



The Letter team wishes all of its reader happy holidays, returning on Monday 1st September.

Citizenship, Sport and the sense of belonging to the European Union



Author: Luc Desauettes

Indeed if it seems difficult to reconcile the links between sport and national identity with the emergence of a common European identity, other, initially less visible elements help to qualify this observation. This paper aims to show how sport has already enabled the progressive structuring of a public European area with the aim of looking into some ideas that might, by using sport as a lever, lead to the development of a political sense of belonging to the European Union.

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Foundation :

Christine Lagarde: "persistently low inflation can severely affect growth" in Europe



On 18th July 2014, Christine Lagarde, IMF Managing Director attended a conference organised by the Schuman Foundation in Paris together with Wolfgang Schäuble, German Minister for Finance and member of the Foundation's Board. During her speech, Christine Lagarde, warned that growth in Europe could be "severely" affected if inflation remained very low. "Persistently low inflation can severely affect growth" and "increase the debt burden," she said, calling for the ECB to maintain a "accommodative" monetary policy. Mr Schäuble for his part declared, "for the time being there is no sign of deflation." "I think that neither Central Banks nor economists can explain why, worldwide, with the mass of liquidity at our disposal and the high level of debt in the industrial countries, which is comparable with post-war levels, that inflation remains so low. Traditional growth schema generated by government deficits or by monetary

creation are no long working," he stressed... [Read more](#)

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Financial Crisis :

Recent labour market reform in the UK has not yet produced results



According to an OECD report published on 15th July 2014 the recently launched reforms of the labour market in the UK have not yet produced any results. The UK is on the forefront of work undertaken in OECD countries to transform and modernise strategies to counter unemployment and inactivity, as noted with the two major initiatives launched recently - Universal Credit and the Work Programme. However further OECD study reveals that in order to achieve their ambition goals the reforms started in view of fostering a return to work should be implemented across the board and be fine tuned... [Read more](#)

Bulgarian Ministers assess the banking situation



On 14th July Bulgarian Prime Minister Plamen Oresharski and the leaders of the main political parties met under the aegis of Bulgarian President Rossen Plevneliev. The main issue was the country's financial situation and the need to make legislative changes by Parliament. The Bulgarian President as well as the political leaders agreed that Bulgaria had to take steps immediately to join the EU's single supervisory mechanism. On 17th July the Bulgarian parliament rejected a modified budget put forward by the government to settle the banks' liquidities' crisis, which is throwing the poorest EU country into turmoil. "The adjusted budget did not get any support" from the parliamentary committees announced Finance Minister Petar Chobanov. Plamen Oresharski's government is to resign on 23rd July. The Central Bank promised to release accounts on 21st July but its rescue plan was rejected by the main political parties during a meeting organised by the head of State... [Read more](#)

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The number of poor people increased in Italy in 2013



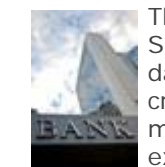
In 2013 there were nearly 10.5 million poor people in Italy, i.e. more than 16% of the population - a figure that rose in comparison with the previous year announced the National Statistics Institute (Istat) on 14th July. "In 2013 16.6% of the population were in a state of relative poverty, i.e. 10.48 million people," according to a report. In 2013 there were 9.56 million poor, i.e. 15.8% of the total population. "Absolute" poverty affected 9.9% of Italians, ie 6.20 million of them, whilst there were "only" 4.81 million (8%) in 2012... [Read more](#)

Espirito Santo - the main holding files for bankruptcy



The main holding of the Portuguese empire Espirito Santo, the leading shareholder in the BES bank went into receivership on 18th July. This announcement caused a shockwave in the country's financial sector. The group is unable to pay back a major share of its debt which is now due to reach maturity. Problems led to the fall of the CEO of the Ricardo Salgado group who has been replaced by Vitor Bento. The group is deemed to be one of the most important in the country and analysts fear major consequences as far as the country's financial stability is concerned... [Read more](#)

