

Does the European Court of Human Rights threaten democracy?

Authors: Jean-Claude Mignon, René Rouquet



Although the criticism aimed at the European Court of Human Rights might be exaggerated this does not mean that a more general question cannot be raised about reconciling the unprecedented power wielded by the judges of the 21st century with the respect of democracy, since it is true that the "rule of Law" belongs above all to those who interpret it. This deserves overall thought by all of those involved on a European level, without demagoguery, nor over simplification and without specifically challenging one jurisdiction in preference to another. This is the conclusion of the study by Jean-Claude Mignon, French MP, Member of the Parliamentary of the Assembly of the Council of Europe and René Rouquet, MP for the Val-de-Marne and Chairman of the French Parliamentary Delegation at the PACE

[Read more](#)

Contents

Elections : Italy - Estonia **Foundation** : Lille **Commission** : Markets/Capital - Transparency - Bulgaria/Romania **Parliament** : Agreement/Laundersing **Council** : Economy/Finances - Agriculture/Fisheries - Eurogroup - Terrorism - Justice - Committee/Regions **Diplomacy** : Russia **Court of Justice** : Integration **Germany** : Economy **Estonia** : OECD **France** : Terrorism - China - France/Poland **Greece** : Government - Renegotiation/Debt? **Italy** : Electoral Reform **The Netherlands** : Healthcare **Poland** : Commemoration/Auschwitz **Ukraine** : Disagreement - Aid/EU **Council of Europe** : Ukraine/Russia **Eurostat** : Unemployment - Inflation - Tourism **Studies/Reports** : Employment - ECHR **Culture** : Venice/Carnival - Exhibition/Shoah - Exhibition/London - Berlinale

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

Elections :

The new President of the Italian Republic is Sergio Mattarella



Sergio Mattarella was elected President of the Republic of Italy on 31st January by 655 votes in support out of a possible 995 voters during a fourth round of voting. This was 150 votes more than the 505 necessary to be able to take over from outgoing Head of State Giorgio Napolitano who resigned from office on 14th January last. Aged 73 Sergio Mattarella, who is close to the Democratic Party, has sat as a judge at the Constitutional Court since 11th October 2011. He will become the 12th President of Italy for a mandate of 7 years... [Read more](#)

General Elections in Estonia



979,910 Estonians are convened to ballot on 1st March next to renew the 101 members of the Riigikogu, the only Chamber in Parliament. MPs are elected every four years by a proportional vote within 12 multi-name constituencies. Four political parties are represented in parliament at present: the Reform Party (ER) of Prime Minister Taavi Roivas, the

Centre Party (K), Pro Patria Union-Res Publica (IRL), and the Social Democratic Party (SDE). According to a poll by TNS Emor for the daily Postimees the Reform Party is due to win the general election on 1st March. With 25% of the vote it is due to pull ahead of the Centre Party which is forecast to win 22%. The Social Democratic Party is due to win 18%, Pro Patria- Res Publica 15%, the new Free Party of Estonia 8% and the People's Conservative Party (EKRE) 5%... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

Europe's Christian Roots



On 5th February the Dominican Convent in Lille is organising a conference with Jacques Portevin, archivist on the theme of "Europe's Christian Roots: Robert Schuman's Commitment"... [Read more](#)

Commission :

The European Commission progresses towards the Capital Markets Union (CMU)



On 28th January the European Commission launched its project to create a Capital Markets Union for the 28 Member States of the EU by doing away with obstacles to cross-border investment and by reducing the cost of financing within the EU. It is one of the leading projects in the Commission's work programme since the single capital market should also facilitate the mobilisation of private financing as part of the "Investment Plan for Europe". The CMU project was the focus of a consensus within the College of Commissioners which concluded that a Green Paper should be adopted next month to "consult all of the interested parties on the path to follow and the real areas of potential action"... [Read more](#)

