

## Overcoming democratic breakdown in the European Union

Author: Julien Zalc



The European Union is undergoing a crisis of democratic legitimacy. Confidence in the EU and its institutions is at an all-time low and many Europeans criticise how democracy is being implemented in the Union. For several years the gap between the community's institutions and its citizens seems to have widened. The latter believe that their voice is not heard, they believe the EU is too distant from their concerns and that it is not very transparent. To recover legitimacy the EU has to reduce this democratic deficit and recreate a link with the citizens of Europe. Some initiatives have been undertaken to do this but they seem to be inadequate. Other things must be done and this is one of the challenges facing the new Commission over the next five years.

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### Foundation :

#### European Security Forum, Brussels



The European Security Forum was organised on the initiative of several European political organisations and groups on 17th and 18th November in Brussels. Several Defence Ministers, the EU's High Representative Federica Mogherini as well as other experts attended.

On 18th November Jean-Dominique Giuliani, the Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation moderated a round table on the theme of differences in perception of security issues in Europe... [Read more](#)

#### "Sortir l'Europe des crises: quels rôles pour la France et l'Allemagne?"



On 21st November the French Institute for International Relations together with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation will be organising a conference "Sortir l'Europe des crises: quels rôles pour la France et l'Allemagne?" (Ending the crisis in Europe: what roles are to be played by France and Germany?). Two themes of debate will focus on "Is the European malaise irreversible?" and "Transforming the euro zone: what possible and desirable compromises are there between France and Germany?". Thierry Chopin, Studies

Director at the Robert Schuman Foundation will be speaking on the first panel... [Read more](#)

#### Elections :

##### Klaus Johannis wins the presidential election in Romania



Klaus Johannis (National Liberal Party -PNL) Mayor of Sibiu and member of the Democratic Forum of the Germans of Romania (FDGR), won the 2nd round of the presidential election that took place on 16th November in Romania. He won 54% of the vote against 46% for Victor Ponta, the outgoing Prime Minister and leader of the Social Democratic Party (PSD). Turnout was high and totalled 61.5% ie 3.48 points more in comparison with the second round of the previous presidential election on 22nd November and 6th December 2009 and 8.33 points more in comparison with the first round. Mr Johannis will enter office on 22nd December and will replace Traian Basescu who has undertaken two mandates already and was not allowed to stand for office again...

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#### Financial Crisis :

##### The OECD publishes unemployment figures and a report on growth



On 13th November the OECD published figures on unemployment for the period covering September 2014. Unemployment in the OECD zone was down by 0.1 percentage points to 7.2% ie 44.2 million people. In the US and Canada unemployment was down by 0.2 percentage points to 5.9% and 6.8% respectively whilst it was up by 0.1 percentage points in Japan at 3.6%. The unemployment rate was stable in the euro zone at 11.5% for the fourth consecutive month. On 12th November the OECD published a new report on world growth. The Leading Composite Indicators show weak growth in Europe and stable growth in most of the world's other major economies and across the OECD as a whole. In the euro zone indicators show a downturn in growth particularly in Germany and Italy, but figures were stable in France. In the UK the trend is also downwards... [Read more](#)

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##### Greece requests debt reduction



During an interview published on 16th November in the newspaper Kathimerini, the Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras insisted on the need to take steps to reduce the country's debt in the quest for political and economic stability. He said that an agreement with Greece's creditors had to be reached regarding debt reduction. Without this Greece will be excluded from the financial markets... [Read more](#)

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##### Portugal: final loan granted by the EU and Central Bank report



On 12th November the European Commission, on behalf of the EU, disbursed a 400 million euro loan to Portugal as part of the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism and as part of the financial assistance programme to Portugal agreed this year. Moreover the Bank of Portugal spoke in support of continued efforts to consolidate the country's budget. "In spite of unprecedented budgetary consolidation seen over the last few years, the level of debt means that we cannot forego adjustment work," maintained the Central bank in a press release published as part of its six-monthly report on Portugal's financial stability. This work is "vital to protect the country's external credibility," it maintained since government debt totals nearly 130% of the GDP... [Read more](#)

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##### Unemployment stable in the UK



Unemployment stabilised at 6% in the UK during the three months ending in September - this is the lowest rate recorded since the end of 2008 said the Office for National Statistics on 12th November. There are 1.96 million people seeking work in the UK, 529,000 less than a year ago. If the 16-64 year olds who are not looking for work are added to this figure the ONS announces however a total 9.03 million people who are economically inactive. The ONS states that of the 30.97 million people working in the country, 73% work full time and 27% part time... [Read more](#)

