

## COP21 and possible solutions: stakes and prospects

Author: Nicolas Hulot



Just three months before the UN Conference on Climate Change in Paris which will take place from 30th November to 11th December 2015 (COP21), Nicolas Hulot, the French Republic's Special Envoy for the Protection of the Planet, reviews the issues at stake and the perspectives offered by this international meeting.

[Read more](#)

### Contents

**Front page!** : Editorial **Migration** : Council - Parliament - Germany/Schengen - Spain - Visegrad - Commission **Commission** : State/Union - Programme/Work - Personal Data - Telecoms - Alstom/GE **Parliament** : 2016 Budget - Trade - Equality - Russia - Cloning - Fundamental Rights - Sakharov Prize **Council** : General Affairs - Eurogroup - Economy/Finance **Diplomacy** : Iran - Cuba **Germany** : Budget - Serbia **Belgium** : SME **Bulgaria** : Anti-corruption **Cyprus** : Visit/Tusk **France** : Hollande/Press - Climate - European School **Greece** : Polls **Ireland** : Resignation/Northern Ireland **Portugal** : Dairy **Ukraine** : Speech/Poroshenko - Russia/Ukraine **UN** : Ukraine **Eurostat** : GDP - Trade/Korea **Publication** : Bojanus/Vilnius **Culture** : Exhibition/Hamburg - Lyon/Biennale - Exhibition/Paris - Fair/Munich

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

### Front page! :

#### Europe and Migration: rising to the challenge



In an editorial on his site Jean-Dominique Giuliani explains that the present unprecedented wave of immigration quite clearly reveals major issues that the European Union has to face - including of course external border controls, the reception of asylum seeking refugees but which also calls on its diplomacy and defence policy... [Read more](#)

### Migration :

#### Conclusions of the Justice and Internal Affairs Council



Following the "Justice and Internal Affairs Council on 14th September the Presidency, with the support of a large majority of the delegations presented the following conclusions: the Commission and the Member States agreed to develop opportunities for refugee relocation as quickly as possible, to increase the EU's and Member States' budgetary support, notably a regional trust fund to help UNHCR meet refugee requirements in camps near their countries of origin. The Council also highlighted the need for effective border control to manage migratory flows and committed to stepping up ongoing action, notably EUNAVFOR, and to deploy Frontex rapid intervention teams immediately to the borders. Finally the Council agreed to release funds to help Greece improve its reception capacities, its asylum system, the management of its borders and to help the Western Balkan countries affected by the refugee crisis, as well as

increase cooperation with Turkey. Earlier in the afternoon the Council also gave its approval to relocate 40,000 refugees from Greece and Italy... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

### The European Parliament votes in support of relocating 40,000 asylum seekers



On 9th September MEPs, who met in plenary in Strasbourg, adopted the legislative resolution regarding the emergency relocation mechanism for an initial 40,000 asylum seekers, 498 votes in support, 158 votes against and 37 abstentions. Parliament is proposing that asylum seekers who are relocated from Italy (24,000) and Greece (16,000) will be able to establish a ranking in order of preference of the Member States in which they would like to be relocated. Their choices should then be motivated by criteria of family, social and cultural links (linguistic competence, stay, studies or prior work experience)... [Read more](#)

### Germany temporarily re-introduces border controls



Germany is suspending its open-door policy. In the present refugee crisis Germany has relinquished the rule to dispatch exiled migrants back to the country in which they first arrived in the EU in order to relieve migratory pressure that is weighing on the countries of Central Europe. The result was the entry of 63,000 people in just two weeks. In order to relieve migrant reception structures Germany has temporarily introduced controls on its border with Austria. At the same time the Austrian rail company has suspended traffic with Germany whilst the Czech Republic also announced the strengthening of its border with Austria... [Read more](#)

### Spain releases 13 million € in aid to the refugees



On 11th September the Spanish government approved the "decision in view of the international humanitarian crisis and the increase in the number of asylum seekers." This first subsidy totalling 13 million € in 2015 and 2016 is designed for the reception and integration of people demanding and benefiting from Spain's international protection. Its aim is to increase the network of places available in additional centres and to finance information, orientation, social intervention, psychological aid, legal assistance, translation and interpretation services as well as first reception on national soil and intervention on border posts as well as renovating reception centres in Ceuta and Melilla... [Read more](#)

