



"What is the European Central Bank's logic?"

Author: Jean-Paul Betbèze



The European Central Bank (ECB) "controls" the euro and the euro "controls" the euro zone. This means "controlling" the zone to bring it out of the financial crisis which is in reality a slow, difficult mutation. To win this role the ECB has had to take on a series of problems and legacies, which are much more complex than those faced by the American Federal Reserve (Fed) for example, in a situation that has also been much more difficult. There it does have some merit. This paper by Jean-Paul Betbèze offers an analysis of the ECB's logic in the settlement of the financial crisis.

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Front page! :

The challenge of illegal immigration in the Mediterranean



Last week the Foundation published a study by its Chairman on the challenge of illegal immigration in the Mediterranean. The news this week sadly reminds us of the urgency of the migratory issue which is challenging the Member States' domestic policy. Protest movements have seized the issue to challenge government action and the European institutions. Simplistic ideas are flourishing, criticising the Schengen Agreements and the inefficacy of national and European policies. Reality is however very much different: Europe is facing a significant challenge that it will only overcome with time. It demands constant effort, courage and imagination and quite certainly the rejection of simplistic sound bites... [Read more](#)

Elections :

The Centre Party wins the elections in Finland



The Centre Party (KESK) led by Juha Sipilä came out ahead in the general elections held in Finland on 19th April winning 21.1% of the vote and 49 of the 200 seats in the Eduskunta/Riksdag. The True Finns (PS) a populist party led by Timo Soini took second place with 38 seats

and 17.6% of the vote. They were followed by the Conservative Assembly (KOK) led by outgoing Prime Minister Alexander Stubb, who won 18.2% and 37 seats. The Social Democratic Party (SPD) took 4th place with 16.5% and 34 seats. The Greens (VIHR) won 8.5% and 15 seats, the Left Alliance (VAS), 7.1% and 12 seats, the Swedish People's Party (SFP), 4.9%, 9 seats and the Christian Democratic Party (SKL) 3.5% and 5 seats. Turnout was high at 70.1% ie 2.7 points more than in the 2011 election... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

The State of the Union, Schuman Report on Europe



The 6th Schuman Report on the State of the Union has just been published and presented in Brussels. It offers readers a better understanding of future stakes: strengthening of the euro zone, growth and employment, investments, Energy Union, immigration, terrorism, European defence and security challenges in the East and South, transatlantic issues etc... The most eminent personalities including Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission as well as the best experts have chosen to contribute articles to this edition: Angelino Alfano, Joachim Bitterlich, Michel Derdevet, Nicole Gnesotto, Mathilde Lemoine, Anand Menon, Jean-Claude Piris, Robin Niblett, Daniela Schwarzler etc... The Schuman Report 2015 on the State of the Union is available from book shops and from the Foundation's site in paper and digital versions... [Read more](#)

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International Conference "Dialogue and Identity"



Jean-Dominique Giuliani, Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation will be taking part in an international conference on 24th April "Dialogue and Identity" in Budapest, organised by the National Assembly of Hungary and the Ministry of Justice. He will be speaking on the theme "The realities of a European identity". Anne Levade, a member of the Foundation's Scientific Committee will be speaking on 23rd April on the theme "the role of values, traditions and constitutional principles in the creation of a constitutional identity".. [Read more](#)

Financial Crisis :

The IMF has published its World Economic Outlook



On 14th April 2015 the IMF published its spring economic forecasts for world growth just before its spring session from 17th-19th April. World economic growth is encouraging, since Europe and Japan are notably showing signs of recovery but the outlook for the USA is somewhat mitigated. The IMF is still forecasting 3.5% growth in 2015 for the whole world and 3.8% 2016, with the latter figure slightly improved in comparison with its initial forecasts in January. The IMF revised its euro zone growth figures upwards to 1.5% this year and 1.6% in 2016 thanks to the work undertaken by the ECB and the decrease in oil prices. However it still showed caution about recovery which is still weak... [Read more](#)

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G20 Finance Ministers Meeting