#### Commission :

Rule change regarding Member States' contribution to the EU budget



On 12th November the European Commission adopted a rule change concerning the adjustment of EU Member States' contributions. The proposal plans to provide an extended deadline - until September 1st of the following year - interest free, in some exceptional cases. Indeed the extension of the deadline would be applicable if additional contributions are over a specific threshold: for individual countries, if they are requested to pay more than twice their regular monthly payment to the EU budget; for all countries, if the total requested adjustment is more than half of the total monthly contribution of all Member States... [Read more](#)

#### Alliance between the airlines Etihad and Alitalia



On 14th November the European Commission gave its conditional go-ahead to the alliance agreed between the Emirate airline Etihad Airways and the Italian company Alitalia, thereby enabling the latter to avoid probable bankruptcy. Brussels has set just one condition and that is the opening of landing opportunities for another airline in the airports of Rome Fiumicino and Belgrade. The operation will lead to a new joint company New Alitalia, which will guarantee the continued activities of Alitalia CAI. Moreover Etihad will have exclusive control over Alitalia Loyalty SpA, a branch of Alitalia CAI which manages the Italian airline's loyalty programme. The Commission assessed the impact on competition and concluded that the operation would not cause a serious problem - except regarding the Rome-Belgrade liaison - mainly because of competitive pressure exercised by other companies... [Read more](#)

#### Ukraine: further EU aid



On 12th November the European Commission, decided to grant a 260 million euro loan to Ukraine on behalf of the European Union as part of the EU's Macro-Financial Aid Fund. The aim of the programme is to help Ukraine both economically and financially in the present situation. Moreover the European Commission decided to increase its humanitarian aid to the country to a total of 32 million in response to immediate requirements on the part of vulnerable populations who are affected by the conflict. An additional 3.3 million euro will be distributed to the population in the east to satisfy their basic requirements and to prepare for the approaching winter and 4.5 million euro will respond to the needs of the displaced elsewhere in the country... [Read more](#)

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#### Jean-Claude Juncker's response to the "LuxLeaks" affair



On 12th November, a week after the publication of the investigation "LuxLeaks" the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker responded to criticism which implied his responsibility in the tax agreements made between multinationals and Luxembourg's tax authorities when he was the country's Prime Minister. He recalled that "tax rulings" were a "well established" practice in 22 of the EU's countries deeming that solutions had to be found Europe-wide. He acknowledged that he was "politically responsible" for the tax system but denied the existence of any "conflict of interest" in terms of the Commission investigating Luxembourg highlighting his non-intervention regarding issues and, Margareth Vestager, the Competition Commissioner's total autonomy. He stressed that the Commission wanted to resume the harmonisation of the common tax base Europe-wide. Moreover he announced that he had asked the Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Taxation, Pierre Moscovici to prepare a directive that will enable the automatic exchange of information between the 28 EU Member States on tax agreements... [Read more](#)

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#### Parliament :

##### States are to retain the power to allow GMOs or not



EU Member States will be allowed to have the final word on authorising or banning the cultivation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) according to the result of the vote by the Environment Committee at the European Parliament on 11th November. France is against the cultivation of GMOs whilst the UK maintains that Europe cannot ignore new technologies if it wants to retain its position in the world. Given the divisions between States they will finally have the last word in terms of decision making even if a GMO product has been given the green-light across the EU. This decision was approved by 53 votes against 11 by the Environment Committee at the European Parliament which now has to seek the support of a majority in plenary session... [Read more](#)

## Council :

### Conclusions of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council



The 28 Agriculture and Fisheries Ministers decided on 10th November to extend the ban on fishing deep sea sharks by the European fleet for another two years. Regarding other deep sea fishing stocks whose capture opportunities ministers were due to assess, the next two years are forecast to be less favourable. Generally the ministers agreed to reduce fishing quotas notably the black scabbardfish, roundnose grenadier and roughhead grenadier. But these reductions are below European Commission expectations as part of the new common fisheries policy, focused on countering overfishing and preserving species. Moreover they exchanged views on the financing of European Agricultural Guarantee Funds during which most Member States said they were worried about the potential impact of a CAP budget reduction planned for by the European Commission in its 2015 budget amendment letter... [Read more](#)

