



## Europe adrift: Illusions and Realities of the European Energy Policy



Author: Joachim Bitterlich

The European Council on 22nd May will mainly be devoted to the energy question. On this occasion the Robert Schuman Foundation will be publishing a text by Joachim Bitterlich taken from the "Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2013" published in April last by Springer Verlag Editor.

[Read more](#)

### Contents

**Front page!** : Franco-German - Prize/Pflimlin - Schuman Report - TV **Financial Crisis** : Eurogroup - Germany - France - Hungary - Italy - Portugal - Slovenia **Commission** : France - EU/Switzerland - Consumer/Protection **Parliament** : Ombudsman **Council** : Economy/Finance - Agriculture/Fisheries - Education/Culture **Diplomacy** : Mali **Germany** : Russia - Basel III - Energy **Bulgaria** : Government? **Spain** : Trade **France** : Europe - Consumer - Franco-German **Lithuania** : Finland **Luxembourg** : Germany **Poland** : Italy - Czech Republic - Poland - Visegrad **UK** : Referendum/EU - USA **Sweden** : Arctic **ECHR** : Switzerland **IMF** : Cyprus - Poland **Eurostat** : Growth - Trade - Inflation **Studies/Reports** : Water/Bathing **Publications** : Europe/Future **Culture** : Wagner/200 years - Exhibition/Madrid - Exhibition/Berlin - Exhibition/Paris

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

### Front page! :

#### Franco-German Economy Day



On 23rd May 2013 the Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation, Jean-Dominique Giuliani will be taking part in the Franco-German Economy Day alongside Louis Gallois, Thierry Repentin, Ernst Burgbacher and Susanne Wasum-Rainer. The meeting is being organised by the Franco-German Chamber of Trade and Industry. Debate will not only focus on competitiveness issues but also on the euro crisis and measures pertaining to banking regulation. The conference will be split into three main discussions entitled "France-Germany: the split?" "Banking Regulation and Financing the Economy" and "France-Germany: two models of industrial competitiveness." Participation in the conference is free of charge and entry is by invitation only... [Read more](#)

#### Award of the Pierre Pflimlin Prize

The Robert Schuman Foundation is involved in the Pierre Pflimlin Prize awarded to young researchers who are working on the Franco-German



relationship. This prize will be given on 22nd May by Joseph Daul, the EPP group president, at the European Parliament during the European Meeting in Strasbourg organised by ENA which will be the location of many debates over a two day period... [Read more](#)

#### Presentation of the "Schuman Report 2013"



On 27th May 2013 the two co-managers of the "Schuman Report on Europe-State of the Union 2013", Thierry Chopin, Studies Director for the Robert Schuman Foundation, associate expert at the CERI-Sciences Po and Michel Foucher, lecturer at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, Training Manager at the National Institute for Higher Defence Studies (Institut des hautes études de défense nationale) will be presenting the work at Sciences Po CERI. The debate will be moderated by Christian Lequesne, the CERI-Sciences Po Director. On 27th May Thierry Chopin will be presenting the report on the occasion of the "Rendez-vous Bourgogne/Europe at Sciences Po Dijon. The "Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union in 2013" is available for the first time on e-books and tablets for 10.99 euros. It is available in paper version in French and English from the Foundation's site and also in bookshops... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#) | [Other link](#) | [Other link](#)

#### "Talking Europe" hosts Antonio Vitorino



As part of the partnership between the Robert Schuman Foundation and the Audiovisuel extérieur de la France (AEF), the Foundation is broadcasting its latest programme "Talking Europe" on its site. The guest this week is former European Commissioner Antonio Vitorino. He is interviewed on Portugal's economic situation by Jean-Paul Betbèze, a member of the Foundation's Scientific Committee... [Read more](#)

#### Financial Crisis :

##### The Eurogroup encourages Cyprus and Greece



On 13th May 2013 the 17 Euro zone Finance Ministers supported the European Stability Mechanism's decision to pay a first tranche of aid totalling three billion euros to Cyprus. They welcomed the work undertaken by the Cypriot government and citizens, notably regarding money-laundering. The Ministers also encouraged the Greek government in its fiscal and structural reforms and announced that they were going to implement the necessary measures for the payment of the next aid tranche, to a total of 7.5 billion euros... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

