



**"The stability and growth pact does in fact include some room to manoeuvre according to budgetary adjustment and these margins must be used."**



Author: Benoit Coeuré

On 4th September the ECB Council of Governors took a number of decisions which will enter into force on 10th September. They comprise a further reduction in the main rates and a programme to purchase mainly non-bank assets. The Robert Schuman Foundation has published an interview with Benoit Coeuré, a member of the European Central Bank's Executive Board.

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**Elections :**

**Early general elections in Bulgaria**



On 5th October next the Bulgarians are being called to ballot to renew the 240 members of their National Assembly (Narodno sabranie), the only chamber of Parliament. These general elections are the second to happen early after those of 12th May 2013. 18 parties and 7 electoral coalitions are running in this general election. MPs are elected every four years within 31 electoral multi-member constituencies. The voting method is mixed: 31 MPs are elected by a majority method (according to the first past the post system) and 209 are elected proportionally (closed lists) according to the Hare-Niemeyer method. Candidates have to be aged 21 at least. A minimum of 4% of the

votes cast is vital for a political party to be represented in Parliament. the political parties represented in the National Assembly are: the GERB, the main opposition party led by former Prime Minister (2009-2013) Boyko Borissov, 97 seats ; the Coalition for Bulgaria (KzB), alliance of four leftwing parties including the Socialist Party (BSP) 84 seats; the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS), 36 seats; Ataka, far right party, 23 seats. According to a most recent poll by Sova Harris, published on 3rd September, the GERB is due to win 42.2% of the vote, the Socialist Party 31.4% the Movement for Rights and Freedom 11.1%, Uncensored Bulgaria 7.3% and the Reform Bloc 7.1%... [Read more](#)

#### General elections in Latvia



The Latvians are being called to ballot on 4th October to renew the 100 MPs in the Saeima (parliament). 1,156 candidates from 13 parties are standing. Since 1998 MPs have been elected every four years in a proportional vote according to the Sainte-Laguë method. A political party has to win at least 5% of the votes cast to be represented in Parliament. Five political parties are represented there at present: Harmony Centre (SC), the main left-wing opposition party, 31 seats; Unity (Vienotība, V), of outgoing Prime Minister Laimdota Straujuma, 20 seats; the Reform Party (R), an outgoing government member, 16 seats; the National Alliance, an outgoing government, 14 seats; the Greens and Farmers' Union (ZZS), an outgoing government member, 13 seats. According to the most recent poll by Latvijas Fakti published on 5th September, Harmony Centre is due to win the election with 21.1% of the vote, followed by Unity with 17.3%, the Greens and Farmers' Union, 8.2% and the National Alliance 5.8%... [Read more](#)

#### Financial Crisis :

##### The ECB revises its macro-economic forecasts



On 4th September the European Central Bank (ECB) updated its macro-economic forecasts for the euro zone in 2014, 2015 and 2016. Growth has been brought down to +0.9% instead of 1% in 2014, to +1.6% (against +1.7%) in 2015 and it has been revised upwards to +1.9% (against 1.8%) in 2016. Inflation has been brought to +0.6% (against +0.7%) in 2014; it remains unchanged at +1.1% in 2015 and +1.4% in 2016... [Read more](#)

##### Rise in unemployment in Spain in August 2014



On 2nd September 2014 the Spanish Employment and Social Security Minister published unemployment figures that totalled 4,427,930 individuals on the registers. This implies 8,070 unemployed more than in July. Over the last decade official unemployment figures have increased by 49,025 people on average in August. However the result is positive since over the last twelve months unemployment has decreased by 270 853 people ie a reduction of 5,76 %. The Secretary of State for Employment, Engracia Hidalgo justified these results by the rise of permanent contracts in August with nearly 73,000 people finding work, ie 16.8% more than in August 2013. The construction and industrial sectors benefited from the improvement in economic activity. Engracia Hidalgo concluded by recalling that "the main goal is for economic growth to enable stable employment and provide opportunities for all of those who are searching actively for work.".. [Read more](#)