### Joint press release by Foreign Ministers of the Visegrad leaders in Bratislava



On 11th September the Foreign Ministers of the Visegrad group (Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic and Poland) met their German and Luxembourg counterparts to discuss concrete measures to take in managing the external dimension of the refugee crisis. The four countries "support a common, mutually acknowledged solution" and "declare that they are prepared to take part in European action by providing expertise and financial, technical and logistic assistance." They continue to maintain that "relocation must really only be a temporary, emergency measure" and ask for the focus to be on the migratory route in the Western Balkans, the stabilisation of the European neighbourhood, the fight to counter human trafficking and smugglers, on development aid and humanitarian assistance in the countries of origin and transit, and finally on international cooperation within the community of the UN... [Read more](#)

### Refugee crisis: the Commission proposes a series of real measures



Following the commitments made in the European agenda in terms of migration adopted in May last the European Commission presented a series of proposals in view of solving the refugee crisis that the EU is now facing. These measures comprise an emergency relocation proposal for 120,000 refugees who have arrived via Greece, Hungary and Italy. Relocation will be undertaken according to an obligatory distribution list based on objective, quantifiable criteria. The Member States which are temporarily unable to participate will be asked to pay a financial contribution to the EU budget matching 0.002% of their GDP (temporary solidarity clause); there will be a permanent relocation mechanism for all of the Member States to which the solidarity clause will also apply, a common European list of safe countries of origin to accelerate the processing of requests, a common handbook on return and an EU action plan regarding return, a communication regarding public procurement governing support measures to refugees, an "Emergency Trust Fund" in support of stability and the fight

to counter the deep causes of illegal migration in Africa" that is to be provided with 1.8 billion €. These proposals will be discussed during the extraordinary "Internal Affairs Council" on 14th September... [Read more](#)

#### Commission :

##### President Juncker's Speech on the State of the Union



On 9th September the President of the Commission Jean-Claude Juncker presented his speech on the State of the Union to the European Parliament which convened in plenary in Strasbourg. The speech that lasted one and a half hours was mainly devoted to the refugee crisis experienced at present by the EU. Mr Juncker recalled on this occasion that Europe itself had a long history of refugees and that it had set up the right to asylum as a one of the Union's fundamental rights. Although Europe might not be able to receive all of the refugees, the latter only represented 0.11% of its total population. Mr Juncker would like the EU to receive 160,000 refugees and for it to build a European Asylum System whose standards will be implemented by all of the Member States. Hence the Commission launched a second emergency relocation mechanism for the 120,000 refugees who have already arrived in Italy, Greece and Hungary, put forward a list of countries of safe countries of origin and a Permanent Relocation Mechanism. The Commission will propose a migration package in 2016. The Commission is also proposing the creation of an Emergency Trust Fund of 1.8 billion euro for Africa to address the causes of migration at the root.

Mr. Juncker then addressed the Greek crisis asking for the programme that was adopted to be accepted and respected by all of those involved and by all Greek governments. Regarding economic and monetary Union the President hopes that the European Parliament will be more involved in the future. Mr Juncker then addressed the issue of taxation by proposing the establishment of a Euro Area Treasury which would be supported by the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) and the taxation of profits in the countries where they are made. Regarding social issues the President announced that he wanted to work towards the creation of a European social rights base during the first half of 2016. Finally Mr Juncker hopes for an improved international representation of the euro zone via a single representative at the IMF...

[Read more](#)

##### Letter from J-C. Juncker and F. Timmermans to M. Schulz and X. Bettel



In a letter dated 9th September addressed to Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament and Xavier Bettel, the Prime Minister of Luxembourg, the President of the Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and his first Vice-President Frans Timmermans lay out the main initiatives that will be taken by the Commission over the last few months in 2015 and by the end of 2016... [Read more](#)

##### Conclusion of the EU/US "umbrella" agreement on personal data protection



On 8th September the European Commission announced the conclusions of negotiations between the EU and the US regarding high data protection standards for transatlantic police cooperation. The agreement covers all types of personal data exchanged between the EU and the US for purposes of prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences, including terrorism. This agreement establishes clear boundaries in terms of data use, a prior agreement to ulterior transfers, precise retention periods, access and rectification rights, information in the event of security breaches, judicial redress and enforceability rights. European citizens will now enjoy treatment equal to that of their counterparts in the US. The agreement now has to be signed by the two parties involved... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