##### German growth up slightly in the first quarter



According to estimates published by the German Statistics Office Destatis on 15th May 2013 the German GDP grew slightly by 0.1% in the first quarter of 2013. This "low growth" is largely due to "an abnormally long, cold winter" according to the statistics office which also revised the figures for the fourth quarter of 2012 downwards for the second time running; in its opinion the German economy contracted by 0.7% over the last three months of the year... [Read more](#)

##### France officially enters into recession



On 15th May 2013 the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) announced that France had technically entered into recession after two successive quarters of GDP contraction. Indeed the country recorded a GDP contraction of 0.2% in the first quarter of 2013 after a similar development in the fourth quarter of 2012. The contraction in the fourth quarter of 2012 was revised to -0.2% instead of -0.3% by INSEE. According to the Economy and Finance Minister, the government will maintain its growth forecast of 0.1% in spite of a first negative quarter. INSEE also announced that French household buying power had declined by 0.9% in 2012... [Read more](#)

### Hungary emerges from recession



The Hungarian economy recorded growth of 0.7% of the GDP in the first quarter of 2013 in comparison with the previous quarter thereby emerging from recession according to provisional figures published on 15th May 2013 by the Central Statistics Bureau. Hungary entered recession in the second quarter of 2012... [Read more](#)

### Given the crisis the Italian government adopts a series of measures



The Italian government led by Enrico Letta adopted a series of measures on 17th May 2013. "The first is to suspend the payment of the SCT (the Single Council Tax) that families were to pay in June," said Mr Letta adding that his government was going to wait until "31st August in order to re-write the tax system completely, including the SCT. Mr Letta also announced the suspension of ministers' salaries who already receive an MP's salary. The Italian government adopted a decision on all of these measures and this will enter into force immediately. However it still has to be validated over the next few months by Parliament. The Council of Ministers finally affected one billion additional euros to the fund for those who were technically unemployed... [Read more](#)

### Portugal is on the right path according to the OECD



On 14th May the OECD issued a satisfecit on the ambitious, courageous structural reforms undertaken by Portugal whilst calling for a return to growth and the "maintenance of social cohesion". It is vital to continue budgetary consolidation" and "the obstacles to growth have to be reduced to a minimum in order to achieve social cohesion and to lay the foundations for stronger, fairer growth" said the OECD in its report. The latter deems that the structural reforms already set in place to revive the economy might lead to a GDP rise of 3.5% by 2020... [Read more](#)

### Agreement between the government and the civil service unions



The Slovenian government led by Prime Minister Alenka Bratusek came to an agreement with the civil servants' unions on a new basis for civil servants' salaries in a bid to stabilise the country's finances. "We came to a satisfactory result," announced the Interior and Civil Service Minister, Gregor Virant after more than 11 hours of negotiations with the unions. The agreement was signed by Mr Virant and the unions' representatives. This still has to be approved by a majority of unions in the public sector and by the government. It might enter into force in June added the minister... [Read more](#)

## Commission :

### The French President speaks to the European Commission



On 15th May 2013 the French President François Hollande met the 27 European Commissioners in Brussels. The European Commission President José Manuel Barroso pointed to the successful work undertaken by France to reduce its structural deficit calling for the continuation of its reforms. François Hollande promised to undertake reform in support of competitiveness on the same day that France entered into recession. He also deemed it likely that France's growth would be zero in 2013. José Manuel Barroso said he believed him to be in good faith. But the two years of respite granted to France to bring its public deficits below the 3% mark "should be used to step up structural reform" and to "do away with the loss of competitiveness" of the French economy... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