##### Portugal: amended budget 2014



Thanks to surplus revenues totalling 1.6 billion euro, which has cancelled the impact of recent decisions taken by the Constitutional Court MPs adopted the amended budget 2014 on 4th September in which no further austerity measures are introduced. "We are going to be able to respect the 4% cap on the GDP set for the public deficit in 2014 without having to make any further cuts to spending or tax increases", says Finance Minister Maria Luis Albuquerque. As for the 2015 budget the government has relinquished replacing a pensions tax censored on 14th August by the Constitutional Court and reversed its decision on raising VAT and social contributions. Hence the government has to catch up on 622 million euro... [Read more](#)

##### Italy maintains the freeze on civil servants' salaries in 2015

The Italian Minister responsible for the Civil Service, Marianna Madia announced on 3rd September in Rome that her government will



maintain a freeze on three million civil servants' salaries in 2015. This measure should enable the government to save 2.1 billion euro. In response to the vehement reaction on the part of the Italian unions Matteo Renzi's government recalled that Italy is once again in recession for the third time since 2008. Moreover this decision is part of an overall savings plan totalling 20 billion euro planned for next year. The plan should enable Italy to reduce its budgetary deficit and to respect the cap of 3% of the GDP set by the European Union... [Read more](#)

#### Law on foreclosure



On 6th September the Cypriot Parliament adopted a law enabling foreclosure which should help the island, which is in recession, to receive its next tranche of international aid. The vote came the day after the deadline set by the international creditors who made this legislation on the seizure of properties a condition for the payment of 436 million euro of the 10 billion euro of aid granted in 2013. The new law means that the length of foreclosure periods will be reduced significantly from 20 years to just a few months and introduces assessment rules on properties to be seized as well as their sale by auction. Banks are being encouraged to restructure the loans before deciding to resort to foreclosure... [Read more](#)

#### Commission :

##### JC Juncker communicates the composition of the next Commission to the Council



On 5th September 2014 Jean-Claude Juncker, the future President of the European Commission, addressed the list of Commissioners-designate to the Council. These appointments follow interviews that he has had with all of the candidates put forward by the Member States. The Council accepted this list on the same day and it will be published in the European Union's Official Journal. In all likelihood JC Juncker will announce the distribution of portfolio on 10th September so that auditions with MEPs can go ahead. After these auditions the whole college of commissioners will be submitted to a vote of approval by the European Parliament. Amongst the Commissioners-designate we note the presence of 9 women, four former Prime Ministers and several ministers. The average age is 53... [Read more](#)

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##### The European Union announces aid to counter the Ebola virus



On 5th September the European Commission announced European Union aid measures to a total of 140 million euro to counter the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. This aid will be mainly addressed to the countries affected by the virus: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria. 38 million euro have been reserved to help authorities in these countries to improve their healthcare services. 5 million will be used to provide mobile laboratories to aid the detection of the virus and to train healthcare staff. 97.5 million euro will help finance budgetary support measures in Liberia and Sierra Leone to improve the authorities' capacity to provide public services, notably in terms of healthcare, and to strengthen macro-economic stability. Kristalina Georgieva, the European Commissioner for International Cooperation declared the importance of "pooling our efforts and providing adequate means of air transport and medical material to our partners in order to counter this threat.".. [Read more](#)

##### Smart card cartel fined



On 3rd September 2014 the European Commission fined three smart card manufacturers for their participation in a cartel between 2003 and 2005, which is prohibited by the EU's antitrust rules. The fine totals 138 million euro. The German company Infineon was fined 82.8 million euro, the South Korean Samsung 35.1 million euro and the Dutch company Philips 20.1 million euro. As for Renesas (at the time it was a joint venture between Hitachi and Mitsubishi) it enjoyed full immunity because it was the first to reveal the existence of the agreement to the Commission. The three companies that were found guilty maintained bilateral contacts between 2003 and 2005 in view of deciding their respective answers to clients who wanted to achieve price reductions. The Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Competition Policy, Joaquin Almunia declared that "in this digital era it was vital for businesses which produce smart cards to focus their work on innovation and to provide the best products at the most attractive prices.".. [Read more](#)

## Parliament :

### No deflation according to Eurogroup President Jeroen Dijsselbloem



Eurogroup President Jeroen Dijsselbloem spoke to the European Parliament's Economic Committee on 4th September. After the declarations made by the ECB President, Mario Draghi in Jackson Hole many MEPs seemed mistrustful of the economic future of the euro zone. J. Dijsselbloem reassured them explaining that the euro zone is in danger of experiencing a long period of extremely low inflation but that there was no threat of deflation. He said it was necessary to allow more time to assess the effects of the measures unveiled by the ECB in June. In his opinion fiscal measures should play a more important role in terms of countering the crisis but the flexibility of the implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact is also necessary because the pact is the "anchor of confidence and it would be counter-productive to destroy it"...

