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Foundation :

Documentary on judicial and police cooperation in Europe



The documentary co-produced by the Robert Schuman Foundation with the support of the European Commission and directed by Olivier Ballande will be broadcast on 17th March on France2. The film focuses on judicial and police cooperation in Europe following the stages of the dismantling of a prostitution network across Europe which was offering escort girls, recruited in the countries of Eastern Europe, on-line. Five countries were involved (France, Hungary, Romania, Cyprus and the Czech Republic) and nearly three years were necessary for the completion of the documentary... [Read more](#)

Art and European Common Sense



As part of a conference organised in Florence on 19th and 20th March entitled "Why should we communicate the knowledge of art?" Thierry Chopin, the Foundation's Research Director will be speaking on "art and European common sense"... [Read more](#)

Conference: "Religion and Politics in a Free Society"



A conference on the theme "Religion and Politics in a Free Society" organised by the Robert Schuman Foundation, the Hans Seidel Foundation and the ForumBrussels International, will be taking place in Brussels on 19th March. Professor Thomas Schirrmacher, Chair of the International Council of the International Society for Human Rights and Khalid Hajji, Secretary General CEOM (Conseil Européen des Ouléma Marocains) will be speaking on the themes of "Fundamentalism - When religion becomes violence" and "Religious Puritanism and Violence in Post-Modern Migration Context", the speeches will be followed by a debate... [Read more](#)

Conference: growth and regulation



The Council of Notariats of the European Union is organising a conference on the theme of "growth and regulation" on 24th March together with the Robert Schuman Foundation. Discussions will focus on two panels "Does regulation help growth?" and "How should we regulate effectively?" The conference will take place at the Representation of the Land of Baden-Württemberg in Brussels and several personalities will be taking part like Johannes Jung, head of the Representation of the Land of Baden-Württemberg to the EU, Jean Tarrade, Chair of the CNEU and Jean-Paul Gauzès, former MEP and member of the Robert Schuman Foundation's Board... [Read more](#)

Financial Crisis :

Visit by Greek Prime Minister at the OECD



Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras met OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría on 12th March in Paris. Mr Tsipras reviewed his country's government debt, defining it as "unsustainable". At the same time Mr Tsipras maintained that he wanted to continue reform in order to make Greece a "normal country", within the framework of the European Union and the euro zone. They signed a joint document for closer cooperation between Greece and the international organisation... [Read more](#)

European Council :

Donald Tusk meets Barack Obama in Washington



The President of the European Council, Donald Tusk met US President Barack Obama in Washington on 9th March. The Ukrainian crisis was the focus of their interview. Barack Obama stressed the work achieved by Angela Merkel and François Hollande as part of the Minsk Agreements which may still not lead to real de-escalation unless "scrupulous monitoring is implemented." Mr Tusk recalled that the links between Europe and the USA were vital to the management of the conflicts that they should face together whether this is the war in Ukraine and the fight to counter terrorism... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

713 million euro for 372 new research grants



On 12th March the European Commission announced the introduction of 372 new subsidies for research projects totalling 713 million euro. These grants might total 2.75 million euro for projects requiring more funds and will be granted to the best scientific projects in Europe originating in 38 different countries in order to consolidate research teams and to take research forward in areas such as autism, dyslexia and even weightlessness in space. The funds will come from the R&D programme Horizon 2020. Carlos Moedas, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation stressed the mutual benefits that researchers and the EU will enjoy as a result of these investments: "With a project of this size we are turning Europe into the biggest laboratory in the world. Our best researchers will benefit from EU funding and in turn Europe will benefit from this new knowledge every day..." [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Bank card payments: parliament ends opaque fees



The fees demanded by banks of retailers to undertake client payments will be capped in line with European rules following a vote on 10th March - 621 votes in support, 26 against and 29 abstentions. The cap will apply to cross-border and national payments and should lead to a reduction in costs for users... [Read more](#)