### The EU and Switzerland sign a cooperation agreement on competition



The European Union and the Helvetic Confederation signed an agreement to strengthen cooperation between their respective competition authorities on 17th May 2013. This is the fifth agreement of this type signed by the Union in the wake of agreements with the US, Canada, Japan and Korea. The agreement with Switzerland is innovative in that it enables the two authorities to exchange the information

obtained in the course of their investigations. It will enter into force as soon as it is ratified by the European and Swiss Parliaments... [Read more](#)

#### More than half of dangerous products come from China



On 16th May 2013 the European Commission indicated that it wanted to improve cooperation in the EU to step up consumer safety. The warning system on dangerous non-food products (RAPEX) recorded 26% more warnings in 2012 in comparison with 2011. The most dangerous products are clothing, textiles and accessories (34%) and toys (19%). The main threats are chemical in origin, but there are also dangers of strangulation and injury. 58% of the products that were the focus of an alert came from China... [Read more](#)

#### Parliament :

##### Six candidates for the post of European Ombudsman



The President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz declared on 20th May 2013 that 8 people who would like to run for the post of ombudsman had handed in their request before the deadline set on 8th May - six of these are eligible. The candidates are Ms Ria Oomen-Ruitjen MEP (EPP, NL); Emily O'Reilly; Dagmar Roth-Behrendt MEP (S&D, DE) and Msrs Alex Brenninkmeijer; Markus Jaeger; Francesco Speroni MEP (EFD, IT). The candidates will be auditioned by the petitions committee on 18th June and the new ombudsman will then be elected in plenary session in July... [Read more](#)

#### Council :

##### Economy and Finance Council



The 27 Finance Ministers agreed on 14th May 2013 on the need for greater cooperation between the national, European and international levels notably between the G8, the G20 and the OECD regarding the automatic exchange of information. The issue will be addressed on 22nd May during the European Council. They also agreed on a mandate at the European Commission to renegotiate the fiscal agreements with Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Andorra and Saint-Marin. The ministers published their conclusions on financing the fight to counter climate change, on the macro-economic imbalances of the 13 Member States in question and on the single euro payment area (SEPA). They also said they were pleased with the agreement with the European Parliament on the proposal made regarding mortgage loans... [Read more](#)

##### Agriculture and Fisheries Council



On 13th and 14th May 2013 the 27 European Agriculture Ministers were informed of the progress made in negotiations associated to the reform of the CAP. Issues relative to young farmers, smallholders and active farmers were addressed in more specific detail. Regarding the reform of the common fisheries policy ministers came to an agreement which should enable the presidency to finalise discussions with other institutions. The ministers also discussed the effects of the tobacco directive on agriculture. Mackerel stocks and the next global summit on the oceans were also on the agenda... [Read more](#)

##### Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council



On 16th and 17th May 2013 the Culture, Education and Sports Ministers of the 27 Member States appointed Aarhus and Paphos as the European Capitals of Culture 2017 and La Valette in 2018. Ministers also debated the position of the cultural sector in the future trade negotiations with the USA and the means to employ culture as a diplomatic tool. They stressed the importance of training and employment for young people in terms of their social inclusion. Finally they looked into the results of the latest anti-doping summit in Montreal which was particularly innovative as far as the role played by public authorities was concerned... [Read more](#)

## Diplomacy :

### The international community mobilises 3,250 billion euros for Mali



The International Conference of donors 'Together for a new Mali' organised by the EU and France with Mali took place on 15th May 2013 in Brussels. With 80 countries represented and about ten heads of State, the international community turned out in a decisive manner in support of development priorities in Mali. Based on the "Plan for the Sustainable Recovery of Mali 2013-2014" (PRED) presented by the Malian government, the creditors published their respective financial commitments. Out of a global budget 4,343 billion euros necessary to implement the PRED, financial commitments and promises of donations to a total of 3.250 billion euros were announced by the creditors together... [Read more](#)

## Germany :

### 20th German-Russian Forum



On 15th May 2013 the German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle hosted his Russian counterpart Serguey Lavrov in Berlin on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the German-Russian Forum. During a speech celebrating the event, Mr Westerwelle recalled the joint cultural roots shared by the two countries and also one of the Forum's goals which is to "create links, not only political and economic, but also cultural and societal." Germany criticised the pressure exercised by the Russian government on NGO's in the country. The German Minister stressed the "strategic interest of the cooperation between the two countries" notably from an economic point of view. Finally he spoke of certain issues pertaining to international relations, notably those concerning the fight to counter terrorism, the security policy and also Syria... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