Slovenia: the Central Bank calls to step up reform



The Slovenian Central Bank called on 17th July to step up reform in Slovenia, which is suffering a major economic crisis. This call comes four days after the victory of Miro Cerar in the general elections. "We are at a cross-roads, excessive confidence based on recent figures (economic) might prove to be a disappointment and take us back to a vicious circle," explained the governor of the Central Bank Bostjan Jazbec. The country's main economic institution is forecasting 0.5% GDP growth this year after a contraction of 0.8% in 2013... [Read more](#)

European Council :

European Council: sanctions against Russia, no agreement on appointments

During an extraordinary meeting of the European Council on 16th July 2014 the next institutional cycle as well as external relations with Ukraine and Gaza were addressed. There was an exchange of views



with the new President of the European Commission, Mr Jean-Claude Juncker. European leaders did not progress towards appointing the heads of the European executive. A final decision will be made regarding these during an extraordinary meeting organised on August 30th. The Council also recalled its support to a pacific settlement to the crisis in Ukraine and stepped up sanctions against Russia. It regrets the violence in Israel and in Gaza : "The European Council calls on both sides to de-escalate the situation, to end the violence and the suffering of the civilian populations.".. [Read more](#)

Commission :

Jean-Claude Juncker's programme



Jean-Claude Juncker was elected President of the European Commission on 15th July by the European Parliament. His programme entitled "New Start for Europe: my agenda for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change" covers the EU's various priorities for the next five years ie: the fight to counter unemployment, the defence of the euro, and the promotion of American-style immigration. Jean-Claude Juncker also spoke of the importance of an ambitious economic policy oriented towards strengthening the common market and a Europe which will strengthen its diplomatic weight to the detriment of enlargement... [Read more](#)

6th round of discussions on the transatlantic agreement (TTIP)



The 6th round of discussions between the USA and the EU on the free-trade agreement ended on 18th July in Brussels to the backdrop of criticism over the lack of transparency in the negotiations. "We have had intense, technical discussions" but "political decisions will have to be taken at a later date," explained the head of the European delegation, Ignacio Garcia Bercero. "Many things have changed since we started negotiations in July 2013" stressed his American counterpart, Dan Mullaney. This issue was addressed by Jean-Claude Juncker on 15th July in the European Parliament. He stressed that he was not ready to accept all of the compromises. The issue of the negotiations' transparency has come under severe criticism. Karel De Gucht, the European Commissioner for trade called on the Member States to publish the negotiation mandate given to the Commission... [Read more](#)

Scoreboard of the Single Market - lifting the last impediments



According to the European Commission the EU countries are about to remove the final impediments to the European single market. This is the conclusion it has made from observing the common market scoreboard which indicates the degree of implementation of European rules in the Union, as well as in the EFTA countries. The EU countries, particularly Finland and Estonia, have notably improved their results in comparison with the previous scoreboard published in February 2014... [Read more](#)

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Four new commissioners for four months



On 16th July 2014 Parliament approved the appointment of four candidates as Commissioners in replacement of those who have left their post to become MEPs. The four new commissioners will take office for the rest of the present Commission's mandate which comes to an end on 31st October 2014. The candidates were auditioned by parliamentary committees on 14th July. The new commissioners are Jyrki Katainen (Finland), appointed to take care of economic and monetary affairs and the euro, in replacement of Olli Rehn, Ferdinando Nelli Feroci (Italy) appointed to industry and entrepreneurship in replacement of Antonio Tajani, Martine Reicherts (Luxembourg) appointed to justice, fundamental rights and citizenship in replacement of Viviane Reding and finally Jacek Dominik (Poland) appointed for financial programming and the budget in replacement of Janusz Lewandowski... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Composition of the delegations