The G20 Finance Ministers met in Washington on 17th April 2015. During this meeting the 20 ministers insisted notably on the challenges facing the world economy caused by the volatility of exchange rates, low inflation rates, persistent internal and external imbalances as well as ongoing geopolitical crises. The Greek situation was not mentioned in the final press release but it was addressed during bilateral meetings. The next meeting of the G20 Finance Ministers will take place in Antalya in September... [Read more](#)

The spring report by the main economic research institutes



On 16th April Germany's main economic research institutes (IWH, Ifo, DIW, RWI) announced their growth forecast for Germany in 2015 - bringing it up to 2.1% instead of a previous 1.2%. In 2016, they are forecasting GDP growth of 1.8%. This change is explained by the depreciation of the euro, the fall in oil prices and the recovery of European consumption, particularly in Germany. The employment rate is positive for the German economy since the number of people in work is now to rise to a record 43 million. Exports, one of the pillars of the economy is healthy. The institutes also pointed to the risk of speculative bubbles forming on the shares markets due to the ECB's quantitative easing programme that was launched last month. These forecasts

are influencing the German government's own economic forecasts... [Read more](#)

Cyprus passes the bill on foreclosures



The Cypriot Parliament approved a bill on 18th April (33 votes out of 56 in support), on foreclosures demanded by the international creditors in exchange for the disbursement of a further tranche of aid of 86 million euro to the island. This legislation has been impeded since December by the MPs notably demanding better protection of private parties in the event of insolvency. After weeks of debate and hesitation the text on insolvency was finally adopted... [Read more](#)

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French Finance Minister presents the budgetary stability programme



On 15th April French Finance Minister Michel Sapin presented the budgetary stability programme 2015-2018. This programme sets out the main guidelines in the public finance strategy for the next three years as part of the European Semester. Indeed the European Commission is expecting France to act and prove that these reforms will lead the country back to a deficit below the 3% mark by 2017. To this end the government has promised to make 4 billion € savings in 2015 and to save a further 5 billion € in 2016. These measures will be implemented by the entire civil service and will be gauged according to the weight of the sector in public spending... [Read more](#)

Greece: transfer of funds to the State by public organisations



Following Greece's discussions with the Brussels Group and just before the informal Eurogroup meeting on 24th April Greece decided on 20th April to ask for the transfer of funds from public organisations and local authorities to the country's Central Bank in response to the financial difficulties experienced by the State. Indeed Greece's creditors have demanded reform so that the country can be granted the further tranche of 7.2 billion euro in aid. Athens hopes to bring together 3 billion euro in this desperate situation to cover its financial requirements over the next 15 days. These urgent needs are detailed in a government text: "1.1 billion d'euro in salaries, 850 million for the social security, 200 million euro in interest on loans and on 12th May, 746 million that it has to repay the IMF.".. [Read more](#)

Commission :

Google accused by the Commission of being in breach of EU anti-trust rules



On 15th April the European Commission launched action against the American company for abuse of dominant position in terms of internet search results, after seeking a means of reconciliation for many years. It also launched a separate inquiry to determine whether Google is not breaching the EU's anti-trust rules with its smartphone telephone system. The Commission notably criticises the company for systematically promoting its price comparison services in the results pages to the detriment of the services of other companies. This also includes the effects of its activities on innovation whereby the development of new search engines is being discouraged. Google now has two months to prepare its defence before a possible audition organised by the Commission. A final decision, which might then see sanctions being imposed on Google, will be delivered at the end of 2015 at the earliest... [Read more](#)

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Launch of a consultation on the challenges on sustainable food



On 13th April the European Commission launched an on-line consultation on the theme of food security in view of preparing the Universal Exhibition that will take place this year in Milan on the theme "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life". This consultation focuses notably on the way that science and innovation can help the European Union ensure safe, nutritious, sufficient and sustainable food globally. It will also enable the preparation of future debates over food safety and quality, how to reduce food loss and waste. Tibor Navracsics, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport recalled the major role that the EU had to play in the fight for sustainable, fair food access across the world... [Read more](#)

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The Commission approves the construction of 20 offshore windfarms in Germany

On 16th April the European Commission approved a German



government project to build 20 offshore windfarms. The Commission believes that this does not raise any competition issues and that it fosters renewable energies. 17 windfarms will be built in the North Sea and three in the Baltic. In all the windfarms will enable the production of 7 gigawatts of electricity as of 2019... [Read more](#)