### Adoption by the Bundestag of the Basel III rules



German MPs in the Bundestag adopted the new international rules governing the capitalisation of banks - the so-called Basel III - on 16th May 2013. This makes Germany one of the first European countries to transpose this new regulatory framework which is designed to strengthen the banking sector. The Basel III standards aim mainly to strengthen banks' own funds, likewise their liquidity reserves to limit the dangers of default and to avoid further crises. They plan to set a ratio of own funds on banking establishments - ie its credits and investments have to be in proportion to its capital - by 8% by the end of 2018. The Basel III rules were initially due to enter into force as of January 1st 2013 but the date was postponed because it proved impossible to come to agreement last year... [Read more](#)

### Let's turn energy transition into the couple's driving force



The French and German Environment Ministers, Delphine Batho and Peter Altmaier published an article in Le Monde on 15th May 2013. In this text they highlight "energy transition" in France or the "Energiewende" in Germany "which involves decoupling growth and consumption of limited resources" and which should "lead to a significant growth in renewable energies and energy efficiency." They recall the recent decision to create a Franco-German Office for Renewable Energies. They advocate the strengthening of the community's CO2 emissions trade system and the definition of new European goals for 2013. They "decided to create a "club" of States that take on the pioneering role in energy transition and which foster renewable energies." On this issue the Foundation has published a study entitled "The Control of Energy Transition: a Franco-Germany project at the service of growth.".. [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

## Bulgaria :

### First session of parliament after the general elections

On 22nd May during the 42nd parliamentary session in Bulgaria the electoral committee appointed two socialist MPs, Margarita Stoilova and



Lazar Popov in replacement of Iliyana Yotova and Rumen Styanov. The first parliamentary session, in the wake of the early general elections, took place on 21st May. However 10 members of the GERB belonging to the electoral committee were absent thereby making it impossible for any decisions to be taken. Mr Plevneliev who repeated his call for "stability" after the election on 12th May announced that discussions for the formation of a new government would start on 23rd May... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#) | [Other link](#)

## Spain :

### First trade surplus since 1971



In March Spain recorded its first trade surplus since 1971 totalling 634,9 million euros. This was due to a fall in imports associated with a decline in domestic demand announced the Spanish Economy Minister on 17th May 2013. In March the country witnessed the volume of its imports decrease by 15% in comparison with March 2012, to 19,653 billion euros whilst exports increased by 2% to 20,288 billion... [Read more](#)

## France :

### François Hollande announces European initiatives



On 16th May 2013 French President François Hollande spoke of European issues during his press conference. "To bring Europe out of its torpor" he announced that he was going to initiate a four point European initiative: the economic government of the euro zone, youth, energy and a new stage in European integration. Moreover he decided to opt for a "marriage of convenience" with German Chancellor Merkel and responded to the wish for a political Europe as expressed by Germany "because it is no longer an affair of political sensitivity, it is an emergency". He maintained that France "is prepared to provide content to this political union.".. [Read more](#)

### The Senate supports the creation of a European consumer law



In the wake of the scandal of horsemeat lasagne the Senate adopted a draft European resolution on 15th May 2013 which is designed to lead to a "European consumer law" focusing on the "control and knowledge of foodstuffs." Delivered by François Zocchetto and the members of the UDI-UC group on 28th February 2013 this resolution aims to introduce obligatory labelling which indicates whether the meat or fish in the foodstuffs were fed with or without animal based meal. The authors believe that "full information and the well-being of the consumer has to be guaranteed to enable him/her to make an enlightened choice, to identify the foodstuff better in view of making appropriate use of it". They want this proposal to be sent to the European Commission so that the latter can guarantee that EU consumers are well-informed... [Read more](#)