New rules regarding the EU's transparency register



Following work undertaken jointly by the European Commission and the European Parliament a new version of the EU's transparency register was put on-line on 27th January. This "second generation" register implements the measures included in the revised inter-institutional agreement that the European Parliament and the European Commission concluded in April 2014. The new system modifies the way human resources are declared in lobbying; it demands that additional information be supplied on the participation in committees, forums, intergroups and similar EU structures as well as ongoing legislative files; it also intends that all of those who register should be obliged to declare the estimated costs of lobbying. Finally the new system simplifies warning and complaint procedures thereby enabling better control and more effective treatment of supposedly deceptive information... [Read more](#)

The Commission's reports on corruption in Bulgaria and Romania



On 28th January the European Commission published its annual reports on the development of the fight to counter corruption in Romania and Bulgaria in 2014. According to the report Bulgaria has serious a problem with organised crime and witness protection. The cases where major corruption affairs or organised crime finally reach court are very rare. The lack of independence of the judicial branch and political instability simply make the problem worse. The Commission does note however that work has been done on the analysis by the Higher Magistrates Council of the burden of work in courts, and the implementation of the reform of the public ministry. Regarding Romania a great deal of progress has been made. The main judicial institutions have made this battle a priority and their determination to defend the independence of the judicial system has strengthened the confidence of Romanian citizens. However progress needs to be consolidated and made secure. Hence there are still problems, for example Parliament is still reticent about implementing final judicial decisions or decisions taken by the Constitutional Court... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

Parliament :

Agreement between Parliament and Council on the laundering and transfer of funds

The Parliament and Council agreed on 27th January on the directive that aims to counter money laundering (capital that represents a yearly 2 to 5% of the world's GDP), but also tax fraud and the financing of terrorism. Measures that aim to pick out more rapidly the



transfer of funds were adopted: the effective owners of businesses (who hold and control a business) will have to be included on European countries' central registers, which will be accessible on the part of the authorities and by people who have a "legitimate interest". Both agreements have to be approved by Parliament as well as the Council... [Read more](#)

Council :

Economic and Financial Affairs Council



On 27th January the European Economy and Finance Ministers met to examine the proposal to create a European Strategic Investment Fund thereby confirming that they want to come to agreement by March 2015, so that the first investment programmes can be launched mid-year. They discussed the Commission's proposal to grant macro-financial assistance of up to 1.8 billion euro to Ukraine concluding that a decision had to be taken quickly. Moreover they modified the mother/subsidiary directive adding an anti-abuse clause to prevent tax evasion and optimisation by fostering a better application of the directive in all States. Finally they approved two agreements concluded with the European Parliament: the first of these establishes new rules to counter money laundering and the financing of terrorism, the second involves new rules to ensure the quality and reliability of EU statistics... [Read more](#)

Agriculture and Fisheries Council



On 26th January the Latvian Presidency presented its programme: organic agriculture and the simplification of the CAP will be its priorities. A programme aiming to regulate the capture of several species (cod, herring and sprat) in the Baltic Sea was welcomed by the States. The Russian embargo on agricultural products was also addressed: the Latvian minister announced that negotiations should include all of the EU and that any specific treatment would be unacceptable... [Read more](#)

Eurogroup Meeting



The euro zone Finance Ministers, who met in Brussels on 26th January are "very motivated" to work with the new Greek government and to move forward on the path to recovery" declared Jeroen Dijsselbloem, President of the Eurogroup saying however that "major issues in the Greek economy had not disappeared and had not changed from one day to the next just because there had been an election." Ministers also spoke of monetary transition in Lithuania which officially adopted the euro on January 1st 2015. They also formally welcomed the Lithuanian Finance Minister Rimantas Šadžius as a "fully fledged member of the Eurogroup." They highlighted the need for strong action on the part of the Member States in terms of fiscal consolidation, investment, structural reform, in the respect of the Stability and Growth Pact in order to foster growth in the euro zone... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