The number of MEPs making up the 44 interparliamentary delegations was approved in plenary session on 16th July. These delegations aim



to maintain relations and exchange information with national parliaments which are not EU Members. The lists of MEPs making up the delegations were also approved on 17th July. For this new legislature the Parliament will have 44 interparliamentary delegations including a new one for relations with Brazil. The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of these delegations will be elected during constitutive meetings planned for 4th September (multi-lateral assemblies) and on 1st and 2nd October (interparliamentary delegations)... [Read more](#)

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EU to help 5.3 million young people find a decent job



On 17th July 2014 Parliament asked for firmer measures to fight against youth employment, notably minimal common standards for training, as well as decent wages. European funding for programmes linked to employment is also due to rise in future budgets added the text. Sustainable economic growth will not be possible as long as inequalities are not reduced maintains the resolution adopted by 502 votes in support, 112 votes against and 22 abstentions. According to the text youth unemployment has reached unprecedented levels with an average of 23% across the EU and a rate over 50% in some Member States. In all 5.3 million Europeans aged under 25 are unemployed... [Read more](#)

MEPs ask Russia to support the peace plan for Ukraine



Russia must show more resolve in supporting the peace plan put forward by Ukraine, respect the cease-fire and withdraw its mercenaries via the dedicated corridor, declared MEPs in a resolution adopted 497 votes in support, 121 against and 21 abstentions on 17th July 2014. They call for a collective embargo on arms sales to Russia as well as a guarantee to Ukraine of an adequate supply of gas. They hope for a rapid ratification of the association and free-trade agreement with Ukraine... [Read more](#)

Iraq: MEPs reject jihadist terrorism and demand a political solution



In a resolution adopted on 17th July 2014 the European Parliament firmly condemned the Islamic State's attacks on the Iraqi State and its citizens, notably summary executions and the imposition of a strict interpretation of the Sharia law. At the same time the text demanded that Iraqi security forces respect the international commitments made by Iraq concerning human rights and fundamental freedoms whilst fighting against the Islamic State and other terrorist groups. The idea is to forge open governance to put a halt to the fragmentation of Iraq. Security interventions must go together with a sustainable political solution that involves all of the components of Iraqi society. Moreover MEPs stressed the importance of an overall European policy for the Middle East that has to include Iran, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf countries. MEPs also called for international cooperation to take adequate legal measures against hundreds of foreign mercenaries, notably European citizens, who have chosen to join the rebel movement of the Islamic State... [Read more](#)

Council :

Council agrees position on the 2015 EU budget



On 15th July 2014, the Council reached an agreement on the 2015 EU draft budget, on the basis of a compromise text presented by the Italian presidency. Thanks to this agreement, there was no need to convene the ECOFIN (Budget) Council scheduled for 17th July. It will now be possible to engage in discussions with the European Parliament later this year which are forecast to be difficult since the Council reduced the planned spending package in the draft budget put forward by the European Commission for 2015 to 2.1 billion euro... [Read more](#)

Foreign Affairs Council : Ukraine, Syria, Africa



On 22nd July the 28 Foreign Affairs Ministers met in Brussels. They launched the EU's Consultative Mission for the reform of the Civilian Security Sector in Ukraine, a civilian mission under the Union's Common Security and Defence Policy. Moreover, given the seriousness of the situation in Syria, ministers stepped up the Union's restrictive

measures taken out against the Syrian government. They also extended the EUCAP Missions in the Horn of Africa and in Niger... [Read more](#)

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Diplomacy :

Iranian Nuclear issue: negotiations extended until 24th November



Iran and the 5+1 group (USA, UK, France, Russia, China and Germany) agreed on 19th July in Vienna to allow four extra months in order to reach a final agreement on Teheran's nuclear programme. The extension of talks, which will have until 24th November to be finalised, was recommended by the Iranians in Vienna just a few days previously. "Although we have made tangible progress in certain areas and that we have worked together on a text (...), major disagreements continue in certain key areas," declared the head of the EU's diplomacy Catherine Ashton in a joint press release with Iranian Foreign Minister, Mohamad Javad Zarif... [Read more](#)