The Commission releases 100 million euros for Tunisia



On 15th April the Commission approved macro-financial aid totalling 100 million € in loans to Tunisia. This sum is the first part of the macro-financial aid programme for Tunisia adopted in May 2014. More than 800 million € have been provided to Tunisia since 2011 in the shape of significant loans on the part of the European Investment Bank (EIB)... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Parliament: Commemoration of the Roma and Armenian Genocides



In a resolution adopted on the occasion of the centenary of the Armenian genocide that led to the death of 1.5 million people, MEPs who met in Brussels on 15th April, invited Armenia and Turkey to resume bilateral diplomatic relations, to open their borders and to facilitate their economic integration. MEPs also adopted a resolution that recognises 2nd August as the day when the Roma holocaust will be commemorated in order to quell hate discourse and discrimination against the Roma of whom 500,000 were exterminated in the Second World War... [Read more](#)

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Council :

10 proposals to prevent new migratory disasters



The European Union put forward 10 immediate proposals for action on 20th April in "response to the migratory crisis" in the Mediterranean, including the strengthening of surveillance operations and rescue at sea after a terrible series of shipwrecks in which many lives have been lost. "We must take direct, practical, significant action. If we do not act now the crisis will grow to dangerous proportions over the next few months," warned the European Commissioner responsible for the issue, Dimitris Avramopoulos, as he presented the action plan. This plan was fully supported by the Foreign and Home Ministers of the EU who met in Luxembourg. It is to be submitted to the heads of State and government on 23rd during an extraordinary European Council... [Read more](#)

Conclusions of the Agriculture/Fisheries Council



The 28 European Agriculture Ministers met on 20th April in Luxembourg. A multi-annual plan for the Baltic Sea was notably addressed to regulate the stocks of herring, cod and sprat so that these fish might be used sustainably. This new plan which takes on board environmental effects and the biological interactions between the fish stocks will be a test for the drafting of future multiannual plans. Ministers also adopted a position for the UN Forum on Forests that will take place in New York from 4th to 15th May. They would like to show their "commitment to forests and their sustainable management" under the post-2015 development goals agreement... [Read more](#)

Informal Energy and Environment Ministers Meeting in Riga



From 14th and 16th April 2015 the 28 European Energy and Environment Ministers together with the European Commissioner for Climate and Energy, Miguel Arias Cañete met in Riga. The EU is preparing emergency plans to guarantee energy security in all circumstances. They discussed the need to implement a European heating and cooling strategy. They also emphasised the importance of regional cooperation to enable the successful implementation of the Energy Union. They progressed on the goals laid out in the Strategy for Biodiversity in the EU. One of the central goals of this strategy will be to reiterate the close, positive link between biodiversity and economic development notably via the new tool introduced by the Natural Capital Funding Facility (NCF)... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Conclusion of the Foreign Affairs Council



The 20 European Foreign Ministers met in Luxembourg on 20th April and adopted conclusions on Libya, Yemen, consular protection and the neighbourhood policy. They approved an action plan for Sahel 2015-2020. They held an exceptional working session with their counterparts from Home Affairs to discuss the migratory issue in the Mediterranean. They set out 10 immediate proposals for action "in response to the migratory crisis in the Mediterranean. "We must take direct, practical, significant steps. If we do not act now the crisis will grow dangerously out of all proportion over the next few months," warned European Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos, who is responsible for the issue. This plan is to be submitted to the heads of State and government on 23rd April during an extraordinary European Council... [Read more](#)

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G7 Foreign Affairs Ministers' Meeting-Lübeck



The Foreign Ministers from the G7 countries met on 14th and 15th April in Lübeck, north Germany. They discussed some of the world's geopolitical issues. The French and German ministers notably informed their counterparts of the situation in Ukraine following their Normandy Format meeting on 13th April. The full implementation of the Minsk II Protocol is still a pre-condition for Russia returning to the G8. Regarding the Middle East ministers committed to putting forward political solutions to settle the conflicts in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen. The Iranian nuclear issue was also a major theme of discussion with ministers maintaining that they want to end the diplomatic crisis, likewise the trade embargo but that "Iran without nuclear arms" was still the main goal. Finally maritime security was the focus of discussion. The "Lübeck Declaration" is an common agenda for security and the prevention of conflicts... [Read more](#)