Terrorism: the EU adopts a battle plan



The 28 Home Affairs Ministers adopted a "concrete, ambitious" battle plan in Riga on 29th January to counter the propaganda of radical Islamists and to prevent any further attacks in Europe. A series of real actions were adopted in a common declaration. They will be discussed during a European Summit on 12th February. The EU wants to be able to make the control of EU citizens obligatory on their arrival on the external borders of the Schengen Area, notably at airports. The EU also wants to have a European air passenger data register in order to be able to monitor the movements of suspects. They are also going to adopt technology to be able to follow exchanges over the social networks, block sites, pictures and messages used to radicalise young people and to be able to decipher some communications. Europol, the European Criminal Police office, will be given this task. It finally wants to work against the causes of radicalisation in certain Muslim communities in Europe, notably in prison and prevent people from being recruited by Islamic movements, prevent their departure for war zones in Syria, Iraq and Libya and also locate them when they return to Europe so that they cannot do harm. It is estimated that between 3,000 and 5000 Member States' citizens have left for these countries 30% of whom approximately have come back... [Read more](#)

European Justice Ministers' Meeting in Riga



Meeting in Riga on 30th January European Justice Ministers noted the conclusions adopted by the Interior Ministers on 29th January highlighting that they want to continue the most recent work to enhance measures to counter terrorism in Europe via the "maximum use of legislative and non-legislative instruments in the area of justice." Moreover they debated the pertinence of widening the implementation of existing legislation on data protection to the police and criminal justice. Finally ministers discussed the means to promote "digital justice" in order to modernise the judicial area so that citizens can have easier access to it... [Read more](#)

The Council appoints the new members of the Committee of Regions



On 26th January the Council appointed the members of the Committee of Regions for a period of five years from 26th January 2015 to 25th January 2020. The 353 members appointed by the Council on the proposal of the Member States are responsible for representing the regions and other areas in the EU. The EU treaty demands that members of the Committee, as well as being representatives of regional and local communities, hold a regional or local electoral mandate or that they are political leaders of an elected assembly... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Further sanctions against Russia



The European Union will add further names to its blacklist of people sanctioned for their involvement in the conflict in Ukraine at the beginning of February, and prepare "further measures," announced the head of European diplomacy on 29th January. The European Foreign Ministers also decided to extend the targeted sanctions that were adopted in March against pro-Russian and Russian personalities by six months, until September added Federica Mogherini. The targeted sanctions which comprise a freezing of assets and a travel ban in the EU affect 132 people at present. The proposals for new names must be ready "in a week's time" said Ms Mogherini in view of adoption by the Ministers during their meeting on 9th February. Regarding any additional measures to be taken by the EU she indicated that the diplomatic service is to prepare "further appropriate action"... [Read more](#)

Court of Justice :

No obligatory integration examination for long term residents



The European Court of Justice referred to by the Netherlands gave a decision on 28th January on the application of the directive on the status of long term citizens from third countries: this provides that States can demand that these citizens satisfy integration conditions to validate their status of long term residency. The Netherlands however obliged two citizens - one from the US and the other from New Zealand - to sit an integration test otherwise they would be subject to a fine. According to the Advocate General Szupnar although the obligation for civic integration is not incompatible with Union law, the obligation to pass the test infringes the principle of proportionality. Integration measures must aim to facilitate the integration of citizens which can be gauged by their family ties, their professional or personal lives - (neighbourhood, practice of a leisure activity)... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Publication of Economic Report 2015 in Germany



On 28th January the government's annual economic report was published. This report forecasts economic growth of 1.5% this year and then 1.6% in 2016. Amongst the other forecasts feature a significant reduction in unemployment to 6.6% (instead of the present 6.7%) as well as gross salary increases of 3.2%. The latter can notably be explained by the introduction on 1st January of a minimum salary. These forecasts, which integrate the decline in the euro exchange rate and the drop in oil prices, should revive debate over the margin that the government has to increase its investments... [Read more](#)