##### 360° review of the telecoms rules



On 11th September the European Commission launched public consultations on the future regulation of telecoms in Europe. The first focuses on broad band requirements, the second on the review of the present telecoms framework. They will be open until 7th December 2015... [Read more](#)

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

##### Greenlight for General Electric's acquisition of Alstom's production and electricity transport assets

On 8th September the European Commission gave the greenlight regarding General Electric's acquisition of the energy assets of the



French company Alstom to a total of 12.5 billion € - coupling this with terms that aim to protect competition. Subordinate to the relinquishment of some of Alstom's major assets and very powerful gas turbines to the Italian business Ansaldo, this approval enables GE to strengthen its position in terms of power plant equipment and maintenance... [Read more](#)

#### Parliament :

##### Rapporteurs response to the 2016 budget put forward by the Council



On 9th September MEP rapporteurs on the budget José Manuel Fernandes (EPP) and Gérard Deprez (ALDE), delivered their thoughts on the 2016 budget put forward by the Council on 4th September. The budget put forward comprising 153.2 billion euro in commitments and 140 billion in payments would lead to reductions of 563.6 million euro for new projects and 1.4 billion euro in terms of new bills in 2016 in comparison with the Commission's proposal. J.M. Fernandes believes that "the Council's cuts are unacceptable, incomprehensible and inconsistent". G Deprez highlighted the "need for adequate financing for organisations addressing the refugee issue some of whose funds have been cut by the Council." The most important cuts would affect foreign policy tools, financing for neighbouring countries, transport network programmes and research. Parliament is due to deliver its position on the issue before 29th October, the date on which 21 days of conciliation talks will start between the Council and the Parliament... [Read more](#)

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

##### Parliament gives its go-ahead on the Trade Facilitation Agreement



On 9th September the European Parliament voted in plenary in support of the ratification of the World Trade Organisation's Trade Facilitation Agreement. This should help simplify and modernise customs procedures across the world, help SMEs access new export opportunities and increase countries' commitment to development in the world value chain. To become effective this agreement has to be ratified and implemented. If the Council also approves this agreement at the beginning of October the EU will become the 17th participant in the Agreement. It has planned to devote up to 400 million € to help developing countries finance reform and customs system improvement projects, thereby making this agreement effective... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

##### MEPs ask for greater gender equality in the education system



In a non-legislative resolution adopted on 9th September in plenary 408 votes in support, 236 against and 40 abstentions, MEPs ask for measures to be taken in terms of gender equality at all levels in the education system including in teacher training and the curriculum. These measures aim to close the gap between women's education and their professional development, abolish stereotypes associated with gender and strengthen self-confidence and support relations based on respect and reciprocity... [Read more](#)

##### The European Parliament calls for the release of illegally imprisoned Ukrainians



In a resolution adopted 378 votes in support, 111 against and 138 abstentions on 10th September MEPs invited Russia to free Eston Kohver, Oleg Sentsov and Olexandr Koltchenko immediately; this also included all Ukrainian citizens held illegally including Nadia Savchenko. In addition to this "they firmly condemn the flagrant infringement of Ukrainian and Estonian territorial integrity with the illegal kidnapping of citizens from both of these countries who have subsequently been sentenced by a Russian court that has no competence to try them... [Read more](#)

##### The European Parliament wants a total ban on cloning



During a vote in plenary on 8th September the European Parliament strengthened the Commission's proposal to ban animal cloning. The legislative report adopted 529 votes in support 120 against and 57 abstentions, now bans the cloning of all farm animals, of their offspring and any derivate products including imports into the EU. Negotiations with the Council on the final form of the bill are now to start... [Read more](#)

## Resolution on Fundamental Rights

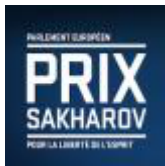


On Tuesday 8th September MEPs met in plenary and adopted a non-legislative resolution 369 votes in support, 291 against and 58 abstentions, which focuses on fundamental rights in the EU in 2013-2014. Regarding the fundamental rights of migrants and asylum seekers MEPs are asking for vigorous steps to be taken and also the introduction of an effective, harmonised asylum system across the EU.