ECB :

ECB Council of Governors



The governors of the European Central Bank, who met on 15th April, decided to maintain the interest rates on refinancing operations at their historic level of 0.05%. Interest rates on marginal loans and deposits will also remain unchanged, at 0.30% and 0.20% respectively. Mario Draghi, President of the ECB confirmed the inflation goal of 2% or as near as, and he insisted on the fact that quantitative easing operations (of 60 billion € per month) were having the expected effects: reduction in financing costs for the financial markets and the private sector and an increased demand for credit on the part of households. He was also enthusiastic about the virtuous circle that these indicators represent, although slowness in implementing structural reform might impede recovery... [Read more](#)

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European Agencies :

Meeting devoted to the Southern European Neighbourhood Policy



On 13th April a ministerial meeting devoted to the Southern European Neighbourhood Policy took place in Barcelona under the guidance of Ms Federica Mogherini, the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Attending the meeting were Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, the 28 EU Member States, as well as eight partners from the southern shores of the Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, Tunisia). Ms Mogherini called for greater cooperation for security, the fight to counter terrorism and migratory challenges. Immigration will also be on the agenda of the next Foreign Affairs Council... [Read more](#)

Report on the EULEX mission in Kosovo



On 14th April French lawyer Jean-Paul Jacqué delivered a report on the EULEX mission in Kosovo to Federica Mogherini. EULEX aims to promote the rule of law in Kosovo, but fears of corruption were raised against the magistrates in charge of the mission at the end of 2014. The report states that EULEX - in operation for the last seven years - needs reform because very few concrete results have been produced to date. However Mr Jacqué tempers magistrate Maria Bamieh's accusations - the latter was at the origin of the affair - drawing up a rather mitigated image of her and her revelations... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Indian Prime Minister visits Germany



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Germany from 12th to 14th April. He met German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Economic and trade relations were the focus of discussion. Mr Modi explained that the economies of their two countries were complementary. Engineering and German experience in terms of sustainable development, as well as in industrial innovation offered opportunities for Indian initiatives in the digital economy. The two heads of government said they wanted to strengthen their "strategic partnership" by developing certain areas of cooperation such as industry, renewable energy and science. Moreover they discussed international issues such as the fight to counter terrorism and the situation in Afghanistan. The German Chancellor said she supported India in terms of the negotiation of a free-trade agreement between the EU and India... [Read more](#)

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Bulgaria :

Bulgarian Prime Minister on an official visit to France



Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov travelled to Paris on 14th April to meet French President François Hollande and Manuel Valls. He took advantage of this occasion to inaugurate the exhibition "The Saga of the Thracian Kings - Archaeological Discoveries in Bulgaria" at the Louvre. This exhibition brings together the works from 17 different Bulgarian museums... [Read more](#)

Spain :

King of Spain visits Brussels



On 15th April 2015 the King of Spain Felipe VI visited Brussels and the European Institutions ie the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council. Although he had already been to the European Parliament in Strasbourg in 1999 this trip was his first visit as King of Spain. Together with Spanish Foreign Affairs Minister José Manuel Garcia-Margallo His Royal Highness was hosted by the Presidents of Parliament Martin Schulz, of the Council, Donald Tusk and of the Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker. He took advantage of his presence in Brussels to speak with political groups in the European Parliament as well as with some Spanish MEPs... [Read more](#)

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Italy :

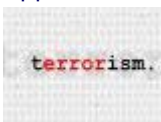
Italian Prime Minister visits the USA



Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi was on an official visit to the USA on 17th April. He met American President Barack Obama. The two main subjects of discussion were security issues, notably after the capsizing of a boat carrying 700 migrants in the Mediterranean and negotiations over the free-trade and investment treaty (TTIP). The two men also discussed the links between their two countries... [Read more](#)

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Approval of anti-terrorism measures in Italy



The Italian Senate voted in support of the Italian government, 161 votes in support, 108 against and 1 abstention on 15th April, thereby finally approving the draft anti-terrorism bill that already received the greenlight from the Chamber of Deputies on 31st March. The anti-terrorist measures will now enter into force... [Read more](#)