Murder of Boris Nemtsov - MEPs call for an international, independent inquiry



The murder of Russian politician Boris Nemtsov should be the focus of an international, independent inquiry maintain MEPs in a resolution adopted on 12th March. This "was the most significant political assassination in Russia's most recent history," they added warning that the Kremlin's propaganda is leading Russia towards "a State marked by repression, the discourse of hate and fear..." [Read more](#)

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MEPs encourage the Member States to work towards gender equality



On 10th March the European Parliament approved a non-legislative resolution - 441 votes in support, 205 against - whereby policies have to be changed in order to achieve gender equality. A great deal of progress still remains to be achieved notably in the field of the wage gap, "glass-ceilings" on women's careers, the lack of economic independence and the protection of the right and access to abortion. The resolution assesses the situation in 2013 and highlights the key political challenges regarding women's rights. MEPs are encouraging the Member States to implement the directive on the establishment of the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the workplace, to promote educational policies that encourage women to undertake careers in ITCs and science as well as the sharing of family responsibilities and paid parental leave... [Read more](#)

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[The European Parliament refers to the Anti-Fraud office against the Front National](#)



On 9th March the European Parliament turned to the Anti-Fraud Office - (OLAF) - regarding possible financial irregularities undertaken by the French far-right party, Front National. It is suspected that the latter has been paying salaries from the European budget to assistants who work for the party in France and not for MEPs at the European Parliament. In late February, the European Parliament noted that the French National Front party's organisation chart listed 20 assistants to EP members, although assistants paid by the European Parliament must perform work directly linked to the exercise of a Member's parliamentary mandate. The Parliament's administrative body doubts that they really work for MEPs in view of their address for example, since these are registered at the party's HQ in Nanterre or according to information on the FN's website... [Read more](#)

[Assessment of the political and economic situation in the Balkans](#)



MEPs adopted four resolutions on 11th March assessing the progress in terms of reform made by Serbia, Montenegro, FYROM and Kosovo in 2014. Overall they point to continuing problems regarding the rule of law, corruption, discrimination and the implementation of structural reform. Regarding Serbia they said they were pleased with the Serb government's commitment to European integration but stressed that the process is still lacking in transparency and that work had to continue to align its foreign and security policies with that of the EU, notably regarding Russia. As a priority Kosovo has to strengthen the rule of law, the independence of the judicial system and must fight to counter corruption. Montenegro takes the lead in the region since it is the only country in the Balkans to have provisionally closed some EU negotiation chapters. MEPs said they were happy with Montenegro's total alignment with the EU's common security and defence policy but maintain that progress still has to be made to counter corruption, ensure the independence of the judicial system and to guarantee the freedom of expression and that of the media. Finally regarding FYROM MEPs have - for the ninth time - asked the Council to set a date as quickly as possible to launched negotiations with Skopje at the risk of undermining the credibility of the EU's enlargement policy... [Read more](#)

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[The European Parliament votes on road vehicles](#)



On 10th March the European Parliament finally adopted the heavy-goods vehicle directive put forward by the Commission in April 2013. By placing the emphasis road safety and the respect of the environment the directive obliges HGVs to respect a maximum weight and size and bans mega-trucks. Lorries will also have to respect conditions governing their shape, they will have to be aerodynamic in order to reduce the risk of accidents and they will have to be less pollutant. This directive was the focus of long negotiations within the Council of Ministers, since the latter did not manage to find agreement on the effective date of implementation of these rules. An agreement was found for 2022 and the directive now has to be approved by the Transport Ministers' Council in June... [Read more](#)

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[Council :](#)

[Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council](#)



Foreign Affairs Ministers met on 16th March and decided to extend the EU's training mission in Somalia until 31st December 2016. Regarding the situation in Burundi they reiterated their commitment to the country's democratisation process. The Council also launched an EU consultative mission in Central African Republic in support of the reform of the Central African Armed Forces (FACA). An annexed plan for the Gulf of Guinea was adopted for the period 2015-2020, with the aim of rising to the region's security challenges.