They also expressed their concern about conditions in reception centres, "hot returns", barbed wire and other measures of dissuasion. Regarding the austerity measures MEPs want an impact study to be undertaken focusing on fundamental rights and the guarantee of adequate resources for the respect of these. Finally regarding the monitoring of fundamental rights in the Member States MEPs believe that the Commission should set up a scoreboard with "joint, objectives" indicators...

[Read more](#)

## Sakharov Prize: nominations for 2015 unveiled



On 10th September the nominations for the 2015 Sakharov Prize for the Freedom of Thought were unveiled at the European Parliament.

Amongst the candidates there feature Boris Nemtsov, a Russian physicist, former deputy prime minister and opposition politician who was assassinated in Moscow in February 2015. Another candidate Raif Badawi is a Saudi blogger sentenced to 10 years in prison and 1000 lashes of the whip and a heavy fine for having insulted the values of Islam on his site Free Saudi Liberals. On the other hand three whistle-blowers Edward Snowden already nominated in 2013, Antoine Deltour and Stéphane Gibaud have also been shortlisted. This prize, created in 1988, honours personalities who try to defend human rights and fundamental freedoms. It will be awarded in October... [Read more](#)

## Council :

### Conclusions of the General Affairs Council



During the "General Affairs" Council on 14th September ministers started preparations for the European Council of 15th and 16th October that will focus on migratory issues, reviewing what has been done since the European Council in June and in preparation for the summit in Valette on 11th and 12th November during which

European and African leaders will try to strengthen their cooperation to rise to the challenge of migration. Ministers also noted the letter sent by Mssrs Juncker and Timmermans on the Commission's work programme for 2016. Finally they deemed that the EUNAVFOR-MED mission could enter its second phase on the high seas and they decided to extend European sanctions against Russia due to its activities damaging the territorial integrity, sovereignty and the independence of Ukraine...

[Read more](#)

### Eurogroup meeting



On 12th September the Eurogroup met in Luxembourg to discuss the euro zone's economic situation, the 7th assessment of the economic adjustment programme ongoing in Cyprus and the most recent developments in Greece. During his concluding remarks President Jeroen Dijsselbloem announced that ministers had agreed on an

instrument to benchmark the tax burden on labour in the euro zone and that they had adopted a declaration on this issue... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

### Informal meeting European Economy and Finance Ministers



The 28 European Economy and Finance Ministers met in Luxembourg on 11th and 12th September notably to discuss the deepening of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) as well as the issue of bridge financing the Single Resolution Fund (SRF). Regarding the deepening of the EMU discussions focussed on the Five Presidents Report notably

on the long term aspects, the need to implement what already exists and short term progress. Regarding SRF the need for credibility in terms of available funds was stressed... [Read more](#)

## Diplomacy :

Hollande, Merkel, Cameron: article on Iran



On 10th September whilst the American Congress was about to vote on the support it will provide or not to the E3+3 agreement (France, Germany, UK, USA, China and Russia) achieved in terms of Iran limiting its nuclear programme, Ms Merkel and Mssrs Hollande and Cameron published a joint article in which they reassert their full support to this agreement. Indeed they believe that the goals set on enriched uranium, plutonium, the AIEA's room to manoeuvre, the progressive relief of sanctions or their re-introduction have been reached, being based on "careful monitoring, detailed descriptions, which can be checked on in the long term", thereby providing the basis for the final settlement of the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme... [Read more](#)

#### EU-Cuba: end of 5th round of negotiations



On 10th September in Havana the EU and Cuba finalised a further round of talks with decisive progress being made in terms of trade and cooperation and the first exchange of points of view qualified as "constructive" regarding a difficult political chapter. Negotiations on trade and cooperation might be finalised during the next session planned for the end of November in Brussels announced the two delegations after 48 hours of talks... [Read more](#)