Estonia :

The OECD publishes an economic study on Estonia



On 28th January the OECD published its annual economic study on Estonia. This study highlights the various stages that might be implemented by the Estonian authorities to revive growth in their country. The OECD notes that in spite of vigorous growth after the crisis the Estonian economy is still unstable. This study notably points to the lack of qualified labour which is accentuated by the high percentage of non-qualified young people. The OECD recommends stepping up structural reform to increase the country's productivity... [Read more](#)

France :

The French government launches "stop-jihadism" site



On 28th January the French government launched a site devoted to the prevention of and the fight against terrorism which addresses a wide public. It provides the public with practical tools (information, videos, eye-witness reports). The site aims to help people understand the terrorist threat, to inform them about the means to fight it, to decipher radicalisation and to raise citizens' awareness of the problem. This site is one of the integrated measures to counter terrorism launched by the French government (which includes the tightening of legislative instruments, the Vigipirate plan, and a plan to counter the radicalisation of people in prison)... [Read more](#)

French Prime Minister Manuel Valls travels to China



French Prime Minister Manuel Valls travelled on an official visit to China from 29th to 31st January. He met the Chinese President and Prime Minister and visited several French companies, including the Airbus assembly factory in Beijing. The main aim of this meeting lay in stepping up trade between China and France. The Prime Minister recalled that France is "open to China"; investors, students and tourists are all welcome to come. In 2014 France notably launched a policy to facilitate the visa system for tourists and students from China in view of making France the world's "leader in tourism." However this visit was also an opportunity to call for a re-balancing in trade relations between the two countries... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

Franco-Polish Meeting at the Elysée



On 29th January in Paris further Franco-Polish consultations took place. Eva Kopacz's visit to François Hollande is part of the Franco-Polish cooperation programme adopted on 29th November 2013. The two leaders discussed key issues in their partnership. In terms of security, defence and foreign policy France and Poland said they wanted to join forces on a diplomatic plan to counter terrorism, ensure peace in Europe and put an end to the vicious circle of violence in Ukraine. From an economic point of view François Hollande and Eva Kopacz reiterated their determination to revive growth and employment in Europe, via the introduction of a productive investment policy, economic and fiscal policy coordination, a programme to counter youth unemployment and development of the EU's social dimension. Cooperation in the area of energy security and the promotion of cultural, scientific and university partnerships were also addressed. The next intergovernmental consultations will take place in Poland at the beginning of 2016... [Read more](#)

Greece :

New Government in Greece



Alexis Tsipras, leader of the radical left coalition, SYRIZA, has been officially appointed Prime Minister Greece. He was sworn in by President Karolos Papoulias. In order to have a majority in parliament SYRIZA, which won the general election on 25th January without achieving the absolute majority, is to form a coalition with the Independent Greeks (ANEL), a eurosceptic, sovereignist, right-wing party. Together the two parties have 162 seats of the 300 in Parliament. Alexis Tsipras presented his new government on 27th January. The executive comprises 16 ministers of whom only one is a woman. Professor in Economy, Yanis Varoufakis, one of the "anti-austerity radicals" is Finance Minister. The Deputy Prime Minister responsible for negotiations with the EU is Yoannis Dragasakis. Nikos Kotzias is Foreign Minister. The eurosceptic, sovereignist party the Independent Greeks will occupy the Defence Ministry, with Panos Kammenos taking this seat... [Read more](#)