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Court of Justice :

Pensions of civil servants in France: Europe criticises the advantages given to women



The advantages granted in terms of retirement pensions to civil servants who are parents of at least three children creates indirect discrimination in favour of women, which "does not seem justified" according to a decision by the European Court of Justice on 17th July. French legislation provides that civil servants who are parents to at least three children can retire early with an immediate right to a pension if they have had to interrupt their career for a continuous period of at least two months for each child. It also provides additional seniority under the same conditions. In its decision the Court believes that early retirement with a immediate rights to a pension and additional seniority lead to a "disadvantage for many male workers" thereby introducing "indirect discrimination based on gender".. [Read more](#)

Germany :

Angela Merkel's Press Conference



German Chancellor Angela Merkel held a summer press conference on 18th July. Ms Merkel firstly spoke of the crisis in Ukraine, which in her opinion, has to be taken seriously with emphasis being placed on dialogue. From the beginning of the press conference the Chancellor said that she had spoken with Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte expressing her condolences following the tragedy of flight MH17 and stressed that an independent inquiry had to be set up as quickly as possible. The German Chancellor assessed the work of her government positively regarding the reform of the renewable energies law, the minimum salary as well as the retirement pensions programme. She welcomed the ongoing debate of Germany's greater responsibility in foreign policy, in order to live in peace and democracy in the long term... [Read more](#)

German doubts about the post France is targeting in the Commission



Whilst heads of State and government did not come to agreement on 16th July on the first distribution of posts within the future European Commission some countries have already put their candidate forward. France would like the economic and monetary affairs portfolio. But German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble has expressed his doubts about the timeliness of giving a Frenchman this portfolio, a key post in terms of the respect of budgetary rigour. "How will public opinion react, not only in France but undoubtedly in Europe if a post like this were to be occupied by a French candidate," he asked. "The experts that take this decision must also think before making their choice. And that is what they are doing incidentally," declared Mr Schäuble. The French are "doing the necessary at present by lightening business charges to stimulate investment (...) and at the same time reduce a high government accounts deficit," he added congratulating his French counterpart Michel Sapin who laid out these measures to him on 17th July... [Read more](#)

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Cyprus :

Mario Draghi meets with Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades

The European Central Bank said that it wanted to help the Cypriot authorities in their work to settle the problems that continue to plague the banking sector. The President of the ECB said it was clear that major progress had been achieved in the implementation of the



adjustment programme within a very short time span. Mario Draghi and Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades assessed the country's financial situation as they met in Frankfurt on 16th July and discussed the means the ECB might deploy in terms of additional aid. Mr Anastasiades said that he was pleased with the meeting and that he would continue work to help his country's financial sector recover... [Read more](#)

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Croatia :

Summit of heads of State of 8 Balkan countries in Croatia



The annual Brdo-Brijuni Process forum took place in Dubrovnik on 14th and 15th July together with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. During a conference on the enlargement of the EU she declared that the countries of South East Europe can have a place in the EU once they satisfy all of the necessary membership conditions. This meeting is a follow-up to the strategic dialogue initiated in 2013 which rallies the Slovenian President Borut Pahor, Albanian head of State Bujar Nishani, Montenegrin Filip Vujanovic, Macedonian Gjorge Ivanov, Serb, Tomas Nikolic, the President of Kosovo Atifete Jahjaga, and the members of the Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bakir Izetbegovic, Željko Komšić, and Nebojsa Radmanovic. The 2014 summit featured discussions over the political situation, relations between States in the region and the continuation of the EU's enlargement policy... [Read more](#)

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France :

French President travels to Africa



French President Hollande travelled to Africa from 16th to 19th July. He visited Côte d'Ivoire, Chad and Niger. During his visit to Côte d'Ivoire he met with President Alassane Ouattara and defended the interests of French businesses with the latter as part of the country's development programme. He held press conferences with the Presidents of Niger and Chad... [Read more](#)