#### Germany :

##### Presentation of the draft 2016 Budget to the Bundestag



Germany will provide all the financial means necessary to receive and integrate refugees who want to settle in the country promised German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble on 8th September. For Germany "completing this task is an absolute priority," he declared in a speech to the Bundestag, the lower chamber of the German parliament, where he presented the 2016 budget. The latter is likely to be amended to take on board the costs linked to the reception of several hundred thousand migrants this year and in the future, said Mr Schäuble. He deemed that it made no sense to "speculate about the final amount for the time being. We must finance this as far as is possible without contracting any further debts.".. [Read more](#)

##### Meeting between Angela Merkel and Serb Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic



On 7th September German Chancellor Angela Merkel met Serb Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic in Berlin. Germany will be "changed" by the massive influx of migrants deemed Chancellor Angela Merkel as she promised to work towards the changes being "positive" for the country. "What we are experiencing is something that will keep us busy for the next few years, it will change us and we want this change to be positive and we think that we can do it," she declared. Moreover Angela Merkel and Aleksandar Vucic expressed a clear stance regarding Serb citizens who want to go to Germany - in no way are the latter entitled to political asylum. "It is quite clear and it is our common position with Serbia - as an EU candidate country - it is a safe country of origin," maintained the Chancellor... [Read more](#)

#### Belgium :

##### 145 million € in support of SMEs in Belgium



On 11th September the European Investment Fund (EIF) and the Société Wallonne de Financement et de Garantie des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises (SOWALFIN) signed two agreements to facilitate access to financing on the part of Wallonian independent workers and SMEs. These agreements, InnovFin and COSME, have the support of the EFSI (European Fund for Strategic Investment) and will enable SOWALFIN to issue guarantees on bank loans to a total of 145 million € to around 600 innovative businesses in Wallonia... [Read more](#)

#### Bulgaria :

##### 13 EU countries insist on the adoption of an anti-corruption law



15 European countries of which 13 are EU members insisted on 7th September that Bulgaria rapidly adopt an anti-corruption bill after Parliament's rejection on 4th September of draft legislation in this direction. "We hope that the political parties (...) will put forward new ideas as quickly as possible", stressed the Embassies of Germany, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy,

Luxembourg, Poland and the UK as well as Norway and Switzerland. "The rejection of the initial text put forward by the government without any discussion in Parliament is a negative sign," note the signatories. The text rejected provided for the creation of an anti-corruption bureau" which would investigate the wealth and life style of around 10,000 public leaders including politicians, executive civil servants and magistrates, as well as town councillors, university rectors, hospital directors and heads of projects funded by the EU. The draft bill was not adopted due to the abstention of two parties, (ABV) on the left and the Patriotic Front (nationalists)... [Read more](#)

#### Cyprus :

##### Visit by the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk to Cyprus



On 11th September the President of the European Council Donald Tusk and Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades met in Cyprus. On this occasion the Presidents discussed the promising developments in talks with Cyprus, the country's role as a regional player in the Middle East, the refugee crisis and the positive results in the development of the Cypriot economy... [Read more](#)

#### France :

##### French President François Hollande: press conference



The President of the Republic of France François Hollande held his sixth official meeting with the press on 7th September. Regarding migrants he repeated that "the right to asylum is an historical fact" and is a part of France's soul. He announced that France would receive 24,000 refugees over the next two years. He mentioned an "obligatory and permanent" distribution mechanism" within the EU. He also opened the way for France's participation in strikes undertaken by the international coalition against the Islamic State (IS) in Syria and not just in Iraq via reconnaissance flights. He also congratulated the "late" respect of the cease-fire in the east of Ukraine, which was decided upon in the Minsk Agreements in February... [Read more](#)

##### Launch of COP21



French President François Hollande announced on 10th September the launch of COP21 which will take place in Paris in December. He recalled the urgency of the climate situation and therefore the need to come to an agreement that would lead to real measures being taken after the conference. However he also raised the issue of coming to a prior agreement, notably deciding on the means to finance 100 billion annual \$ devoted to the fight to counter global warming as of 2020. The G20 summit which will take place in Turkey on 15th and 16th November is now vital from this point of view... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

##### Inauguration of the European School in Strasbourg



On 10th September Strasbourg inaugurated its European school, an establishment that is to contribute towards the town's status as European capital. Designed primarily for the children of EU civil servants this establishment has three linguistic sections - German, English and French. The teaching model which prepares pupils for the European baccalaureat is identical to existing European schools in Europe and which are approved by the EU... [Read more](#)