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

Athens asks Europe for time to put forward a new pact on the debt



On the occasion of his first council of Ministers on 28th January, the new Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras repeated that he wanted "negotiate debt relief" hoping to find "a fair, viable and mutually useful solution," with his creditors. He also announced a series of "anti-austerity" measures notably the halt of privatisation of the port of Piraeus and that of Thessaloniki. Following his official visit to Greece on 29th January, the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, stressed that negotiation between Greece and the EU over its debt could only be done "via consensus and non-provocation". The country's political and economic situation is, in his opinion, "weak but not desperate". "Ignoring the agreements is not the right path to take," indicated the President of the Eurogroup Jeroen Dijsselbloem after his meeting with the new Greek government on 30th January in Athens. On the same day Portuguese Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho declared that he was against any discourse that might upset investors. He said that Portugal would not follow the same path as Greece in its request to restructure the debt. In an interview with the German newspaper, Die Welt, on 31st January German Chancellor Angela Merkel rejected outright the idea of "any further cancellation of the debt" recalling that "Greece had already been exempted from billions of euros by the banks." "Europe will continue to stand by Greece as it has done with other countries that were particularly affected by the crisis, on condition that these countries undertake the necessary reform and savings," she added. Finally on February 1st, during a press conference with his French counterpart Michel Sapin, the Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis declared that he wanted a global agreement on the financial situation in Greece to be found by the end of May" stating that the Greek government was not going to ask for "any further loans" from the country's creditors within that time... [Read more](#)

Italy :

Reform of the Electoral Law in Italy



The electoral reform was adopted by the Italian Senate 184 votes in support, 66 against and 2 abstentions on 27th January. The amendments provide for a 40% threshold in the attribution of a majority bonus to the list that wins the first round of the election; the possibility of a second round between two lists that come out ahead; a single representation threshold of 3% and the implementation of the new electoral legislation as of 1st July 2016. Moreover after further polemic in the wake of the elections in 2013 by Erasmus students the Senate adopted the amendment that allows proxy voting for citizens on professional, study or medical grounds if they have been abroad for at least three months. The reform now has to be assessed by the Chamber of Deputies... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

The Netherlands :

The Netherlands has the best healthcare system in Europe



The Swedish NGO Health Consumer Powerhouse undertakes a yearly comparative assessment of the healthcare systems in European countries. The 2014 version of the "Euro Health Consumer Index" indicates that the Netherlands has the leading European healthcare system, ahead of Switzerland and Norway, with 898 points out of a maximum of 1000. It is the fifth year running that the Netherlands has taken first place. European Commissioner for Healthcare and Food Safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis was present for the award of the 2014 ranking in Brussels. In his speech he said he supported this kind of ranking so that Member States could exchange information and improve understanding of the best practices in the area of public health... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

Poland :

Commemorations of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz



On 27th January many heads of State and government took part in the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau by the troops of the Red Army. Welcomed by Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski they were accompanied by 300 former surviving prisoners. They all walked along the 700 metres that separate the "gate of death" from the ruins of the crematoriums, a symbolic path since those who were deemed unfit for work were sent immediately to their death on arrival at the camp... [Read more](#)

Ukraine :

No agreement during the negotiations in Minsk



The peace talks in Minsk on 31st January over the conflict in the separatist pro-Russian east of Ukraine did not lead to an agreement, declared Kyiv's envoy, former Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, accusing the rebels of having undermined the discussions. "The Minsk consultations are a failure," declared Mr Kuchma explaining that the leaders of the break-away republic who signed the previous agreements did not come to Minsk whilst their envoys "refused to discuss measures for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy arms." "The Ukrainian side accepts no ultimatum," he continued. Negotiations between the Contact Group comprising Mr Kuchma, Russian representatives, the OSCE and the rebels lasted nearly four hours in the Belarus capital where the peace agreements were signed in September and which have not been respected... [Read more](#)

Europe steps up its aid to Ukraine



Whilst the bombing of Mariupol on 24th January led to 30 deaths and 70 injured Christos Stylianides, European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, decided on 26th January to increase humanitarian aid to Ukraine. This will comprise 15 million additional euros in humanitarian assistance, designed to support the Ukrainian population in the zones affected by the conflict: shelter, food, drinking water and sanitary provisions will be delivered to the city of Dniepropetrovsk, in the east of Ukraine. With this Europe wants to re-iterate its support to the country whilst violence is escalating in spite of repeated requests addressed by the European Union to Russia... [Read more](#)