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### MEPs want to step up Europe's humanitarian aid



On 2nd September the Foreign Affairs Committee met at the European Parliament to discuss the international crises that are affecting the EU's neighbourhood. The chair of this committee Elmar Brok (EPP, DE) declared that it was necessary to "simplify and speed up" the budgetary procedure. He added that "bureaucracy is excessive and the funds granted to humanitarian operations come too late." This week the parliamentary committee also debated the crises in Iraq, Gaza, Syria, Libya and Ukraine. Several EU mission or delegation leaders to these countries travelled to Brussels to discuss the costs of reconstruction which might total "billions of euro"...

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### Priorities of the Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union



Italian ministers presented the priorities of the Italian Presidency of the Council of the EU in the parliamentary committees held on 2nd and 3rd September. The audition of the various ministers led to a precise definition of the general programme of the Italian presidency within each of the fifteen competent committees, announced Matteo Renzi in his speech to the European Parliament. Hence the extension of "rapid reaction" measures initiated by the Commission to overcome the Russian embargo, the guarantee of transparency in the negotiations of the TTIP with the USA, the stepping up of the EU's humanitarian aid, the revival of economic growth via employment and competitiveness and the defence of the European "cultural exception", are the main priorities set out by the Italian ministers... [Read more](#)

## Council :

### Position of the Council on the EU budget 2015



On 3rd September the Council adopted its position on the EU's budget in 2015. This decision follows the presentation of the draft budget by the Commission. In this adoption the Council granted 140 billion euro in payments i.e. an increase of 3.3% in comparison with the 2014 budget (135.50 billion euro) and the equivalent of 1% of the GNI. To this it has added 145.08 billion euro in commitments, an increase of 1.7% in comparison with 2014 (142.64 billion euro) which is equivalent to 1.04% of the EU's GNI. It has increased the budget by 2.8 billion euro, ie 24.5% in areas such as research, innovation and education. The Italian Secretary of State for Economic and Financial Affairs, Enrico Zanetti said he was satisfied with the work achieved with the Member States on this draft. He also recalled that the EU will provide an answer to the real concerns of Europe's citizens ie fighting unemployment, youth mobility, support to SMEs and the management of migration flows. " The European Parliament is due to express its opinion by the end of October... [Read more](#)

### European response to the Russian embargo on Agro-food products



During a meeting in Brussels on 5th September the 28 EU Agriculture Ministers started to draft a joint plan to counter the Russian embargo that is affecting European foodstuff exports. As part of a "harmonised, European" response the ministers agreed on the "importance of assessing the possibility" of using the common agricultural policy to help the sector, indicated Italian Maurizio Martina, whose country is in charge of the

rotating presidency of the council. This is the cause of discord even though according to Agriculture Minister Dacian Cioloș, "there is a political agreement on the idea that the agricultural sector must bear the burden of this although it is not responsible," for the embargo. This measure was introduced a month ago by Russia in retaliation to the European sanctions set against it for its role in the Ukrainian crisis... [Read more](#)

#### Further sanctions against Russia



On 5th September the 28 countries of the EU approved further economic sanctions targeting Russia for its infringement of the sovereignty of Ukraine in spite of a ceasefire agreement between the Ukrainian forces and the pro-Russian rebels. "This new set of restrictive measures has now been approved," by the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the Member States of the EU, indicated the President of the Commission José Manuel Barroso and the President of the Council Herman van Rompuy in a letter addressed to the heads of State and government. The written procedure of adoption by the Member States was taken on 8th September... [Read more](#)

#### Court of Justice :

##### "Nitrates" Directive: the European Court of Justice condemns France again



On 4th September the European Court of Justice condemned France for not respecting the nitrates directive that dates back to 1991. This community text is supposed to protect the continent's water supplies. In France excess nitrates filter through agricultural soils into the rivers making it increasingly difficult to clean water sources. The Court of Justice believes that French legislation is too laxist regarding dates and the duration of manure spreading, together with other nitrogen-based fertilisers, which can lead to "the risk of pollution of water with nitrates". No financial sanction was decided against Paris but this means that it has to abide by the community rules or it will be condemned again and the next time financial penalties will be implemented... [Read more](#)