Foreign Affairs Ministers finally adopted the EU's regional strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as for the threat posed by ISIL/Daesh. This strategy aims notably to devote one billion euro in support of the forces fighting against Daesh, the prevention of regional contagion and the strengthening the borders, the provision of vital humanitarian aid and international protection to the region... [Read more](#)

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Conclusions of the Justice and Home Affairs Council



The 28 European Justice and Home Affairs Ministers met on 12th and 13th March. Regarding the issue of regulating migratory flows they highlighted the progress achieved in implementing the work of the task force in the Mediterranean. They agreed to step up the monitoring of maritime and land borders by increasing resources and also the functional capabilities of Frontex so that it can both counter criminal trafficking networks effectively and cooperate better with third countries. Ministers also looked into the priority measures to introduce to counter terrorism: strengthening the implementation of the Schengen framework, counter radicalisation on the internet, counter the illegal trafficking of arms and stepping up international cooperation... [Read more](#)

Conclusions of the Transport Council



Transport Ministers who met in Brussels on 13th March assessed the proposals to liberalise passenger services and to strengthen the governance of railway infrastructures. The aim is to move towards greater competitiveness in the European rail sector. The Latvian presidency also addressed the third Asia-Europe Dialogue (ASEM, Asia-Europe Meeting) devoted to transport that will take place in Riga on 29th and 30th April, which will focus on the development of transport between Europe and Asia... [Read more](#)

Economic and Financial Affairs Council Conclusions



The EU's Economy and Finance Ministers met on 10th March in Brussels and granted France two more years to bring its government deficit below the 3% mark of the GDP. Indeed, although this is the third time that the Council has given the country extra time to readjust its deficit, ministers highlighted the progress that France has already made. They took position in view of the negotiations ongoing with the European Parliament regarding the European Strategic Funds for Investment... [Read more](#)

Conclusions of the Employment, Social Policy, Healthcare and Consumer Council



During the Employment, Social Policy, Healthcare and Consumer Council on 9th March ministers looked into the aspects of employment and social policy in the European Semester Programme 2015. Ministers approved the measures regarding the social protection financial systems, saying that the existing systems of social protection should be reformed to guarantee their sustainability. They also came to conclusions regarding the introduction of a more inclusive European labour market. Ministers finally adopted a strategic healthcare and work safety framework for 2014-2020, notably comprising the improvement of safety at work and a response to the challenges set by the ageing of the workforce... [Read more](#)

Publication of the negotiation mandate of the agreement on services trade



On 10th March the Council published the guidelines for the negotiations on the internet services trade agreement (TISA). On 29th January last Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Trade addressed a letter to Edgar Rinkevičs, the Latvian Foreign Minister whose country is ensuring the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU to allow the publication of the negotiation mandate that has been given to the Commission under the Services Trade Agreement. This agreement aims to liberalise the trade of services and it involves 23 WTO members, including the EU which represents 70% of the world's trade in services... [Read more](#)

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Court of Justice :

The Court confirms the Commission's decision to prohibit the merger between Deutsche Börse and NYSE Euronext

On 9th March the EU's Court of Justice rejected the appeal made by the operator of the exchange in Frankfurt, Deutsche Börse, against the



European Commission's decision to prohibit its merger with NYSE Euronext. The Commission, which is the guardian of competition in Europe, vetoed the project to merge Deutsche Börse with the transatlantic operator in February 2012. The latter manages the New York, Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, and also the Lisbon markets. The Commission deemed that this merger would have led to an almost total monopoly of the international market of European derivative financial products. In its judgment the court "deems that none of the arguments put forward by Deutsche Börse can call into question the Commission's conclusions over the definition of the "relevant market" and that the latter did not make errors of law or assessment in considering that exchange-traded derivatives (ETDs) and over-the-counter derivatives (OTC derivatives) belonged to separate markets... [Read more](#)

Germany :

WTO, IMF, ILO and OECD leaders meet in Berlin



A high level meeting took place in Berlin in 11th March between the main European and international economic organisations together with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría, WTO Director General Roberto Azevedo, ILO Director General Guy Ryder, the IMF General Manager Christine Lagarde and the President of the World Bank group Jim Yong Kim were notably present to discuss international economic issues. The goals common to all of the leaders of these major international economic organisations are geopolitical risk management which is threatening economic growth, the fight to counter the Ebola virus, the death rate of which rose over the 10,000 mark on 10th March, labour rights and gender equality that are closely linked to the economic growth process and the fight to counter youth unemployment. The leaders also stressed that the work to be done is significant and that an ambitious reform programme should be introduced... [Read more](#)