Council of Europe :

"No long-term ceasefire without a political solution" according the Secretary General of the Council of Europe



In a speech delivered on 29th January to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the institution's Secretary General, Thorbjørn Jagland declared that there would be "no long-term ceasefire without a political solution". He re-iterated the Council of Europe's support to constitutional and democratic reform in Ukraine. Regarding Russia he stressed the need to take part in the development of true "civil society" in the country. Thorbjørn Jagland recalled that NGOs are the "free agents of democracy" and that it is no longer valid in the "21st century" to treat them like "foreign agents" as the Kremlin regularly does... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

EU unemployment drops further in December 2014



In the euro zone the unemployment rate lay at 11.4% in December 2014, down in comparison with November when it lay at 11.5% and 11.8% in December 2013. This is the slightest reduction in unemployment recorded in the euro zone since August 2012. In the EU the unemployment rate lay at 9.9% in December 2014 down in comparison with the November figure of 10% and 10.6% in December 2013. The EU's unemployment rate has therefore decreased under the 10% mark for the first time since October 2011. Amongst the Member States the lowest unemployment rates in December 2014 were recorded in Germany (4.8%) Austria (4.9%), and the highest were in Greece (25.8% in October 2014) and Spain (23.7%). These figures were published by Eurostat on 30th January... [Read more](#)

Inflation still negative in January (-0.6%)



Inflation in January 2015 is said to have fallen again in comparison with December 2014: whilst it was already negative last month (-0.2%); a Eurostat study dated 30th January deems that the inflation rate in January was -0.6%. These negative rates are said to be due mainly to a fall in energy prices (-8.9% in January), and also to the decrease in foodstuff prices, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (-0.1% against 0.0% in December). The only increase forecast by the study concerns services up by 1%... [Read more](#)

Tourist numbers up in Europe

Whilst the financial crisis impacted European tourism negatively, the number of people visiting the EU has risen for the fifth year running: the number of nights spent in accommodation is due to total 2.7 billion



in 2014, a rise of 1.7% in comparison with 2013. Although France and Spain are still the leading tourist destinations France has suffered slightly with a 1.2% reduction in visits in 2013. Conversely the rise in tourism in Spain is now confirmed (+3.1%): 21% of visits by non-EU residents are made to Spain. The highest growth was recorded in Latvia, Belgium, Portugal and Greece whilst Slovakia, Finland and even Italy have experienced a reduction in the number of tourist visits... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Investment plan: more than 2.1 million jobs could be created according to the ILO



According to the report "An Employment Oriented Investment Strategy for Europe" published on 28th January by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) more than 2.1 million new jobs could be created by mid 2018 as part of the European Commission's Investment Plan. The ILO believes that investments together with public and private sectors to a total of 315 billion euro might strengthen Europe's competitiveness and help solve the employment crisis. However the report shows that to make any significant progress in terms of employment the Commission's plan will have to include a significant share of private investment - especially in SMEs which often create jobs. Secondly it will have to address major disparity that exists in terms of unemployment across the EU so that the economies which most need them can benefit from these funds. The organisation also stresses that the investment plan will have to be supported by a long term employment strategy which gives priority to quality jobs and balanced reform..." [Read more](#)

The European Court of Human Rights publishes its annual report 2014



On 29th January the European Court of Human Rights published its activity report 2014. Its president, Dean Spielmann indicated that the Court's activity has continued along its positive trajectory started in 2013 and highlights a decrease in requests of around 30%. This reduction might be explained by the new approach in terms of the requirements necessary for a request to be attributed to a judicial organisation. It also insists on the need for each Member State to ensure that endemic issues are resolved nationally rather than being brought to the Court. Regarding the country by country statistics the States against which the most judgments were issued and where there was at least one infringement of the Convention were Russia (122 judgments), Turkey (94), Romania (74), Greece (50) and Hungary (49). Moreover on 31st December 2014 most of the pending cases were against Ukraine (19.5%), Italy (14.4%), Russia (14.3%) and Turkey (13.6%)... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