Poland :

Review of the Polish President's Mandate



The mandate of Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski elected in 2010 is now coming to an end. The next presidential election will take place on 10th May next and Mr Komorowski is running again. During an interview he reviewed the five years he has spent as head of the country. He recalled the importance of debate and cooperation in the political and legislative process: "dialogue is the basis on which a society's harmony is founded." With this vision of the democratisation and internationalisation of Poland he spoke of the 270 international meetings that have been organised in Poland during his mandate as well as the organisation of the next NATO summit in Warsaw in 2016... [Read more](#)

UK :

The Schengen Information System now operational in the UK



On 13th April 2015 the Schengen Information System (SIS) started operating in the UK. The SIS, which includes 25 EU Member States as well as four associate countries represents a key part of national authority cooperation in terms of implementing the law notably over the fight to counter terrorism and organised crime. The integration of the UK into this system, although effective since the Council of February 13th 2015, required significant effort on the part of all participating States as well as eu-LISA, the agency responsible for the operational management of SIS. Since the UK is not a Schengen Area member the SIS will only be used as part of police and judicial cooperation and not in terms of the external border policy... [Read more](#)

New TV debate in the UK electoral campaign



The second and last TV debate in the UK electoral campaign took place on 16th April on the BBC. Five political leaders took part including, Ed Miliband (Labour), Nicola Sturgeon (SNP), Natalie Bennett (Greens), Nigel Farage (UKIP) and Leanne Wood (Plaid Cymru). David Cameron and Nick Clegg refused however to participate. Discussions were heated between Ed Miliband and Nicola Sturgeon notably over the issue of a possible coalition between the SNP and Labour. In a Survation poll for the Daily Mirror, Ed Miliband was declared the winner by 35% of the viewers, followed by Nicola Sturgeon 31% and Nigel Farage 27%. In Scotland, where Labour has lost significant support, the survey gave a 68% vote to the SNP and 17% to Labour... [Read more](#)

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Ukraine :

Meeting of French, German, Ukrainian and Russia Foreign Ministers



The French, German, Ukrainian and Russian Foreign Ministers met in the "Normandy" format on 13th April. They called for greater involvement on the part of the OSCE in the implementation of the Minsk II Protocol. The cease-fire plans for the withdrawal of all heavy arms from the area of fighting and ministers said they hoped that the process would gather pace and that smaller arms would be included in the agreement. After several weeks of relative calm fighting with heavy arms has started again in the Donbas. Although conversations were "difficult at times" according to German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the ministers agreed to call for a de-escalation in the conflict. Mr. Steinmeier did however recall that the implementation of the cease-fire was not enough to take the situation forward and that elections had to be organised in the autonomous regions and that access to humanitarian aid be facilitated... [Read more](#)

Iceland :

Icelandic President visits France



On 17th April French President François Hollande hosted Icelandic President Olafur Grimsson. They said they hoped that France and Iceland might strengthen their university, scientific and economic partnerships, notably in the energy sector. Cooperation agreements on geothermal energy were also signed. Moreover the Icelandic President indicated that he would support France's efforts during the climate conference in December 2015 in view of an ambitious, universal and binding agreement. The meeting also led to discussions over the Arctic and notably the protection of the environment in this sensitive region. On the invitation of the Icelandic President Mr Hollande will travel to Iceland to inaugurate the International Arctic Circle Conference in October... [Read more](#)

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Switzerland :

French President on an official visit to Switzerland



On 15th and 16th April French President François Hollande was on an official trip to Switzerland. He met with Simonetta Sommaruga, the President of the Helvetic Confederation. This visit focused on three themes: investment, green growth and vocational training. The President travelled to Bern, Zurich and Lausanne where he visited schools and businesses meeting some representatives of the French community. Regarding tension over tax issues between the two countries the President of the Confederation said that "relations had cooled sometimes but "this visit marked the opening of a new phase, defined by conviviality and cordiality...".. [Read more](#)

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Council of Europe :