### Franco-German Journalism Prize 2013



The Franco-German Journalism Prize Winner (PFAJ) which is celebrating its 30 anniversary in 2013 were selected in Paris on 15th May. Amongst them are Delphine Prunault who received the video prize for her report "The German Miracle - at what price?", a film that was part of the programme "Envoyé Spécial" on France2, which clearly shows the strengths and weaknesses of the German model. The Audio Prize was awarded to Delphine Simon for "My Father was called Werner" broadcast by France Inter and which, via many eyewitness reports, highlights the suffering of post-war children, which is still not healed today. The award of the Franco-German Journalism Prize will take place on 4th July next... [Read more](#)

## Lithuania :

### Finnish President in Lithuania

On May 14th 2013 Finnish President Sauli Niinistö travelled to Lithuania



for a two day visit on the invitation of his Lithuanian counterpart, Dalia Grybauskaitė. During their meeting they addressed the strengthening of bilateral relations and regional cooperation between the eight Nordic and Baltic countries as well as energy issues. Moreover the European crisis and the future Lithuanian presidency of the Council of the European Union as of July 1st were also discussed... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#) | [Other link](#)

## Luxembourg :

### Jean-Claude Juncker in Berlin



On 16th May 2013 Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker visited German Chancellor Angela Merkel in view of the upcoming European Council on 22nd May in Brussels that will mainly address tax policy and energy issues. During a televised conference "WDR Europaforum" the Prime Minister took part in a debate on the future of the Economic and Monetary Union with German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble. "Europe must learn to be proud of itself again. And we must not forget social justice in our political action in order to consolidate social cohesion in our countries," declared Mr Juncker... [Read more](#)

## Poland :

### Warsaw and Rome support "synergy" between budgetary discipline and growth



In Warsaw on 16th May 2013 the Italian and Polish heads of government, Enrico Letta and Donald Tusk spoke in support of "synergy" between the imperatives for financial discipline and economic growth in Europe which is struggling to emerge from the crisis. "We are going to work together in support of an agreement between the main actors in Europe so that the two main ideas in European debate, ie economic growth and financial discipline lead towards synergy and not an alternative," declared Donald Tusk. Enrico Letta took over saying that "budgetary consolidation is a condition to fulfil in order to implement political solutions including those designed to counter youth unemployment," adding that "Italy did not want to fall further into debt nor did it want to increase its deficit..." [Read more](#)

### Intergovernmental consultations between Poland and the Czech Republic



Czech Prime Minister Petr Necas and a certain number of his ministers travelled to Warsaw in Poland on 13th May 2013 as part of the intergovernmental consultations. They spoke with their Polish counterparts about the place of Polish foodstuffs on the Czech market , energy and transport and notably a gas connection between the two countries. Europe was also on the agenda since the ministers discussed the preparation of the next European Council in Brussels and the Eastern Partnership Summit in November... [Read more](#)

### Meeting of the Visegrad Group and Ms Ashton on the Eastern Partnership



The heads of diplomacy in the Visegrad Group comprising Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, together with the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs, Catherine Ashton met in Krakow on 17th May 2013... [Read more](#)

## UK :

### Draft bill on the referendum on the UK's place in the EU



On 14th May 2013 the Conservative Party led by Prime Minister David Cameron introduced a draft bill guaranteeing a referendum on the UK's place in the EU. This draft bill defines the question that will be asked during the referendum and indicates that the consultation must take place before 31st December 2017. The adoption of this text is however compromised because of Labour and Liberal Democrat opposition. The draft bill has been formulated whilst eurosceptic pressure on the British government has

increased. 130 MPs including 114 in the Conservative Party voted on 15th May in support of a non-binding eurosceptic motion regretting that the organisation of a referendum on the UK's membership of the EU was not part of the legislative programme presented on 8th May last... [Read more](#)

#### David Cameron visits the USA



On a trip to the USA British Prime Minister David Cameron spoke on 13th May 2013 with the President of the USA, Barack Obama. The two men spoke of the free-trade agreement between the USA and the European Union, with David Cameron warning that everything should be "on the negotiation table" in this agreement whilst France wants to exclude the cultural exception from the discussions. Although the negotiations have not yet officially started, David Cameron declared that it was possible that the process might be launched in time for the G8 summit on 17th and 18th June... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