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Italy :

Matteo Renzi in Africa



The President of the Italian Council of Ministers Matteo Renzi started a four-day visit of Africa on 19th July 2014. He travelled to Mozambique, a first for an Italian leader. President Guebuza stressed that he deemed "the growing development in terms of economic cooperation and business relations" between the two countries with "immense satisfaction." Matteo Renzi announced that he intended to invest 50 billion euro in the drilling of natural gas that lies in Mozambique. Mr Renzi was then to travel to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola... [Read more](#)

Pompei - EU and Italy sign an action plan to step up the pace of work



On 17th July the European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Johannes Hahn and the Italian government signed an action plan to step up work to renovate the archaeological site of Pompei. This major project was approved in March 2012 by the European Commission and has the support of 78 million euros in investments via the European Regional Development Fund (FEDER). At the moment three projects on the Pompei site have been completed (Casa del Criptoportico and Casa delle Pareti Rosse). The Commission and the Italian authorities will ensure the supervision of the action plan four times between 17th July 2014 and the end of the project (in December 2014 and April, August and December 2015). The goals will then be reassessed and progress evaluated in line with the original plan... [Read more](#)

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The Netherlands :

Srebrenica Massacre - Netherlands deemed responsible

The court in The Hague has declared that the Dutch state was responsible for the deaths of more than 300 Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica during the Bosnian war (1992-1995). The court stressed that Dutch "the Blue Berets" from the battalion Dutchbat should have



protected the civilians, they should have realised that the 300 Bosnian men who wanted to take refuge there would be killed by the Serb fighters if they were expelled. This was the conclusion of the Dutch court which had been to which the "Mothers of Srebrenica" had turned with their case. Although the UN enjoys full immunity, this is not the case for the countries engaged within the peacekeeping forces. It is therefore the Dutch State which has been accused and found guilty. Will there be any more Blue Berets in the future?.. [Read more](#)

UK :

Sharpest decline in births since 1975



In 2013 the number of births in England and Wales declined at its sharpest rate since 1975 indicated the Office for National Statistics on 16th July which suggests that the reform of social aid as a possible cause. The ONS said that the number of births in England and Wales had dropped from 729,674 in 2012 to 689,512 in 2013, i.e. a drop of 4.3% - the sharpest since 1975. The average age of mothers rose slightly from 29.8 in 2012 to 30 in 2013 and the fertility rate dropped from 1.94 to 1.85 over the same period. This is also the lowest rate since 1975... [Read more](#)

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Russia :

Ukraine: European Union and the USA sanction Russia



The European Union and the USA stepped up their sanctions against Russia on 16th July for its role in the Ukrainian crisis, with Washington marking a difference as it targeted key players in the Russian economy. Russian President Vladimir Putin responded on 17th July maintaining that these sanctions would lead "Russian/American relations into a dead-end and cause serious damage." Meeting in a summit in Brussels the Europeans opted for lesser sanctions freezing programmes undertaken by the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The Union also decided to target "entities" - including Russian organisations - accused of supporting, either "materially or financially" the action undertaken or which undermine Ukraine's sovereignty. The precise list of targets will not be finalised until the end of July... [Read more](#)

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Ukraine :

UN Security Council meets after the crash of the Malaysia Airlines plane in Ukraine



A Malaysia Airlines plane was downed on 17th July 2014 probably by an land-air missile as it flew over the war zone in which separatist groups are fighting the Ukrainian government in the country's east. On 18th July the Security Council met in an emergency to discuss this tragic incident and Ukraine's situation. "The conflict has gone over the red line and is now endangering everyone, including the lives of children from various countries," declared Rwanda's July representative within the Security Council, who like the other delegations in attendance, demanded the launch of an independent international inquiry regarding the circumstances of and responsibility for the accident... [Read more](#)