#### Greece :

##### Poll forecasts in Greece



According to the most recent polls in Greece Alexis Tsipras's radical left party SYRIZA is running neck and neck with the centre-right New Democracy (ND). According to the polls ND led by Evangelos Meimarakis is due to just come out ahead with 25.3% of the vote and SYRIZA, 25%. The polls place the far right party, Golden Dawn, third with 5.5% followed by PASOK with 5.3% and the Communist Party (KKE) with 5.1%. A TV debate between Alexis Tsipras and Evangelos Meimarakis took place on 14th September. Has this helped make the difference? General elections in Greece will be held on 20th September... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

#### Ireland :

## Resignation of Northern Ireland's First Minister



On 10th September Peter Robinson, Northern Ireland's First Minister and three other ministers from the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) announced their resignation after a non-adjournment of the Regional Assembly. Adjournment had been requested to the backdrop of increasing tension between Mr Robinson and his government coalition partner Sinn Fein. Mr Robinson has accused the former political arm of the IRA of dishonesty when it states that the paramilitary organisation no longer exists. Arlene Foster, the only DUP minister to remain in the coalition government will temporarily ensure Mr Robinson's role, to guarantee that the nationalists and Republicans do not take financial or any other decisions that might damage Northern Ireland." David Cameron said he was "very worried about the situation" and called "for all politicians in Northern Ireland to work together to build a better future for the country".. [Read more](#)

## Portugal :

### Announcement of a plan to support the dairy sector



On 10th September Portuguese Agriculture Minister, Assunção Cristas, announced a plan to support the dairy sector planning, amongst other things exemptions in terms of social contributions for a three month period, the creation of a line of credit totalling 50 million euro to help with cash management and farm investments, and also measures designed to boost exports and the consumption of milk... [Read more](#)

## Ukraine :

### President Poroshenko's speech at the Yalta European Strategy Meeting



On 10th September Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko delivered an inaugural speech at the 12th annual meeting of the Yalta European Strategy. On this occasion he declared that he thought that it was "clear that a democratic, independent Ukraine firmly anchored in the system of European values was a cornerstone for security and stability in Europe and the whole world." He said that if this were to be disturbed then the basis of European and world security would be shaken. He also said that "it had to be made clear that not only would the present sanctions remain in place as long as Russia occupied Crimea, but also that "restrictive measures would follow if Russia impeded the peace settlement programme regarding the conflict in the Donbass." He emphasised that it was time to discuss the possibility of deploying an operation in the Donbass to support the implementation of the Minsk Agreements and to join forces to amend the institutions and instruments that are the base of the principles and norms of international law, particularly regarding the power of veto and the UN's Security Council".. [Read more](#)

### Meeting of French, German, Russian and Ukrainian Ministers



On 12th September in Berlin the French, German, Russian and Ukrainian Foreign Ministers came together to discuss the situation in the east of Ukraine and the implementation of the measures adopted in Minsk on 12th February 2015. During this meeting the ministers worked on the long term respect of the cease-fire, access by the OSCE's special observation mission to areas of fighting and the means to reach rapid agreement on the withdrawal of lighter weapons and armoured vehicles. They also discussed the organisation of elections and the opening of humanitarian logistics centres, the exchange of prisoners and free access by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Concrete proposals were prepared for the summit of Heads of State and government planned to take place in Paris at the beginning of October... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

## UN :

### Ukraine: according to the UN the conflict is becoming bloodier



On 8th September in its report Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU), the UN's surveillance mission maintained that 105 civilians were killed and 308 were injured in the fighting over the last three months, in comparison with 60 people killed and 102 injured over the previous three months. The UN declared that this escalation is being "fed by the presence and inflow of foreign fighters, sophisticated weapons and munitions from the Russian Federation." However the report accuses both sides of undertaking "blind bombings".. [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)



## Eurostat :

### GDP up by 0.4% in the euro zone and in the EU



According to a publication by Eurostat on 8th September the GDP was up by 0.4% in both the euro zone and the EU in the second quarter in comparison with the previous quarter. In comparison with the second quarter of 2014 the GDP grew respectively by 1.5% and 1.9%. In all Member States for whom data is available for the second quarter of 2015 the GDP increased except in France where it remained stable... [Read more](#)