### Council's position on the budget



On 17th November the Council took position on the European budget 2015 and a certain number of projects in the 2014 amended budget. They acknowledged the unprecedented amount of unpaid contributions and agreed to use flexibility instruments provided for in the regulation by the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 in order to overcome this exceptional situation. The Council's position aims to place the development of commitments and payments on a more sustainable path in order to avoid similar situations in the future... [Read more](#)

### The Council adopts a regulation to improve the transparency of the retail investors market



The Council has adopted a regulation that aims to improve the transparency of the market for retail investors. The regulation is part of a series of measures that aim to stimulate consumer confidence in the financial markets. It enables investors access to the information they need to take enlightened decisions. The text covers retail products, based on insurance-investments (PRIIPs), particularly investment funds, structured deposits and life insurance policies with an investment element... [Read more](#)

## Diplomacy :

### Sanctions against the pro-Russian separatist rebels



The 28 European Foreign Ministers decided on 17th November to extend the list of people targeted by sanctions due to their involvement in the conflict in the east of Ukraine. They asked the EU's diplomatic service to "put forward new additions to the list targeting the separatists so that a decision can be taken by the end of the month." .. [Read more](#)

### Launch of the European mission in Ukraine



On 17th November the Council decided to launch an EU consultative mission for the reform of the Ukrainian civilian security sector starting on 1st December 2014 for an initial mandate of two years. The mission will help the Ukrainian authorities in the area of reforming the civilian security sector including the police force and the rule of law. The EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin signed the Agreement Statutes for the mission between the EU and Ukraine. The mission will advise on a reform strategy, a planning framework for real measures and a structure to supervise implementation. The respect of human rights and the fight to counter corruption are also on the mission's agenda. For the first 12 months the mission will have a budget of 13.1 million euro... [Read more](#)

### Appointment of an investigator into the EULEX mission in Kosovo



On 10th November Federica Mogherini appointed Frenchman Jean-Paul Jacqu , former European civil servant and a professor of law, to investigate the failings of the EULEX mission in Kosovo. In his capacity as an independent expert Mr Jacqu  will be responsible for investigating the allegations of corruption that emerged on 31st



October last. Mr Jacqué will hand in his report to Ms Mogherini in four months' time...  
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#### Court of Justice :

##### ECJ recalls the prohibition of "social tourism in the EU"



On 11th November the European Court of Justice (ECJ) delivered a decision on "social tourism". The courts states that EU Member States are not obliged to grant social services to citizens from other EU states who are living within their territory with the aim of benefiting from social aid. The ECJ recalls that the "Union's citizens' directive", which aims to guarantee the free movement of European citizens conditions the right to stay, notably regarding those who are economically inactive, who must have adequate own resources for residence over three months but under five years...  
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#### European Agencies :

##### Historic landing of the European Philae probe on a comet



For the first time in history on 12th November after more than 10 years of space travel the European probe, Philae landed successfully on the comet Churyumov-Gerasimenko. The success of this operation will enable the European Space Agency to study the comet's core, in contrast to its exterior, which comprises gas and dust. The robot's mission is to take samples which will provide information into the origins of the solar system and even of the appearance of water and life on earth. Philae was dispatched by Rosetta. Philae is now hibernating on the comet but prior to this it was able to communicate all of the scientific data collated since its historical landing... [Read more](#)

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#### Germany :

##### German employers and economists invite the government to double investments



In a report co-written by the German employers' federation (DIHK, the national chamber of trade and industry) and the economic research institute DIW, German company heads deem that Germany requires 6.5 billion euros/year in terms of investments - i.e. twice the figure promised by Angela Merkel. According to the report the level of investments in Germany has declined by 3% over the last fifteen years dropping from 20% of the GDP to 17%. In a context in which only 0.5% GDP growth is expected in 2015 experts want to highlight that it is not just external conditions that are to be held responsible for the difficulties experienced by industry. The German Chancellor is for her part expecting more dynamic investment on the part of business... [Read more](#)

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#### Belgium :

##### Belgian Prime Minister visits France



On 13th November the Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel travelled to Paris to meet the President of the Republic, François Hollande. During the meeting they focused on various issues involving bilateral and European cooperation including the problem of foreign fighters, Belgian medical personnel seconded to counter Ebola, the issue of the North-Seine canal, the connection of Mons-Valenciennes as well as the European investment plan of 300 billion euro... [Read more](#)

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#### Estonia :