#### Sweden :

##### Arctic Council Meeting



The Arctic Council, an intergovernmental organisation that brings together the countries bordering the Arctic (Canada, Denmark, US, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Russian and Sweden) met on 15th May 2013 in Sweden. This meeting marked the end of the Swedish Presidency of the Council and the start of Canada's two year mandate. Canada wants to make "the economic and sustainable development of the communities in the region" its priority. It was decided to extend the number of observer countries within the Arctic Council by six, to include China. The EU's request for observer status was subject to reticence "as long as the concerns of the Council members had not been resolved" said the Arctic Council. The European boycott of products that came from seal hunting is notably a problem for Canada... [Read more](#)

#### ECHR :

##### Switzerland must define its legislation on assisted suicide



The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) deemed on 14th May 2013 that Swiss legislation did not give enough detail about the circumstances in which assisted suicide was allowed. Indeed the directives issued by the Academy of Medicine only concerned patients affected by an incurable illness and who found themselves in a terminal phase. No other text provides directives as far as a healthy patient is concerned. Switzerland was criticised for not having provided clear directives defining the conditions giving rights to a lethal dose of medication. The ECHR's decision is not final: the parties involved have three months in which they can request a re-examination of the case... [Read more](#)

#### IMF :

##### The IMF approves the payment of the first aid tranche to Cyprus



On 15th May 2013 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced that it had approved the financial assistance plan to Cyprus and paid a first loan of 86 million euros to the country. "This loan is designed to stabilise the country's financial system, ensure budgetary viability and support the recovery of economic activity to protect the population's well-being," declared the IMF. In all the IMF is to pay around 1 billion euros to the country over three years as part of the bail-out in which the euro zone will take part to a total of 9 billion euros... [Read more](#)

##### IMF Report on the Polish economic situation



The IMF presented a report in Warsaw on 16th May 2013 on the Polish economic situation. It indicated that Polish economic growth, that has fallen victim to the euro zone crisis, is due to slow this year to 1.2% before recovering to 2.2% in 2014. The IMF also believes that an extended economic slowing in Europe comprises a bigger threat to the Polish economy and that this might prevent the country's economic recovery.



Although the IMF stressed that the Polish financial system seemed to be strong it did say however that it was important for the country to strengthen credit risk management and financial monitoring. The IMF also insisted on the need for an easing in the Polish monetary policy... [Read more](#)

## Eurostat :

### Euro zone GDP



In a press release on 15th May 2013 the European statistics office, Eurostat, presented its first GDP estimate. In the first quarter, in comparison with the previous quarter of 2013, the GDP contracted by 0.2% in the euro zone and by 0.1% in the EU. Over the fourth quarter of 2012 growth rates were respectively -0.6% and -0.5%. In comparison with the same quarter in the previous year the GDP, corrected according to seasonal variations, contracted by 1% in the euro zone and by 0.7% in the EU over the first quarter of 2013 in comparison with -0.9% and -0.6% respectively in the previous quarter... [Read more](#)

### Improvement in goods trade balance



Eurostat indicated on 16th May 2013 that the euro zone and the EU had recorded a international goods trade surplus in March, to a total of 22.9 billion and 15.8 billion euros respectively. The surplus increased by over 10 billion euros with the USA and Switzerland and the deficit with China decreased. Germany was the leading export country, with over 30 billion whilst the UK (-17.6 billion) and France (-15.3 billion) are the countries with the greatest deficits... [Read more](#)

### A further decrease in inflation



On 16th May 2013 Eurostat published inflation figures for April. The EU and the euro zone recorded a further decline in their annual rates, from 1.4% in the EU to 1.2% in the euro zone. In comparison with the month of March 2013 this represents a decline of 0.5% both in the euro zone and in the EU. A year ago in April 2012 the rates lay at 2.6% in the euro zone and 2.7% in the EU... [Read more](#)