Culture :

Venice Carnival 2015



On 31st January and 1st February ie 10 days before Ash Wednesday the opening ceremonies of the Venice Carnival took place with a major show mixing water based, land and airborne displays. The celebrations will go on until 17th February. Although masks, three-cornered hats and costumes are a must many events also contribute to the majesty of the Carnival: "La Traviata" by Verdi, "L'elisir d'amore" and the opéra bouffe "Don Pasquale" by Donizetti - all three directed by Omer Meir Wellber - will be on the "Fenice" Theatre's agenda, which will also be organising a grand masked party on 14th February. The docks of the Arsenal will be hosting a series of modern light and sound shows and the most beautiful masked costume will be chosen at the Grand Theatre at Saint Mark's Square on 7th February... [Read more](#)

The exhibition at the Shoah Memorial 'Filming war: the Soviet troops and the Shoah (1941-1946)



On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the death camps, the Shoah Memorial is running an exhibition until 27th September 2015 "Filming War: the Soviet troops and the Shoah (1941-1946)". This exhibition mainly shows unique images on the opening of graves, evidence of mass execution in eastern Europe (Babi Yar, Rostov, Krasnodar, Kerch etc...) on the liberation of the concentration and death camps (Klooga; Maidanek, Auschwitz ...) as well as the multiple trials and executions that followed the liberation... [Read more](#)

Exhibition "Rubens and his Legacy"



From 24th January to 10th April 2015 the Royal Academy of Arts in London is hosting an exhibition called "Rubens and his Legacy - Van Dyck to Cézanne". This exhibition brings together the Flemish Baroque artist's creations as well as major works by illustrious artists who were influenced by him in the following generations (Picasso, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Delacroix, Constable and Gainsborough). Rubens' art embraces a wide range of subjects, from religious and mythological scenes to landscapes and portraits. Each of these areas is seen via six themes : power, luxury, compassion, elegance, poetry and violence... [Read more](#)

65th Berlinale, the Berlin Film Festival



On Thursday 5th February the 65th Berlinale, the international film festival of Berlin will be taking place. This festival, created by the Allies in 1951 aimed to be "showcase of the free world". It is now one of the biggest international festivals alongside the Cannes and Venice Festivals. This year its Chair Dieter Kosslick wants to pay tribute to free thought and to women. He insisted in his inaugural speech on the fact that artists in the Berlinale took courageous stances on issues like religion, immigration and homophobia. Dieter Kossalick hopes that the programme will be proof of free thinking. For 10 days the panel (comprising, amongst others Audrey Tautou, Darren Aronofsky and Daniel Brühl) will have to decide between 19 films for the Golden Bear award and the various Silver Bears... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



2nd-5th February

Brussels

Week of parliamentary committees at the European Parliament



2nd-6th February

Brussels

8th round of EU/USA negotiations on the free-trade agreement (TTIP)



6th February

Riga

Energy Union Conference (meeting of European Energy Ministers)



7th February

Start of Presidential election in Greece



9th February

Brussels

Foreign Affairs Council



9th-12th February

Strasbourg

European Parliament Plenary Session

The Letter is also available in:



I love the Robert Schuman Foundation's Letter

The Letter's Editorial Team :

Charles de Marcilly, Helen Levy ; Guillaume Anglars, Romain Denninger, Flora Dumont,
Marguerite Richelme, Noémie Rossi, Francesca Tortorella

Chief Editor: Charles de Marcilly
Publishing Director: Pascale Joannin

Contact/Suggestions
info@robert-schuman.eu

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

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