##### Estonia becomes the first country in the world to introduce e-residency



On 8th November Estonia presented its new web platform that will allow anyone in the world to have e-residency in the country. Named "Ten million Estonians" and part of a bill that will enter into force on 1st December 2014 this unique system - the only one in the world - will allow anyone to have a digital Estonian ID card which will open access to a range of public and private services and significantly reduce business running costs. However the e-residency candidate will have to explain his/her links with Estonia and his/her interest in using the digital services... [Read more](#)

#### Italy :

##### Agreement on electoral reform in Italy



On 12th November Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and Silvio Berlusconi, leader of the opposition party, Forza Italia, came to an agreement on the reform of the electoral system. Reform is due to grant a bonus to the majority on a single list winning more than 40% of the vote in the first round. Matteo Renzi maintains that this agreement "is stronger than ever before." The project for constitutional reform is entitled "Patto del Nazareno". This agreement has come just as the present President of the Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, could very well resign, which would upset Mr Renzi's electoral agenda. The draft bill is normally due to be adopted by the Italian Senate by the end of 2014... [Read more](#)

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#### The Netherlands :

##### Netherlands asked to pay 650 million euro towards the EU budget



On 13th November the Netherlands accepted to pay the additional sum of 650 million euro to the EU budget 2014 on the request of the Commission. After the revision of contributions according to the GDP, it seems that the UK owes around 2.1 billion euro, whilst other countries like France will benefit from a rebate. The new GDP calculation includes new activities in the revision of the GDP figures which have not been taken in account to date, such as drug trafficking and prostitution... [Read more](#)

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##### The Netherlands opens the world's first solar cycle path



On 12th November the Netherlands opened the world's first solar cycle path - a project that long term will make it possible to recharge electric bikes and cars across the entire Dutch road network (140,000km, 25,000 km of cycle paths). Named "SolaRoad" the path was built along a 70m stretch to the north of Amsterdam using concrete elements of 2.5m x 3.5m that were covered with solar panels. These in turn were covered with tempered, anti-skid glass in order to avoid accidents... [Read more](#)

#### Portugal :

##### Resignation of Portuguese Home Affairs Minister



On 16th November the Portuguese Home Affairs Minister Miguel Macedo resigned from office three days after a corruption affair emerged regarding the attribution of "golden" visas to foreign investors, which led to the arrest of several high ranking civil servants... [Read more](#)

#### UK :

##### Nicola Sturgeon succeeds Alex Salmond as head of the SNP



Nicola Sturgeon was officially appointed on 14th November as head of the Scottish National Party, the SNP, which met in congress in Perth (Scotland). Ms Sturgeon, who is 44, has been the SNP's number 2 for the last ten years and was the only candidate standing to take over from Alex Salmond who resigned in September after the failure of the referendum on the independence of Scotland. Nicola Sturgeon is also due to be appointed First Minister of Scotland on 19th November... [Read more](#)

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##### The UK reintegrates European justice and police measures



British MPs voted on 10th November in support of reintegrating certain European measures on justice and police into British legislation and as a result this included the European arrest warrant. By reintegrating 11 measures British MPs automatically validated 24 others, including the European arrest warrant, which did not in fact need to be transposed into British law and therefore required no vote. 36 MPs from the majority voted against this motion whilst Labour and LibDem MPs voted in support... [Read more](#)

##### British business owners would vote for the UK to remain in the EU



On 10th November in a conference organised by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), it was stressed that most British business owners would vote for the country to stay in the European Union. Michael Rake, who heads the CBI declared that "staying in the EU is clearly in our interest". Opposition leader, Labour's Ed Miliband, warned that leaving the Union would be a "disaster" criticising those who were "flirting" with the idea.

Finally Prime Minister David Cameron maintained that the "worst thing to do would be to ignore that the debate exists.".. [Read more](#)

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#### Albania :

##### Albanian Prime Minister in Serbia



On 10th November Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama travelled to Belgrade to meet his Serbian counterpart, Aleksander Vucic. The long-hoped-for visit (the first time in 68 years) was meant to promote good relations and cooperation but Edi Rama revived tension as he addressed the issue of Kosovo. Whilst Albania has acknowledged the State of Kosovo (whose population mainly comprises Albanians), Serbia considers Kosovo to be a Serb province. However in spite of this tension both countries stressed their desire to calm relations and Mr Vucic officially invited Tirana to continue the process... [Read more](#)

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#### Moldova :