German Economic Outlook 2015



German Chancellor Angela Merkel attended the Annual Conference on the outlook for the German economy in 2015. The Chancellor announced that German growth in 2015 is planned to reach 1.5% beyond the European average. She declared that the "overall economic situation is satisfactory." The German and European economic outlooks are better in 2015 than they were in 2014 said the Chancellor, notably thanks to a decrease in oil prices and the Union's monetary policy. The conference also provided an opportunity to present the German government's economic policy for 2015. A tax reform is being planned together with the business environment. Ms Merkel also stressed the need to develop "the digital 4.0 economy" in Germany. Finally she repeated that she supported negotiations for the TTIP and that this was a vital factor in countering growth problems in Europe. She tried to reassure the treaty's opponents saying that norms in terms of consumer protection and the environment would not be neglected..." [Read more](#)

Spain :

Visit by NATO Secretary General to Spain



On 12th March NATO's Secretary General Mr Jens Stoltenberg travelled to Madrid to discuss the Alliance's response to further challenges to security. Mr Stoltenberg thanked Spain amongst other things for the work it is doing for the Alliance, quoting more particularly its participation in the police mission in the skies over the Baltic countries, the deployment of its battery of Patriot missiles in Turkey and the hosting of anti-missile defence ships in the naval base of Rota. After a meeting with Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, Mr Stoltenberg was guest to His Majesty King Felipe VI. Speaking alongside Foreign Minister Mr José Manuel García-Margallo during a press conference, Mr Stoltenberg qualified Spain as a "staunch Ally" which "is doing a great deal for our common security." The Secretary General also declared that "NATO is adapting to the challenges that it faces. We are bringing our response force up from 13,000 to 30,000 men - ie double the number." He added that the Alliance was also working on the introduction of new rapid response force of 5000 men called "Spearhead Force". He indicated that in 2016 Spain will be the first ally to lead this force. He qualified the leading role played by Spain as "a strong message of Allied solidarity" which proves that "Europeans are assuming responsibility for their own security..." [Read more](#)

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France :

Maneul Valls on an official visit to Poland



French Prime Minister Manuel Valls met Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski on 12th March to discuss European security issues. The meeting focused mainly the Ukrainian crisis, Russian policy vis-à-vis Ukraine and the growing terrorist threat in Europe. Both countries agreed on the need to work together to step up cooperation in the area of security and defence within the EU and to strengthen NATO... [Read more](#)

Greece :

Investiture of Greek President Prokopis Pavlopoulos



Prokopis Pavlopoulos, the new President of the Republic of Greece promised on 13th March to counter poverty and unemployment for Greece and also for "Europe itself". "We must all help to counter the scourges of poverty and unemployment," declared Mr Pavlopoulos, a professor of Public Law just after his investiture... [Read more](#)

Ireland :

Growth of 4.8% in Ireland in 2014



Ireland recorded growth of 4.8% in 2014 the most vigorous rate in the all of the EU. The former Celtic Tiger has experienced a surge in growth since its exit of the international assistance plan that saved it from bankruptcy five years ago, announced the Irish Statistics Institute on 12th March. In 2015 Ireland might experience the fastest economic growth rate in the EU - with the EU forecasting a GDP increase of 3.5% and Dublin 3.9%... [Read more](#)

Italy :

Constitutional Reform approved in Italy on first reading



The Italian Chamber of Deputies approved the draft constitutional bill 357 votes in support, 125 against and 7 abstentions on 10th March; the latter aims to foster greater government stability by notably reducing the Senate's powers and ending "perfect bi-cameralism". The reform also aims to reduce the number of MPs, the abolition of the National Council for the Economy and Labour (NCEL) and the revision of title V and part II of the Constitution. The text must now go back to the Senate... [Read more](#)

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Romania :

