutional reforms (electoral law) and the second on economic-social measures. They will prepare a report to be handed either to Mr Napolitano between now and the end of his mandate on 15th May, or to his successor... [Read more](#)

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Poland :

Poland could organise a referendum on adoption of the euro



On 26th March 2013, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk declared that he might agree to hold a referendum on his country's entry into the euro zone, a referendum that is sought by the opposition, in exchange for support from the latter concerning modifications to the Polish Constitution. A constitutional change is in fact necessary for the country to be able to abandon its currency, the zloty, in favour of the euro. On the other hand, Latvia and Lithuania rejected the idea of a referendum on joining the euro zone on 28th March... [Read more](#)

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Romania :

Romanian Prime Minister acts as temporary Justice Minister



On 26th March 2013, the Romanian government announced that Romanian Prime Minister Victor Ponta would act as temporary Justice Minister after the appointment of former minister Mona Pivniceru to the Constitutional Court. Victor Ponta has indicated that he intends to propose new candidates for the public prosecutors office and the national anti-corruption office, which have been run by temporary appointees for several months. He said that he would be having discussions in this regard with President Traian Basescu and the Higher Magistrates' Council. Romania is committed to reinforcing its combat against corruption since joining the European Union in 2007. In its January 2013 report, the Commission found that Bucharest still had a great deal of progress to make to succeed in cleaning up its justice system and put

an end to corruption... [Read more](#)

UK :

David Cameron's speech on immigration



On 25th March 2013, British Prime Minister David Cameron gave a speech on plans to reduce the number of immigrants from the European Economic Area (EEA) to the United Kingdom. Several measures were highlighted, notably the end of payment of aid received by an unemployed immigrant after six months, if he has no prospect of finding a job, as well as a restriction on immigrants' rights in terms of housing and access to the healthcare system. David Cameron also announced that the fines which employers of illegal immigrants will have to pay will be doubled and that housing owners could also be liable to these fines. All these measures should come into effect between now and the beginning of 2014... [Read more](#)

Slovenia :

Slovenia ratifies Croatia's EU Membership Treaty



On 2nd April 2013, the Slovenian Parliament ratified Croatia's European Union Membership Treaty. All 82 MPs present, in a Parliament of 90 members, voted in favour of the Membership Treaty. "Slovenia is sincerely convinced that this enlargement of the European Union will ensure the stability of democracy and economic success, both of which are in our interest", said the Slovenian Prime Minister, Alenka Bratusek. The vote came after the agreement, reached less than a month ago, on the dispute that opposed Croatia and Slovenia regarding the Ljubljanska Banka bank. Croatian Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic and his Foreign Minister Vesna Pusic were present at the parliamentary session... [Read more](#)

EADS :

EADS: change of governance



On 27th March 2013 EADS mutated from a group controlled by three European States into a company, free to pursue its worldwide ambitions. In Amsterdam, an extraordinary general meeting of shareholders approved the reform of group governance decided in December by an agreement made with all three States (France, Germany, Spain), which began the group in 2000. The new governance dissolves a complicated shareholders' pact which allowed governments to decide on directors' appointments and weigh on the group's strategic decisions... [Read more](#)

Council of Europe :

The Council of Europe asks Iceland to combat corruption more efficiently



The Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) published on 28th March 2013 an assessment report on measures to combat corruption amongst parliamentarians, judges and prosecutors in Iceland. The GRECO found that informal counter-powers in Icelandic society are being re-evaluated, as are the concepts of transparency and corruption, following the collapse of the banking system in 2008. The Group was also pleased to see improved transparency in the procedure for appointing judges, as well as the fact that a code of conduct for parliamentarians is being written. The GRECO believes, however, that effort is still required in the combat against corruption and conflicts of interest amongst parliamentarians and within the justice system. The Icelandic authorities are to report in eighteen months time on measures taken to implement the ten recommendations included in this report... [Read more](#)

UN :

Appointment of the Head of the Enquiry into possible use of chemical weapons

On 26th March 2013, the United Nations appointed a Swedish scientist to head the team of experts responsible for an enquiry into the possible use of chemical weapons in Syria and decided that this team



would not include any nationals from the major powers. To undertake this task, UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon has therefore chosen Professor Ake Sellstrom, a recognised specialist in serious accidents involving chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive substances. Professor Sellstrom was also involved in the hunt for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq in the nineties and on 27th March he said that "the mission will be carried out one or two weeks from now [and it is] a matter of days. There is considerable preparatory work to do, notably administrative procedures and an assessment of the situation in terms of security", he added... [Read more](#)

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L'Oreal-UNESCO awards 2013



At a ceremony in Paris on 28th March 2013, 5 women scientists from all 5 continents received the L'Oreal-UNESCO awards, as well as 100 000 dollars each, for their contribution to research into physical sciences. Selected by an independent, international jury, the women were congratulated by Professor Ahmed Zewail, Nobel Prize for Chemistry 1999. "Their avant-garde research and their discoveries have changed our way of seeing and thinking in many fields of physical sciences and have pushed back the frontiers of science and technology" declared Irina Bokova, director general director of UNESCO... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Report on European demographics



On 26th March 2013, Eurostat published a report on European demographics. The population continues to grow and also to age. In just 20 years the proportion of over 65 year olds has increased from 14% to 18%. For every person aged over 65 there are 4 of working age. The marriage rate continues to fall, and the divorce rate continues to increase. In every country the number of children born outside marriage has also increased, reaching an average of 40%... [Read more](#)