The Ukrainian army continues its anti-terrorist operation towards Donetsk



Just as the contact group on the Ukrainian crisis deplored this week the "lack of goodwill" for dialogue on the part of the pro-Russian separatists indicating that a visioconference desired by the Europeans and planned for 15th July did not take place and whilst evidence is mounting against the separatists regarding their responsibility in the downing of the Air Malaysia plane, the Ukrainian army continued its anti-terrorist operation in Donetsk. On 21st July violent explosions were heard in in the town held by the separatists. According the rebels' leader the Ukrainian army launched its attack near the central station in a bid to penetrate the town. A spokesperson for the Ukrainian army's operations in the east said for his part that the operation was in its "active phase"... [Read more](#)

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Eurostat :

Euro area international trade in goods surplus



According to estimates published by Eurostat on 16th July 2014, in May 2014, the euro area goods trade balance with the rest of the world gave a €15.4 billion surplus, compared with +€14.6 bn in May 2013. In May 2014 compared with April 2014, seasonally adjusted exports rose by 0.6% and imports by 0.5%. The first estimate for the May 2014 extra-European Union trade balance was a €0.6 bn surplus, compared with +€15 bn in May 2013. In May 2014 compared with April 2014, seasonally adjusted exports rose by 0.5% and imports by 1.4%... [Read more](#)

Euro area annual inflation stable at 0.5%



According to Eurostat figures published on July 17th 2014, euro area annual inflation was 0.5% in June 2014, stable compared with May. A year earlier the rate was 1.6%. Monthly inflation was 0.1% in June 2014. The same month, negative annual rates were observed in Bulgaria (-1.8%), Greece (-1.5%), Portugal (-0.2%), Hungary and Slovakia (both -0.1%). The highest annual rates were recorded in the United Kingdom (1.9%), Austria (1.7%) and Luxembourg (1.2%). Compared with May 2014, annual inflation fell in ten Member States, remained stable in four and rose in fourteen... [Read more](#)

Surplus of the European Union external current account



According to Eurostat figures published on July 18th 2014, the European Union seasonally adjusted external current account recorded a surplus of €25.4 billion (0.8% of GDP) in the first quarter of 2014, down from a surplus of €32.7 bn (1.0% of GDP) in the fourth quarter of 2013 and from a surplus of €32.9 bn (1.0% of GDP) in the first quarter of 2013. In the first quarter of 2014 compared with the fourth quarter of 2013, based on seasonally adjusted data for the European Union, the surplus of the goods account fell (from +€7.7 bn to +€1.8 bn), while the surplus of the services account grew (from +€43.5 bn to +€45.9 bn). The income account surplus moved into deficit (from +€1.9 bn to -€1.8 bn) and the deficit of the current transfers account increased slightly (from -€20.3 bn to -€20.5 bn)... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

The international role of the euro stabilized in 2013



On July 16th 2014 the European Central Bank published an annual report on the international role of the euro, the second world currency after the dollar. "Last year's report showed that the public debt crisis in euro zone put pressure on the international role of the euro. This year however it shows that the majority of indicators used to measure the international use of the euro stabilized or became positive at the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014", declared Benoît Coeuré, member of the ECB Board. This is reflected by an increase in the debt and assets demand of the euro zone, as it is now at its highest level since the beginning of the financial crisis in 2007. The foreign demand for investments in portfolios within the euro zone rose to 3,7 % of its GDP in 2013, against 3% in 2012... [Read more](#)

Commission's annual report on the protection of financial interests



According to the Commission's annual report on the protection of financial interests published on 17th July 2014 Member States must step up work to prevent, detect and report any fraud that affects the Union's funds. The report draws up detailed recommendations in areas to which national authorities must lend particular attention in this respect. According to the report fraud detected in Union spending comprises under 0.2% of all funds. The Commission believes however that more work must be done nationally to counter and detect fraud. The annual PFI report recommends therefore, amongst others, that Member States review their monitoring devices to ensure that they focus on risks and that they are well targeted... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Brussels, Impressionist Capital