#### Compensation for air transport delays



In a decision delivered on 4th September the European Court of Justice defined the framework that is applicable to compensation paid to users in the event of major flight delay. It focused on defining more precisely what is meant by "hour of arrival". The Court finally deemed that the "hour of arrival" means the moment when one of the plane's doors opens, given that at this precise moment in time passengers are allowed to leave the aircraft... [Read more](#)

#### ECB :

##### Announcements made by the ECB Council of Governors



On 4th September 2014 the ECB Council of governors decided to reduce the bank's main rates to an historic low of 0.05%, 0.30% and -0.20%. During his press conference Mario Draghi said that the ECB was about to launch a programme to purchase private debt in support of the credit market and the euro zone economy. In particular the ECB was going to buy a large portfolio of asset backed securities" as well as "a wide portfolio of euro denominated covered bonds issued by the financial institutions of the euro zone" said the institution's president... [Read more](#)

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#### Lists of bank brought under bank supervision



On 4th September the ECB published the final list of 120 "major credit establishments" that will be brought under bank supervision. This list has been established according to many criteria - two of the main ones being: the size and economic importance of the establishment. The ECB will supervise the credit establishments, the banks, the financial companies, holding or mixed holdings which appear on this list directly as of 4th November. The ECB also published a list of lesser institutions, as demanded by the regulation. These banks will continue to be supervised by the competent national authorities. However the ECB can decide at any time to undertake direct supervision in order to ensure the complete implementation of the higher supervisory standards... [Read more](#)

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## Germany :

### Social Conference: call for private investors



On 2nd September and for the fifth year running German Chancellor Angela Merkel brought the social partners and heads of German business together at the Meseberg Castle near Berlin to exchange views on the major economic and social challenges they face this autumn. The federal government wanted to highlight that public investments will not be enough to guarantee the economy's continued dynamism and called for private capital. Participants agreed on the strategic sector in which Germany should focus its efforts: the digital industry and the economy that goes with it... [Read more](#)

## Estonia :

### In Estonia Obama reassures the Baltic countries and warns Putin



On 3rd September 2014 American President Barack Obama travelled to Estonia where he spoke with his counterpart Toomas Hendrik Ilves. This visit, which came on the eve of the NATO summit organised on 4th September in Wales, aimed to reassure the Baltic countries in the face of the threat posed by Russia. The American President warned Vladimir Putin against "any bid to destabilise Eastern Europe." He recalled that Estonia "would never be alone" announcing that "further American air force exercises would take place in the Baltic countries." Moreover the American President was "cautious" following the ceasefire agreement between Russia and Ukraine explaining that it was "too early to say anything about this agreement." Barack Obama then met the presidents of the three Baltic States guaranteeing them NATO's protection and also that of the USA in virtue of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty "on the collective defence of the members of NATO in the event external aggression.".. [Read more](#)

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## Finland :

### The European Court of Justice annuls the Finnish mechanism of positive discrimination in support of women



In a decision delivered on 3rd September the Court of Justice annulled the Finnish law which included a positive discrimination mechanism in support of women in terms of accidents at work. The Luxembourg court deemed that the calculation of lump sum compensation in the event of an accident at work should not be made according to the gender of the worker, but only according to other factors, like age or average life expectancy in a particular sector... [Read more](#)

## France :

### France suspends the delivery of the first Mistral projection and command vessel to Russia



On 3rd September after a restricted defence council the French President decided to suspend the delivery of the first Mistral projection and command vessel, the Vladivostok, to Russia due to the latter's attitude towards Ukraine. The Elysée believes that the "conditions for France to authorise the delivery of the warship have not been met." The contract has been suspended until November. During the NATO summit the French president indicated that he would take a decision at the end of October... [Read more](#)

### SNCM: the European Court of Justice confirms the illegal nature of State aid



On 4th September 2014 the European Court of Justice confirmed the illegality and the reimbursement of State aid received by the Société Nationale Corse Méditerranée (SNCM). During its privatisation in 2006 the maritime company received more than 200 million euro in subsidies paid out by France. This is another hard blow for SNCM after the European Commission obliged it to reimburse 440 million euros in illegal State aid received over the period 2007-2013... [Read more](#)