The Council of Europe favours a more decentralised Ukraine



Council of Europe Secretary of General Thorbjørn Jagland and Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister, Guennady Zubko signed a common declaration on 17th April designed to create a network of regional hubs in Ukraine and thereby implement constitutional and legislative reform. Experts will be appointed by the Council of Europe in each of these offices and they will be responsible for undertaking information campaigns to promote local elections. In view of the events at present in Ukraine the decentralisation of power is now a vital element in guaranteeing the country's stability long term... [Read more](#)

The Council of Europe denounces the insufficient progress made to counter human trafficking



The Council of Europe's Group of Experts of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) published a fourth report on 16th April in which it asks the 35 States in the GRETA network to step up work to protect children. The States must set out legal, adapted protection for these children, together with assistance, compensation as well as the prosecution and conviction of the perpetrators. Human trafficking was the focus of a Council of Europe convention drawn up in 2005 which has now been signed and ratified by 43 States... [Read more](#)

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WTO :

The WTO publishes annual statistics on international trade



On 14th April WTO Director General Roberto Azevedo presented "the WTO's statistics for world trade in 2015-2016". He lauded the progress made by the Bali Package that is now being implemented and which is encouraging greater involvement in trade policy in order to "foster growth" and to "create a trade-friendly global environment". He announced a slight increase in the volume of world merchandise trade of 2.8% in 2014, with this due to rise over the next few years to 3.3% in 2015 and 4% in 2016... [Read more](#)

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Eurostat :

Surplus of 20 billion euro in the goods trade balance



On 15th April Eurostat indicated that the international goods trade balance was again in surplus in February 2015 totalling 20.3 billion € in the euro zone - against only 3.4 billion for the European Union. Exports lay at 160.7 billion €, ie an increase of 4% in comparison with February 2014, whilst imports remained stable at 140.5 billion € in the euro zone. The trade surplus rose from 14.4 to 20.3 billion euro between February 2014 and February 2015. Intra-euro zone trade also rose slightly (+1%) in comparison with February 2014... [Read more](#)

Rise in annual inflation rates in the euro zone and the EU in March 2015



In March 2015 the annual inflation rate in the euro zone (-0.1%) rose by 0.2 points in comparison with February 2015 (-0.3%) according to Eurostat. The EU's annual inflation lay at -0.1% in March 2015 in comparison with -0.3% in February 2015, also a 2 point rise. Greece (-1.9%), Cyprus (-1.4%), Poland (-1.2%), Bulgaria (-1.1%) and Lithuania (-1.1%) had the lowest annual inflation rates. Conversely Austria (0.9%), Romania (0.8%) and Sweden (0.7%) recorded the highest annual inflation rates... [Read more](#)

"Being young in Europe today"



On 16th April 2015 Eurostat unveiled a new publication called "Being young in Europe today". This publication, comprising seven chapters covers themes of demography, family and society, health, education, access to and participation in the labour market, living conditions and the digital world; it offers a review of Eurostat's information devoted to children (0 to 14 years) as well as to young adults (15 to 19 year olds). This publication comes just a few days before the start of the European Youth Week 2015... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Single Market: deficit in transposition of European directives in Norway and Iceland



Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, members of the European Free-Trade Association (EFTA) are not implementing European rules fast enough said the report by the European Surveillance Authority. Over the last six months 23 European directives have not been implemented by Norway, which has one of the lowest EU directive transposition levels after Iceland. Iceland and Liechtenstein have a transposition deficit of 2.8% and 1.2% respectively. The overall average for EU Member States is 0.5%. In 2014 the ESA referred 14 cases to court for not implementing the directives of the single market... [Read more](#)

Publication of quarterly review on employment and the social situation in 2014



On 13th April the Commission published its quarterly review on employment and the social situation in 2014. The report notes significant progress notably in terms of growth in the Member States, the rise in household revenues and employment (2.7 million jobs recovered over the last two years). Unemployment is still high however in varying areas of Europe (26% in Greece and 23.2% in Spain, against 4.8% in Germany and 5.3% in Austria). 1 billion € will be disbursed by the Commission to counter youth unemployment. The Member States will also have to ensure that all young under 25's are offered a job, or a vocational training within the four months following the end of their time at school or if they lose their job... [Read more](#)

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Business leaders support the UK's membership of the EU