Visit by the Romanian President to Warsaw



Romanian President Klaus Yohannis was on an official visit to Poland on 12th and 13th March. He met his Polish counterpart Bronislaw Komorowski to discuss cooperation between the two countries, as well as the situation in the region. In a joint press conference both heads of State said they wanted to establish closer links between their two countries. In light of the Ukrainian crisis and renewed aggression on the part of Russia against Europe the theme of security was central to the visit. The Polish President declared "I think that this partnership is an absolute necessity given the situation in our part of Europe which has witnessed a deep, negative change in terms of security." The joint declaration signed by both sides should provide a satisfactory framework for the establishment of closer links and cooperation in various sectors notably defence said the Polish President... [Read more](#)

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UK :

Former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown warns against the Brexit



In an interview with The Guardian, former Prime Minister Gordon Brown warned against the consequences of the Brexit which would put the UK in the same position as North Korea in its relations with its European neighbours. In his opinion the country would "be without friends and influence, with little trade and even fewer new investments." From the geopolitical point of view this situation would divide the EU, strengthen Russia and divert the USA from the UK in terms of trade. A declaration of this nature just two months before the general elections on 7th May comes in response to Mr Cameron's promise to organise a referendum on Britain's exit from the EU if the Conservatives win in the general election... [Read more](#)

Sweden :

Nordic Defence Ministers sign a new Cooperation Agreement



The Defence Ministers of Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway signed an updated version of the "Cooperation in the Defence Material Area" agreement. This new agreement is adapted to the European defence directives (directive on public defence procurement and the directive on the transfer of military equipment). It also enables cooperation in more areas involving defence and contracts linked to the defence industry. The Swedish Defence Minister and the President of NORDEF (Nordic Defence Cooperation) said he was "satisfied" with this new agreement which is a "major step" towards more cooperation... [Read more](#)

Iceland :

Iceland announces its withdrawal as an EU candidate



On 12th March Iceland announced that it was withdrawing as an EU candidate two years after a eurosceptic government took office which promised to put an end to the process launched in 2009. Foreign Minister Gunnar Bragi Sveinsson, declared in a dispatch that he had notified Latvia of this decision - since the latter is ensuring the presidency of the Council of the European Union at present and that he had informed the European Commission. "Iceland's interests are better served outside of the EU, " said the Minister. The main problem concerns fishing quotas, the mainstay of the Icelandic economy. Many demonstrated against this decision... [Read more](#)

Russia :

Putin reveals his plan to annex Crimea



During an interview for a documentary on the Russian state channel Rossiya1 Vladimir Putin maintained that he prepared the Russian armed intervention in the east of Ukraine to "save" former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich. The head of State also says that he asked his secret services and armed forces to prepare for the "return of Crimea to Russia." These declarations were made in the night of 22nd to 23rd February 2014 several weeks before the declaration of independence by the parliament of Crimea (11th March) and the organisation of a "referendum" on annexation by Russia (16th March)... [Read more](#)

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Ukraine :

The IMF approves the 15.5 billion € loan to Ukraine



Christine Lagarde, the IMF's General Manager announced on 11th March that the IMF's Executive Board had accepted the loan of SDR12.348 billion loan (ie 17.5 billion \$ or 15.5 billion €) to Ukraine. This new agreement, which has been extended by four years, will help stabilise the Ukrainian economy and support the implementation of a vast range of in-depth reforms that aim to revive vigorous economic growth mid-term and improve the living conditions of the Ukrainian population. Ms Lagarde noted that "the Ukrainian authorities continue to show they are serious about undertaking reform.".. [Read more](#)

Visit by the Ukrainian President to Germany



Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko travelled to Germany on a two-day visit starting 15th March. He met Chancellor Angela Merkel and other German leaders. He took advantage of this trip to visit the Ukrainian community of Dresden and notably injured Ukrainian soldiers. On 15th March Mr Poroshenko granted an interview to the daily newspaper "Bild" in which he maintained that the Minsk peace agreements "were not working" in the separatist east of the country where one Ukrainian soldier was killed on 15th March and where daily infringements of the ceasefire have been recorded. "Every day there a shots fired by the Russian side, often more than 60 a day - in all the ceasefire has been broken 1,100 times." "The truth is that the agreement is not working - Minsk means hope for us but not reality," the president added. This visit came as the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea is about to celebrate the first anniversary of its integration into Russia... [Read more](#)

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Council of Europe :

Report by Human Rights Commissioner on Armenia



Human Rights Commissioner Nils Muiznieks published a report on Armenia following his visit there in October 2014 in which he notes a situation of persistent impunity in terms of the violation of human rights and the lack of any real investigation into these infringements.