## Greece :

### Greece demands emergency European aid to counter immigration

During a press conference on 4th September in Athens Greek Merchant



Navy Minister and Minister for the Aegean, Miltiadis Varvitsiotis warned the EU of the dramatic rise in the number of migrants on Greece's maritime borders in 2014. Between 2007 and 2015 alongside support from Frontex (the European Border Management Agency) Greece will already have received 71 million euro for the equipment of its port policeforce. However the Greek government stressed that in 2014 48 migrants had died at sea in comparison with 28 in 2013. Additional solidarity of 63 million euro has been requested by Athens from the European Union... [Read more](#)

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## Italy :

### Matteo Renzi has given himself 1000 days to reform the country



The head of the Italian government Matteo Renzi indicated that he was giving himself 1000 days as of September 1st to reform his country 'gradually'. "It is a major step - the count down has begun," maintained the President of the Italian Council as he presented a new internet site to the press which is designed to allow the Italians to check on the progress of the reforms being made... [Read more](#)

## Poland :

### Woman Prime Minister?



Ewa Kopacz, the leader of the Polish chamber of deputies has been selected to take over from Prime Minister Donald Tusk who has been appointed President of the European Council, indicated the head of government in Warsaw on 4th September. "Ewa Kopacz enjoys the full support of the party as candidate for Prime Minister.".. [Read more](#)

## UK :

### David Cameron announces strengthened measures to counter the jihadist threat



On 1st September British Prime Minister David Cameron announced strengthened measures that will aim to counter the jihadist threat in the UK thereby enabling the police to confiscate the passports and restrict the movements of suspects. The police force will have the power to confiscate temporarily the passports of suspicious travellers on the borders, announced Mr Cameron, who again stressed that some 500 Britons are believed to have joined the ranks of the Islamic fighters in Iraq and Syria... [Read more](#)

### Supporters of Scottish independence forecast to win in the referendum on 18th September



As the referendum on self-rule in Scotland approaches on 18th September a YouGov survey for the Sunday Times published on 7th September forecasts that the supporters of autonomy will win. The "Yes Scotland" movement and its defenders are credited with 51% of the yes vote against 49% for the "Better Together" no camp who are against independence. Given these results on 7th September England promised Edinburgh the transfer of further competences in the tax, public spending allocation fields and even in terms of social security. The possible repercussions of Scotland's independence are still difficult to assess: the issue of monetary choice of the potential new State and that of it belonging to the EU are still without an answer... [Read more](#)

## Ukraine :

### Ceasefire agreement between Ukraine and Russia



On 5th September the pro-Russian separatists and the Kiev government announced a ceasefire agreement in the east of Ukraine. This agreement which resulted after negotiations in Minsk between Russia, Ukraine, the separatists in the east of the country and the OSCE is made up of 12 points. 1. immediate bilateral ceasefire; 2. monitoring and checking of the ceasefire by the OSCE; 3. decentralisation of power, allowing temporary local self-government in areas of Donetsk and Luhansk in eastern Ukraine under a "special status" law; 4. constant, active OSCE monitoring of the border between Ukraine and Russia and the creation of a security zone in the border areas; 5. immediate release of all hostages and illegally detained persons; 6. pass a law against the prosecution and punishment of people over certain events in Donetsk and Luhansk region; 7. continuation of inclusive national dialogue; 8. measures to

improve the humanitarian situation in the Donbass (the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk); 9. ensure the holding of snap local elections in Donetsk and Luhansk; 10. withdrawal of illegal armed groups, military hardware, and all fighters and mercenaries from Ukrainian territory; 11. adoption of a programme to help the economic recovery of Donbass and the recovery of activity in the region; 12. guarantee of safe passage for people taking part in negotiations... [Read more](#)

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#### Council of Europe :

##### Meeting with the Ukrainian President in Kiev



The Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Norwegian, Thorbjørn Jagland, met Ukrainian President, Petro Poroshenko as well as his Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin in Kiev on 2nd September. Discussions focused on the military conflict and the downturn in the situation of the civilian population, which is a "source of particular concern" for the Council of Europe, which re-iterated its wish to "help Ukraine launch reform", to increase humanitarian aid, notably in the east of the country and to ensure the respect of human rights in the region. Mid-August Thorbjørn Jagland addressed a letter to all European Foreign Ministers encouraging the Member States to act in support of the civilian population by sending humanitarian aid to Ukraine. During his visit to Kiev the Secretary General also met with the Ukrainian human rights ombudsman, Valeria Lutkovska, who presented a detailed report on the military and humanitarian situation in the eastern and south regions of the country... [Read more](#)