A recent study by the European Business Awards showed that 86% of business leaders supported the UK remaining in the EU against 11% who want it to leave. A large majority of them believe that the UK's exit of the EU would be negative from all points of view, notably regarding the British economy and the EU itself. The survey included interviews with 437 business leaders across 32 European countries (of which 124 were British), representing all areas of activity... [Read more](#)

Publications :

"Leap into the Unknown"



Peter Lang publishing has released a book by Victoria Martin de la Torre, "Europe, a Leap into the Unknown" in the series "Mémoires de l'Europe en devenir" with a preface by Javier Solana. The author relates the decade that witnessed the birth of the European Community (1948-1957). The reader learns everything there is to know about the "Fathers of Europe" - Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide de Gasperi and Paul-Henri Spaak. The book explores the origins of the European project via their discussions that are key to understanding the decisions that were taken at the time and which now influence the lives of 500 million Europeans... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Exhibition "The Saga of the Thracian Kings" at the Louvre



The Louvre is running an exhibition until 20th July 2015 on the saga of the Thracian kings with several major tomb furnishings on show. This exhibition also includes a journey through Ancient Thrace based on the various components of the Odrysian kingdom. Ancient Thrace is still mainly associated with the emblematic figure of Orpheus and various Thracian kings such as Rhesus and Tereus, who punctuated the Greek mythological world. This exhibition has been created with the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture and the French Institute of Bulgaria... [Read more](#)

500 years/Marignano



The Swiss National Museum in Zurich is celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Marignano until 28th June 2015 with a major exhibition on the bloody battle. The exhibition "1515 Marignano" looks into the causes and the aftermath of the wars of Italy presenting the events chronologically up to the battle on 13th and 14th September 1515, in which François 1er and his Venetian allies fought with Swiss mercenaries who were defending the dukedom of Milan. Objects, picture and

explanatory reports help understand the historical context... [Read more](#)

Art Fair Brussels

ART BRUSSELS The 33rd contemporary art fair "Art Brussels" is taking place from 25th to 27th April at the Brussels Expo site. Nearly 30,000 visitors, collectors and art amateurs are expected to meet gallery owners from the world over. 2000 artists, specialists in various disciplines (sculpture, painting, music, photography) will be presenting their work... [Read more](#)

Exhibition "Siena, a Catalyst for the Renaissance"



The Fine Arts Museum of Rouen is running an exhibition until 17th August focusing on a retrospective entitled "Siena, a Catalyst for the Renaissance." This exhibition offers a journey of discovery of art in Siena via works undertaken between the end of the 13th century and the end of the 15th century. This presentation which is both chronological and thematic leads to an understanding of the major artists of the time like Simone Martini and the Lorenzetti brothers who really revolutionized painting under the impetus of Duccio - in the ilk of their Florentine counterpart Giotto... [Read more](#)

Official Selection of the Cannes Festival 2015



From 13th to 24th May 2015 the 68th Cannes Festival will be taking place. The official selection, the juries and all of the events this year were unveiled on 16th April. The jury chairs will be Joel and Ethan Coen. This year which celebrates the 120 years of the invention of the Lumière Cinematograph the Cannes Festival will be paying tribute, via the Coen brothers, to the work of all "the brothers of cinema" who have enriched its history since the time of Louis and Auguste Lumière... [Read more](#)

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The Commission announces the 12 winners of the European Literature Prize



On 14th April, the Commission announced the 12 winners of the European literature prize 2015 at the London Book Fair. Amongst the prize winners there is a French woman Gaëlle Josse, nominated for her novel published in 2014 "Le dernier gardien d'Ellis island." The winners will receive their prize during a ceremony in Brussels on 23rd June - the prize winners will receive 5000 euros and will have their novel translated into several European languages. The European Literature Prize has already been given to 56 books in 20 different languages and there have been 203 translations financed by the European Union... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



20th April
Luxembourg
"Foreign Affairs" Council
Luxembourg
"Agriculture and Fisheries" Council



21st April
Luxembourg
"General Affairs" Council



23rd April
Brussels
European summit



24th April
Brussels
Eurogroup Meeting



27th April
Kyiv
EU-Ukraine Summit



27th-30th April
Strasbourg
Plenary Session European Parliament

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