He mainly criticises the distinct lack of equality between men and women, the violence perpetrated against women and the lack of independence of the legal system. In the light of this he is encouraging the adoption of measures to counter discrimination and to increase women's participation in public and political life as well as gender equality on the labour market. Finally he recommends greater involvement by the legal system in terms of violence against women, the introduction of adequate sanctions and a more protective legislation for the victims. Reform is now ongoing for the emergence of an independent, fair and effective judicial system in Armenia which will promote the full defence of human rights... [Read more](#)

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UN :

The HCR exhorts Europe to act in the Mediterranean



On 12th March the UN's High Commission for Refugees sent a set of real proposals to the EU to manage the problems set by migratory flows in the Mediterranean. In 2015 around 470 people have died already as they have tried to flee to Europe (in comparison with 15 at the same time in 2014). In his letter to the EU Antonio Guterres, the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees notably proposed the introduction of a European operation similar to the Italian Mare Nostrum that ended in 2014 but which was then replaced by the European mission Triton. The HCR has exhorted the EU to ensure support to refugees once they arrive in Europe whilst avoiding a situation where just some countries have to take on the responsibility alone... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

The share of renewable energies up to 15% in 2013



According to Eurostat the share of renewable energies in the EU's energy consumption increased to 15% in 2013. The share of renewable energies has reached 15% in the EU whilst it was only 8.3% in 2004.

The goal for the EU to reach by 2020 is 20%, and each State has its own goal (this takes on board both differences in their starting points and the potential clean energies available in the various States). Sweden is still the leader in this area with 52.1% of its energy consumption coming from renewable sources, followed by Latvia (37.1%), Finland (36.8%) and Austria (32.6%). Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands and the UK are far from reaching their 2020 goals with a share of renewable energy consumption lying between 3.6% and 5.1%. Three European States have already reached their 2020 goals: Sweden, Bulgaria and Estonia... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

The OHIM condemns the counterfeiting of cosmetics



The Office for the Harmonisation of the Internal Market -OHIM - the European agency for intellectual property published a new report on 10th March in which it condemns the damaging effects of counterfeiting for employment on the cosmetics market. Across the EU counterfeiting leads to losses on the part of manufacturers, suppliers and distributors totalling 80,000 jobs. It also implies a loss of 1.7 billion euro in public revenues equal to income tax and VAT that is not paid to the State. Spain and Italy are the most affected countries in terms of cosmetics counterfeiting. This document is one of a series of reports to come that will aim to show the negative impact of counterfeiting in all areas of the European economy...

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Publications :

"Guides des Aides de l'Union européenne



Thierry Cornillet, a lawyer at the bar, former MEP has published together with Christophe Pons the 2015 version of "Guide des aides de l'Union européenne" (Guide to European Union Funding" with Les Grilles d'Or. This guide, first published in 2006 and updated yearly, responds to two questions. Its first goal is to help determine whether one can benefit from European funding and to pick one's way through the various programmes, projects, funds and instruments. Its second purpose is to show that the EU is close to the concerns of its citizens. Every year it redistributes 95% of its budget to project designers... [Read more](#)

"Géopolitique de l'Europe"



Gérard-François Dumont, professor at Paris-Sorbonne and Pierre Verluise, Director of Diploweb.com have co-authored a book on European geopolitics. "Géopolitique de l'Europe : de l'Atlantique à l'Oural" (Geopolitics of Europe: from the Atlantic to the Urals) was published on 11th March by the University Press of France. The book aims to analyse the geopolitical issues at stake for the EU by studying its geography, history and its institutional structures. The crisis surrounding Europe also led the authors to look into the "other Europes", from the candidate countries to Russia. The study also includes a prospective investigation into the future of Europe's geopolitical situation... [Read more](#)