#### NATO :

##### Final Declaration at the NATO Summit in Newport



The 28 NATO country leaders approved an rapid response action plan designed to strengthen the Alliance's collective defence and to ensure that the latter is ready to face any kind of challenge. "This plan bears witness to our solidarity and our determination," declared NATO's Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen. He recalled that the Allies were facing a security environment that was more unstable than ever before, notably because of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the extremist violence in the Middle East and the instability in North Africa. "In these turbulent times NATO must be prepared to undertake the full range of its missions and defend the Allies against the various threats they face," he declared... [Read more](#)

##### New NATO representative for women



On 4th September 2014 Ms Mariët Schuurman, a Dutch diplomat, was appointed as special NATO representative for women, peace and security. She will take over from Ms Mari Skåre who occupies this post at the moment. The holder of the post - created in 2012 is responsible for raising awareness of NATO's activities notably regarding women, peace and security and also for ensuring their coordination with the UN and other relevant organisations. Ms Skåre's mandate comes to an end on 30th September 2014... [Read more](#)

#### Eurostat :

##### Euro zone GDP remains stable, that of the EU is up by 0.2%



Over the second quarter 2014 the euro zone's GDP, adjusted to seasonal variations, remained stable and that of the EU grew by 0.2% in comparison with the previous quarter according to two estimates published by Eurostat on 5th September. In the first quarter of 2014 the GDP increased by 0.2% in the euro zone and by 0.3% in the EU. In comparison with the same quarter a year ago, the GDP, adjusted to seasonal variations, grew by 0.7% in the euro zone and by 1.2% in the EU in the second quarter, after +1% and 1.4% respectively in the previous quarter. Amongst the Member States Malta has had the highest GDP growth (+1,3%) whilst Germany and Italy find themselves in last place (-0.2% each)... [Read more](#)

##### 12 billion euro current account surplus



The EU's seasonally adjusted external current account recorded a surplus of €12.0 billion (0.4% of GDP) in the second quarter of 2014, compared with a surplus of €25.2 bn (0.8% of GDP) in the first quarter of 2014 and with a surplus of €47.5 bn (1.5% of GDP) in the second quarter of 2013, according to first estimates from Eurostat, the statistical office of



the European Union. In the second quarter of 2014, compared with the first quarter of 2014, based on seasonally adjusted data, the surplus of the goods account moved into deficit (-€1.5 bn compared with +€1.6 bn), while the surplus of the services account grew (+€47.6 bn compared with +€46.1 bn). The deficit of the income account increased (-€11.9 bn compared with -€1.7 bn), as did the deficit of the current transfers account (-€22.3 bn compared with -€20.8 bn), albeit slightly... [Read more](#)

#### Eurobarometer :

##### For the vast majority of Europeans, it is important to protect the environment



A Eurobarometer survey on the interest held by Europeans in the environment was published on 8th September. A vast majority believe that the effective use of natural resources (79%) and the protection of the environment (74%) might be an engine for economic growth. Whilst 80% of those interviewed think that the economy influences their quality of life, 75% believe that environmental problems have a comparable effect and 7% are convinced that environmental problems have a direct effect on their daily lives. Air pollution (56%) and that of water (50%) as well as the generation of waste and the exhaustion of natural resources are issues which concern them the most... [Read more](#)

#### Studies/Reports :

##### The OECD publishes its annual report on employment



On September 3rd 2014 the OECD published its annual report "Employment Outlook". This report highlights the "limited but welcome" decrease of unemployment with an average rate dropping from 8% at the end of 2012 to 7.4% in May 2014 in OECD member countries. The level is still 1.8 points more than before the crisis. Economic recovery is unequal (1.3% of growth on average) and has "remained too weak" to a great degree for it to lead to a net improvement in the employment situation," writes the OECD. The report "anticipates a continued reduction in unemployment to a limited extent," the level of which is due to reach 7.1% in the last quarter of 2015. Finally the organisation is concerned about the rise in long term unemployment. "In spite of a certain decline in overall unemployment, long term inactivity continues to increase," reads the report. The OECD believes that the most worrying situation is the one in Greece where 67.5% of those out of work had been unemployed long term in 2013. The observation is the same in Ireland, Italy and Portugal where the rate is close to 60%. To remedy this situation the report advocates a "more intensive, personalised approach for example with regular face to face interviews and the drafting of individual action plans.".. [Read more](#)