Giverny, together with the Ixelles Museum in Brussels, is running an exhibition until 2nd November 2014 entitled "Brussels, Impressionist Capital". The centre of the European avant-garde, Brussels stood out



brilliantly due to its cultural effervescence at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The exhibition presents around one hundred pictures on loan from some major European museums as well as from major private collections... [Read more](#)

The Imperial War Museum of London re-opens its doors



The Imperial War Museum of London has opened its door to the public again after four years of restoration work. A new exhibition of the First World War with its visual and sound effects recreates the hell of the "war to end all wars". The museum has spared no means from a technical point of view in paying tribute to those who fought in the First World War... [Read more](#)

2014 Bayreuth Festival



As each year, since it was created in 1838, the Bayreuth Festival will begin on 25th July (25th July-28th August). This music festival, which is entirely devoted to Wagner, takes place in the town of Bayreuth, Franconia (Bavaria), where the German genius lived and built a "temple" devoted to his music. After having celebrated the bicentenary of Wagner's death in 2013 this year's festival will open with Tannhäuser, a 2011 production by Sebastian Baumgarten... [Read more](#)

The Puccini Festival - love is the theme



The 60th Puccini Festival will take place from 25th July to 30th August 2014 in Torre del Lago in Italy. The theme this year is love and operas written by the famous Italian composer Giacomo Puccini will be produced. With four or five lyrical productions per season, the Festival attracts around 40,000 spectators to its open-air theatre, the Teatro dei Quattromila (named after its seating capacity). The four productions this year are Madame Butterfly, La Bohème, Turandot and Il Trittico... [Read more](#)

The biggest festival in Finland



From 15th to 31st August the Helsinki Festival will be opening its doors - this is the biggest festival in Finland. It will occupy the entire town and offer a varied programme - with classical and pop concerts, theatre performances and modern dance, plastic arts exhibitions, films and events for children... [Read more](#)

Sziget Festival 2014



The 2014 Hungarian Festival in Sziget will take place from 11th to 18th August on Freedom Island (Obuda) in the centre of Budapest. It has now finally unveiled most of its programme. This year the line-up will include Queens of the Stone Age, Placebo, Madness, The Prodigy, Blink 182, Outkast, Korn, NOFX, Skrillex and Calvin Harris. The programme will also include some rising stars like The Bloody Beetroots, Triggerfinger, Band of Skull and even the pearl of Russian punk, Leningrad. The festival will also have Lily Allen as its guest, as well as the Belgian singer Stromae. The electro-pop scene will be represented by La Roux, whilst Bombay Bicycle Club should create a lively atmosphere... [Read more](#)

37th Jazz Festival in Marciac



The 2014 Jazz Festival of Marciac will be taking place from 28th July to 17th August in Marciac in the Gers, France. Created in 1978 on the initiative of a handful of amateurs Jazz In Marciac, devoted originally to traditional jazz, the festival diversified under the impetus of Jean-Louis Guilhaumon, the head of the Secondary School of Marciac. In the last few years it has become one of the most important and most frequented festivals in Europe. The line-up this year includes Jeff Beck, Jamie Cullum, Gregory Porter and many more... [Read more](#)

Edinburgh Art Festival



The Edinburgh Festival 2014 will be taking place from 3rd to 31st August. Since its beginnings in 1947 it has become a tradition in terms of the town's events and offers visitors dance, theatre, music and opera as well as conferences and workshops. The inaugural concert on 8th August will be performed by the Scottish National Orchestra, which will play Schoenberg, Stravinsky and Debussy... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



22nd July
Brussels
Foreign Affairs Council



23rd July
Brussels
General Affairs Council



Thursday 7th August
Frankfurt
ECB Governors' Council



30th August
Brussels
Extraordinary European Council

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