Unemployment continues to rise in Europe



Figures published on 2nd April 2013 by Eurostat, the European Union's statistics office, show that the unemployment rate, after seasonal variation corrections, was 12% in February 2013 in the euro zone, stable compared to January. In the EU the unemployment rate was 10.9%, up compared to 10.8% the previous month. Both in the EU and the euro zone, rates have increased significantly compared to February 2012, when they were at 10.9% and 10.2% respectively... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Comparative study of the social market economy



The German Foundation Bertelsmann has published the results of a comparative study of the state of social market economies in six European countries, the United States and Canada. Researchers compared these economies according to various different criteria, notably competitiveness, the opening up of the labour market and social mobility. The study's results show that Sweden comes top, followed by Germany (n°2) and the Netherlands (n°3). France comes seventh, ahead of Spain (n°8)... [Read more](#)

"EU no, Euro, yes! European public opinion on the crisis (2007-2012)"



On 27th March 2013, "Notre Europe" published a study by Daniel Debomy entitled "EU no, Euro, Yes! European public opinion on the crisis (2007-2012)". In view of the latest Eurobarometer surveys of European citizens and the EU, the Director of the Public Opinion Research Institute (OPTIM) observes that decline in favourable attitudes to the European Union since 2007 accentuated rapidly in

2011, taking them to an historically low level. However, European citizens still appear to believe that the European Union can take useful action against the crisis. Similarly, a relative majority of citizens still declare themselves to be optimistic for the future of the EU. Within this context, the single currency still receives majority support in the European Union and, above all, within the euro zone... [Read more](#)

What are the European policies on Central Asia?



The Foundation for International Relations and External Dialogue (FRIDE) has published a series of studies on the policies developed by certain European countries with regard to Central Asia, at a time when the European Union is consolidating its relations with this part of the world. The policies of the Baltic States, Romania, Belgium and Luxembourg are successively analyzed in the fields of trade and energy, security, assistance and the values to be promoted in Central Asian countries... [Read more](#)

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Poverty in Europe in 2010



According to data published on 27th March 2013 by the German Federal Statistics Office, almost 16% of people in Germany were living below the poverty line in 2010. That is a higher figure than in France, where the proportion is 14% of the population, but less than the European average (16.9%). France is below the European average, at the same level as Sweden. The share of inhabitants living below the poverty line is lowest in the Czech Republic (9.8%), in the Netherlands (11%), Austria (12.6%), Denmark and Slovenia (13%). At the other end of the scale come Bulgaria (22.3%), Romania (22.2%), Spain (21.8%) and Greece (21.4%)... [Read more](#)

Culture :

European craft skills days



The European craft skills days will be held from 5th to 7th April 2013 in several European countries, notably France, Spain, Italy, Belgium and the UK. A large number of free events will be organised with visits to workshops, skills demonstrations, conferences, exhibitions and open days at training centres... [Read more](#)

"Napoleon and Europe": the image war at the Musée de l'Armée



The Musée de l'Armée in Paris is taking a critical look, from 27th March to 14th July, at the Emperor's European epic. Napoleon was adulated in France at the time of his splendour, but railed against, detested and caricatured abroad. This exhibition, seen as the most important ever devoted to him in France since the bicentennial of his birth (1969), compares dozens of works, etchings and drawings by French and foreign artists, in an attempt to understand how Napoleon Bonaparte turned the European landscape upside down over a period of just a few years. The Musée de l'Armée thus presents the whole diversity of Europe through documents and objects, popular or elegant, funny or academic... [Read more](#)

"Clouds. The fleeting world" at the Leopold Museum



Through until 1st July 2013, Vienna's Leopold Museum is presenting an exhibition entitled "Clouds, The fleeting world". The exhibition looks at representations of clouds, from the 19th century to today, presenting works by European and American painters and photographers such as Caspar David Friedrich, William Turner, Claude Monet, Ferdinand Hodler and Gustav Klimt. This exhibition is divided into twelve sections and addresses notably the themes of the "Creation of Clouds", the "Impressionists' Sky" or the "Beauty of the Macabre"... [Read more](#)

Eugène Boudin at the Jacquemart-André museum

Parisian museum Jacquemart-André, the former private mansion of a wealthy family, is organising for the first time since 1899 a



retrospective exhibition of the oils, pastels and watercolours of artist Eugène Boudin. He who Corot nicknamed "the king of skies" and Monet saw as his master, travelled throughout Europe in a constant search for light. From his native Normandy to Venice, passing through Antwerp, Dunkerque, Berck, Brittany, Bordeaux and the Côte d'Azur, the exhibition retraces the work of an artist considered to be one of the precursors of impressionism. The exhibition will run until 22nd July 2013... [Read more](#)

The British Museum recreates everyday life in Pompeii and Herculaneum



Through until 29th September 2013, an exhibition will retrace the everyday life and the sudden death of the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum at London's British Museum. For this exceptional exhibition, over 250 objects, most of which have never left Italy before, will enable the visitor to get close up to life in the Roman empire before the eruption of Vesuvius swallowed up the two cities in the Bay of Naples in 79 AD. Over 60 000 advance tickets for the exhibition have already been sold... [Read more](#)

Joana Vasconcelos at the National Palace in Lisbon



For an exhibition that will run until 25th August 2013, Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos will install about forty works, some never shown in Portugal before, at the National Ajuda Palace in Lisbon. The artist's sculptures dialogue with humour and outsize in these richly decorated royal chambers. Visitors will see "Marilyn", an enormous pair of shoes made from pans and pan lids and "the Independent Red Heart" an astonishing trompe-l'oeil creation made from plastic cutlery... [Read more](#)

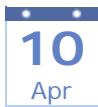
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4th April
Frankfurt
ECB Board of Governors Meeting



7th April
Presidential Election - Montenegro



10th-11th April
Meeting of G8 Foreign Ministers



14th April
Croatia
European elections - Croatia

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