## Studies/Reports :

### Report on the quality of bathing waters in the EU



Holidaymakers this summer will be able to dive more often, without having to worry, into the waters of the 22,000 bathing areas controlled by the EU. These are the findings of an annual report on the quality of bathing water in Europe published on Tuesday by the European Environment Agency. The report published jointly with the European Commission states that 94% of the waters tested in the EU matched minimal quality standards set by European legislation. The quality of the water is excellent in 78% of the areas tested and in comparison with last year's report nearly 2% more of these locations respect minimal standards... [Read more](#)

## Publications :

### Europe: Defeat or Challenge



In the face of globalisation, ageing populations and the exhaustion of public financing Gilles le Bail illustrates in his new book "Europe, defeat or challenge" the various issues that the EU has to rise to in order to overcome the crisis. Whilst fear, both on the right and the left, are feeding populism and tumult of human passion on the old continent, he advocates the humanist, political integration of a more democratic Europe, which protects and fosters greater links between Europeans... [Read more](#)

## Culture :

Celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Richard Wagner



Richard Wagner was born in Leipzig on 22nd May 1813. Sometimes we forget that Leipzig is not just the town of Bach and Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Even though Wagner's name remains connected to that of Bayreuth (Bavaria) where the composer created the world famous opera festival, Leipzig still comprised a major stage in his musical career. Operas from the world over will be celebrating the bicentenary in 2013 integrating works by Richard Wagner into their calendar. But Leipzig and Bayreuth will be the venues of the official events with concerts, exhibitions and ceremonies on 22nd May... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

### The Prado Museum reveals "Captive Beauty"



The Prado Museum in Madrid is holding an exhibition from 21st May to 10th November 2013 called "Captive Beauty. From Fra Angelico to Fortuny". This exhibition presents nearly 250 sketches and pictures undertaken between the 14th and 19th centuries that are all small in format and intimate in terms of their common features... [Read more](#)

### Anish Kapoor in Berlin



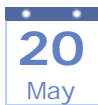
The Martin-Gropius-Bau Museum in Berlin is devoting an exhibition to Anish Kapoor until 24th November 2013. The artist is one of the most reputed in the world of contemporary art. The 70 pieces of art on show in Berlin illustrate the wide variety of his work... [Read more](#)

### Dynamo at the Grand Palais

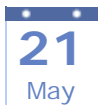


The exhibition Dynamo will be at the Grand Palais, Paris until 22nd July 2013 and is presenting 150 artists covering a period of 100 years. Dynamo comprises 3,700 m2 of exhibition area illustrating how many artists have addressed the ideas of vision, space, light and movement in their works, from Calder to Kapoor - often creating exhibits in which the visitor takes part. This exhibition is devoted to vision, space, light, structures and movement in the work of modern artists from all over the world who are brought together in a chronological or thematic order... [Read more](#)

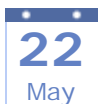
### Agenda :



20th-23rd May  
Strasbourg  
Plenary Session of the European Parliament



21st May  
Brussels  
General Affairs Council



22nd May  
Brussels  
European Council



27th and 28th May  
Brussels  
"Foreign Affairs" Council

The Letter is also available in:



**The Letter's Editorial Team :**

Pauline Massis Desmarest, Pierre Thibaudat ;  
Alexandre Brex, Fanny Cohen, Clara Coornaert,  
Victor Delage, Bettina Mecklenburg

**Chief Editor: Pauline Massis Desmarest**  
**Publishing Director: Pascale Joannin**

Contact/Suggestions  
[info@robert-schuman.eu](mailto:info@robert-schuman.eu)

**The Robert Schuman Foundation**, created in 1991 and acknowledged by State decree in 1992, is the main French research centre on Europe. It develops research on the European Union and its policies and promotes the content of these in France, Europe and abroad. It encourages, enriches and stimulates European debate thanks to its research, publications and the organisation of conferences. The Foundation is presided over by Mr. Jean-Dominique Giuliani.

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