##### Association agreement between the EU and Moldova adopted by the European Parliament



On 13th November the European Parliament adopted the association agreement between the EU and Moldova, 535 votes in support, 94 against and 44 abstentions. The agreement forms the central element in the close political association and economic integration between the EU and Moldova - free market access by both parties is also included in this. MEPs also adopted a resolution that goes with the agreement approved by 529 votes, 96 against and 46 abstentions. They insisted on the importance of the full implementation of the agreement and asked for the organisation of a wide-ranging information campaign on the advantages that Moldovan citizens will benefit from as a result of this agreement... [Read more](#)

#### Council of Europe :

##### Cooperation between the EU and the Council of Europe



On 12th November the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Thorbjørn Jagland, and the first Vice-President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans met in Brussels. During the meeting they made a declaration in which they re-iterated their joint commitment in support of protecting fundamental rights and the rule of law in Europe. In addition to this they re-iterated their belief that the EU should rapidly join the European Convention of Human Rights... [Read more](#)

#### UN :

##### UN fears -the danger of a return to total war-



On 12th November the UN Security Council met to discuss the Ukrainian conflict. During this meeting UN representatives expressed their concern about the "danger of a return to total war". The downturn in the conflict has notably been confirmed by the observers in the OSCE's special surveillance mission in Ukraine who have noted increasing violence in the Donbass. This meeting follows NATO's confirmation of the entry of Russian equipment and troops into Ukraine. The country is preparing for fighting. The Security Council has said that conflict could not be prevented as long as the Minsk protocol was not respected by the signatories, i.e. Russia, Ukraine and the OSCE... [Read more](#)

#### G20 :

##### G20 Conclusions



The leaders of the G20 met on 15th and 16th November in Brisbane, Australia. They agreed on pushing for greater economic growth worldwide and on the fight to counter global warming. They also discussed Russia's role in the Ukrainian conflict regarding which they maintained a firm stance. However they found no compromise on tax evasion since the conclusions were disappointing. They also committed to "eradicating" the Ebola epidemic... [Read more](#)

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#### Eurostat :

##### Growth of 0.2% in the euro zone and 0.3% in the EU

In the third quarter of 2014 the GDP, adjusted to seasonal variations,



increased by 0.2% in the euro zone and by 0.3% in the EU in comparison with the previous quarter. On a longer term, in comparison with the third quarter of 2013, in the 3rd quarter of 2014 the GDP registered an increase of 0.8% in the euro zone and 1.3% in the EU. Amongst the Member States France recorded a rise of 0.3%, Germany, 0.1%, Spain, 0.5% whilst Italy witnessed a contraction in its GDP of 0.1% in the third quarter of 2014 in comparison with the second quarter of the same year. Finally the difference in growth rates in the EU varies between +1.9% in Romania to -0.4% in Cyprus (third quarter of 2014). These figures were published on 14th November by Eurostat... [Read more](#)

#### Rise of annual inflation rates in Europe



According to figures published by Eurostat on 14th November, the euro zone's annual inflation rate lay at 0.4% in October, in comparison with 0.3% in September, whilst in the European Union it lay at 0.5% in October 2014 in comparison with 0.4% in September. A year ago annual inflation stood at 0.9% in the EU. In October 2014 amongst the EU Member States negative annual rates were recorded in Greece (-1.8%), Belgium (-1.5%), Hungary and Poland (-0.3% each) as well as in Spain (-0.2%) whilst the highest annual rates were seen in Romania (1.8%), Austria (1.4%) and Finland (1.2%)... [Read more](#)

#### Trade surplus in the euro zone and the EU



In September the euro zone recorded a trade surplus of 18.5 billion euro after 8.6 billion in August announced Eurostat on 17th November. According to data adjusted to seasonal variations exports increased by 4.2% in comparison with August and imports by 3%. The surplus totalled 2.6 billion euro for the EU... [Read more](#)

#### Studies/Reports :

##### The IEA warns of the dangers of present events in its report



On 12th November the International Energy Agency (IEA) published this year's World Energy Outlook. In the central scenario put forward by the 2014 WEO, it is estimated that world demand for primary energy will be 37% higher in 2040. Renewable energy technologies are rapidly gaining ground aided by falling costs and subsidies (estimated at 120 billion dollars in 2013). The 2014 WEO views renewable energies positively in terms of their outlook. They are due to represent nearly half of the world's increase in electricity production by 2040 and rise above demand for coal as the main electricity source whilst the world demand for oil is due to slow. The biggest fear is the failure to transform the system fast enough to cancel out the increase in energy-related CO2 emissions... [Read more](#)