"European Economic Policies"



"European Economic Policies" by Michel Dévoluy and Gilbert Koenig has been re-edited. This reference book, accessible to the general public covers all areas of European economic policy (budget, currency, employment etc.) Each policy is analysed by various economists who took part in their design, results and perspectives. This second, fuller version helps readers take on board the institutional upheaval that occurred after the failure of the European Constitution in 2005, the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty (2007) and the start of the financial crisis in 2008... [Read more](#)

Italy - the steep path to reform



The "Institut de l'Entreprise" has published "Italie: le chemin escarpé des réformes." Author Charles Trottmann describes the state of the euro zone's third most important economy before and after the crisis as well as the work undertaken by the government to balance the budget and restore the country's competitiveness. "Europe's sick man" Italy had already been weakened as it entered the financial crisis which affected it in two ways mainly: a sharp fall in industrial production in 2009 and the sovereign debt crisis in 2011. In the book's preface Michel Pébereau, the Honorary Chairman of BNP Paribas, stresses that everything shows that "the country can change". Undoubtedly this is the closest case-study to France and the Italian experience is full of lessons to be learned... [Read more](#)

Culture :

The Winged Victory of Samothrace



After a year of renovation work the Louvre will be exhibiting the Winged Victory of Samothrace - a masterpiece of Greek sculpture from 5th March to 15th June 2015. Dated at the start of the 2nd century BC the sculpture is an offering made in the Sanctuary of the Great Gods on the island of Samothrace following a naval battle. The restoration of the statue between 2013 and 2014 has helped improve the sculpture's assembly and has enabled the cleaning of the various types of marble that make it up. The museum also wanted to bring life back to one of the most successful exhibits at the Louvre by restoring the stairs, wall and vaults that serve as a framework to the sculpture... [Read more](#)

Modigliani and the Bohemian of Paris



The Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art of Turin is running the exhibition "Modigliani and the Bohemian of Paris" until 19th July. The exhibition illustrates the unique cultural atmosphere created by the "Paris School" around the central figure of Amedeo Modigliani. 90 of Modigliani's masterpieces and other major artists such as Brancusi, Soutine, Utrillo, Chagall, Survage and Picasso illustrate this artistic experience. The work is on loan from major public and private European collections - particularly those of the National Museum for Modern Art - the Pompidou Centre in Paris together with whom the exhibition has been put together... [Read more](#)

Leonora Carrington



The Tate Museum Liverpool is running an exhibition from 6th March to 31st May 2015 showing the key moments in the life of British artist Leonora Carrington. Born to a wealthy industrialist in 1917 Leonora Carrington was one of the major figures in the Surrealist movement

alongside Salvador Dali and Max Ernst. The exhibition reveals the excentric, fantastic characters in her work as well as her personal life. From her rejection of her upper-class education in 1935 to her Mexican period - her relationship with Max Ernst in the Surrealist circles of Paris and New York, her life is as fascinating as her taste for innovation and the fantastic and also art. This exhibition coincides with 2015 Year of Mexico in the UK... [Read more](#)

Seven European Newspapers launch an alliance



Seven European newspapers officially launched an alliance named LENA (Leading European Newspaper Alliance) on 10th March in Brussels. El Pais in Spain, Die Welt in Germany, La Repubblica in Italy, Le Soir in Belgium, Le Figaro in France and the Tages-Anzeiger and the Tribune de Genève in Switzerland will have a system to exchange articles and will be able to launch European investigations together, working on projects linked to ITs, such as mobile apps, etc. Amongst LENA's goals is to shape and consolidate a European public opinion... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



16th March
Brussels
Foreign Affairs Council
Brussels
Agriculture and Fisheries Council



16th-19th March
Brussels
European Parliament, Committees Week



17th March
Brussels
General Affairs Council



19th and 20th March
Brussels
European Council

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