#### Publications :

##### Do the Europeans (still) love Europe?



Whilst everything seems to be lending belief to the idea that there is increasing rejection of Europe on the part its citizens the Documentation française has published a book by Bruno Cautrès, a lecturer at Sciences Po and researcher at the CNRS, entitled "Do the Europeans (still) love Europe?" Although the detachment of Europeans from the EU is seen daily polls and surveys few of them want their country to leave the EU however. Bruno Cautrès tries to understand how citizens' support to the community project has progressively developed since the 1990's from "permissive consensus" to what we now call "forced dissent"... [Read more](#)

##### Geopolitical manual of Europe



The new edition of "Géopolitique de l'Europe" by Gérard-François Dumont and Pierre Verluise, which has been completely updated and on sale since 27th August 2014, offers a range of vital references on Europe's geopolitical situation. Of all the continents Europe is the one whose definition is regularly the cause of lively controversy. Where does it start? Where does it end? "Géopolitique de l'Europe" addresses this composite territory which extends from the Atlantic to the vast plains of Russia and whose configuration has been radically reshaped since the end of the Cold War... [Read more](#)

How can financial regulation bring Europe out of the crisis?



Seven years after the start of the financial crisis, the "Ecole Nationale d'Administration" has published a book entitled "How can financial regulation bring Europe out of the crisis?" under the guidance of Christian de Boissieu, François-Gilles Le Theule and Paolo Bailo. Via eyewitness accounts given by various key players in the economic arena this book offers an analysis of the major progress made in terms of financial regulation and offers a critical, prospective view of the answers provided on a European level to the international financial system. This book is part of the current papers that comprise the creation of banking union... [Read more](#)

## Culture :

### The painting of Siena on show in Brussels



From 10th September 2014 to 18th January 2015 the Fine Arts Museum of Brussels (BOZAR) is hosting an exhibition "Ars narrandi in Europe's Gothic Age" devoted to the painting of Siena. Around 60 pieces of work accomplished between the 12th and 15th centuries are on show. BOZAR pays tribute to Siena's pictorial art which fascinated all Italian artistic circles and finally left its mark on Europe as a whole over the centuries. This provides an exceptional opportunity to discover these masterpieces... [Read more](#)

### The Pompidou Centre will open a branch in Malaga in the spring of 2015



For an experimental period of five years the French Centre for Contemporary Art Georges Pompidou will open a branch in the Andalusian town of Malaga - the home town of Pablo Picasso - starting in the spring of 2015. The Pompidou Centre will be hosted by a modern building, "El Cubo" - which is a transparent cube set up on the quay of the town's marina. The original building was finished in 2013 by the L35 architects and is now being made available to the French museum by the town council of Malaga. According to the chairman of the Parisian centre Alain Seban, this experimental project aims to turn "El Cubo" into an "interdisciplinary area" (video-dance, cinema, art)... [Read more](#)

### The George Enescu Festival



The 14th George Enescu Festival is starting on 27th September 2014 in Bucharest. This festival, which is organised every three years, pays tribute to the famous Romanian composer and is one of the most important international classical music competitions in Europe. The event comprises four parts: violin, cello, piano and composition within which the greatest musicians challenge each other. Although George Enescu's music will take front stage, as with each of these festivals, German romantic music will be widely celebrated this year in the Romanian Athenaeum and the National University of Music (Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms)... [Read more](#)

### Paris Design Week



Paris is hosting the fourth Paris Design Week until 13th September 2014. It is the annual occasion to discover many new talents from the design and interior decoration world as well as the most recent collections of major labels like Cappellini, Roche Bobois and Poltrona Frau. Parisians will be able to see the various collection across Paris since 210 venues have been selected for exhibitions like the Bastille Square, the Marais and the Cité de la Mode et du Design... [Read more](#)

## Agenda :



10th September  
Announcement of the composition and distribution of portfolio in the next European Commission



12th September  
Brussels  
Eurogroup Meeting



14th September  
General elections in Sweden



15th-18th September  
Strasbourg  
Plenary session in the European Parliament

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