#### Publications :

##### L'Arctique, la nouvelle frontière



Michel Foucher has published a book "L'Arctique, la nouvelle frontière" (Arctic, the new frontier) in which he describes the Arctic as the strategic and economic stake for the States which lie on its edge. In spite of global warming and the melting of the ice new resources and opportunities are on the horizon. The author who is a member of the Foundation's scientific committee analyses the various ongoing and future events with contributions being made by geographers, politicians, strategists and legal experts... [Read more](#)

##### "La résistance chrétienne au nazisme en Allemagne et en France"



Etienne François has published "La résistance chrétienne au nazisme en Allemagne et en France" (Christian Resistance to Nazism in Germany and France). It covers the story of Franz Stock, a German Francophile priest who, on behalf of the Archbishop of Paris, assumed the role of chaplain in prisons and at execution sites from 1940 and 1944. This publication follows a conference in 2011 which was supported by the Robert Schuman Foundation... [Read more](#)



## Culture :

### 22nd London Jazz Festival



The 22nd London Jazz Festival will be taking place until 23rd November 2014. Since 1992 the festival has hosted an audience of thousands at various venues across London. This year around one hundred artists from the world over will be taking part in the festival notably with several jazz legends in attendance, like Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea and Ornette Coleman. Because of the diversity and wealth of the performances the London Jazz Festival is open to the knowledgeable amateur as well as the curious visitor as they discover this musical style... [Read more](#)

### El Greco at the Benaki Museum Athens



On the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the death of Domínikos Theotokópoulos, also known as "El Greco", the Benaki Museum in Athens is running an exhibition until March 1st 2015 devoted to intellectuals, collectors and sponsors who formed the personal circle of the Greek painter in Toledo, Spain where he spent most of his life. The exhibition presents unique documents from Toledo's city archives, manuscripts, books from the Spanish National Library, as well as four portraits of El Greco from the collections of the Prado, Madrid and the El Greco Museum of Toledo and a private collection in London. Deemed to be the founder of the 16th century Spanish School, El Greco influenced a good share of the art world of the French Romantics of the 19th century up to Picasso and Jackson Pollock in the 20th century who were directly inspired by him... [Read more](#)

### Rodin Museum in Paris unveils the secrets of the sculptor's workshop



Until 27th September 2015 the Rodin Museum in Paris is running an exhibition "Rodin, le laboratoire de la création" (Rodin the laboratory of creation) which introduces the visitor to the secret behind the sculptor's workshop - a real laboratory of creation. The museum is also showing a unique series of 150 pieces of plaster and terracotta, that have been taken out of the archives for this exhibition. The Gates of Hell, the monuments to the Burghers of Calais or to Victor Hugo, Balzac, James McNeill Whistler... the exhibition allows visitors to follow the sculptor's exceptional career and discover his most famous and completed pieces of work... [Read more](#)

### Flemish Contemporary Art at the Tripostal, Lille



Initially devoted to the sorting of post, the Tripostal in Lille was transformed on the occasion of Lille 2004, when the city became a European Cultural Capital and is now a must in terms of contemporary art. Collectors established in the region of Lille and Courtrai are showing 140 pieces of work by 80 artists until 4th January 2015. The exhibition entitled "Secret Passions" takes visitors on a journey of discovery of Flemish contemporary art which is largely unknown... [Read more](#)

### International Festival of Contemporary Music Brussels



The 25th International Festival of Contemporary Music "Ars Musica" is taking place until 30th November 2014 in Brussels. In 2014 more than 30 artists will gather in 18 venues in Brussels on the theme "Mini-Maxi". Many concerts will be performed daily enabling the communication of local, European and international music by both experienced and inexperienced composers... [Read more](#)

### New Ethnographic Museum in Geneva



The new Ethnographic Museum of Geneva is now open. The building was designed by Marco Graber and Thomas Pulver and is described as a "black underground box", since a lack of building space led to the creation of underground exhibition areas but the roof and façade of diamond lattice work provide for the generous entry of light. The permanent exhibition "The Archives of Human Diversity" comprises around 1000 exhibits from five continents, most of which have not been available to the public for over ten years... [Read more](#)

## Agenda :



17th and 18th November  
Brussels  
Foreign Affairs Council - Defence



18th and 19th November  
Brussels  
General Affairs Council



21st November  
Brussels  
Foreign Affairs Council - External Trade



24-27th November  
Strasbourg  
Plenary session at the European Parliament

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