### EU/South Korea trade surplus



Prior to the EU/South Korea Summit that will take place on 15th September in Seoul Eurostat has published data on trade between the two players. The value of European Union (EU) exports of goods to South Korea has more than doubled over the period 2004-2014, from €17.9 bn in 2004 to a peak of €43.2 bn in 2014. Imports show a more varied trend over this 10-year time period. In 2014 they amounted to €39.0 bn, up by 9% compared with 2013 but still below the peak reached in 2007 (€41.7 bn). As a result, the EU trade balance with South Korea, which had constantly been in deficit from 2004 to 2012, has turned into a surplus for the last two years and stood at +€4.1 bn in both 2013 and 2014. Hence South Korea is the EU's 8th most important trade partner, behind Japan but ahead of India. The free-trade agreement between the EU and the Republic of South Korea entered into force in 2011... [Read more](#)

## Publication :

### Louis Henri Bojanus, the wiseman of Vilnius



In the series "Portraits célèbres d'Alsace" by Vent d'Est a new publication was released this month "Louis Henri Bojanus, le savant de Vilnius." Louis Henri Bojanus was a zoologist, teacher and the 18th century precursor of comparative anatomy who was originally from Alsace. Authors, Philippe Edel and Piotr Daszkiewicz pay tribute to Bojanus's life and work. Philippe Edel is the Chairman of the Cercle d'histoire Alsace-Lituanie and he has contributed to several publications on people of influence from this region of France. Piotr Daszkiewicz works at the National Museum of Natural History in Paris. The natural heritage in Poland and Lithuania is the focus of his research. He is also an historian of science and a member of the association Alsace-Lituanie... [Read more](#)

## Culture :

### Emil Nolde Exhibition



From 18th September to 10th February 2016 an exhibition is running at the Gegenwart Gallery in Hamburg devoted to Expressionist artist Emil Nolde (1867-1956). Hamburg is known for being the town which inspired Nolde in many of his works and where he also gained significant recognition. In this exhibition the links between Nolde and the town are explored with a total 200 of his works on show including vibrantly coloured paintings and watercolours, atmospheric etchings, woodcuts as well as dynamic brush-and-ink drawings... [Read more](#)

### 13th Lyon Biennale



From 10th September to 3rd January the 13th Lyon Biennale for contemporary art is taking place in Lyon. This year "La Vie Moderne" will be showing work by 61 artists many of whom come from Africa, Asia and Latin America. In line with contemporary debate visitors can notably see the Enigma sculpture by Liu Wei, the monumental megalopolis that raises the issue of humanity lost in the town which is visible on entering the Sucrière, a leading venue of the event on the banks of the Saône. Yearly the entire city is involved in this major exhibition which includes places like the Museum of Contemporary Art, the African Museum and the Tourette Convent... [Read more](#)

### Osiris, Egypt's sunken mysteries



The Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris is running an exhibition until 31st January on "Osiris, Egypt's sunken mysteries" with the aim of familiarising visitors with one of the founding legends of ancient Egypt. The exhibition shows the discoveries of submarine excavations undertaken in the Bay of Aboukir, notably the vestiges of the temples of Heracleion and Canopus which were the venue for huge ceremonies

and religious ceremonies... [Read more](#)

## Oktoberfest



As every year Munich is hosting the biggest folk festival in the world from 19th September to 4th October 2015. The Oktoberfest is an ancient Bavarian tradition which is a venue for 6 million visitors per year... [Read more](#)

## Agenda :



14th September  
Brussels  
Justice and Internal Affairs Council  
Brussels  
General Affairs Council



15th September  
Seoul  
8th EU/South Korea Summit



16th September  
Brussels  
European Parliament Mini-Session



18th September  
Brussels  
Environment Council

The Letter is also available in:



I love the Robert Schuman Foundation's Letter

## The Letter's Editorial Team :

Charles de Marcilly, Helen Levy ;  
Morgane Humbert, Nelson Pajot, Orsolya Topa, Hyung Jun Yoon

**Editor-in-chief: Charles de Marcilly**  
**Publishing Director: Pascale Joannin**

Contact/Suggestions  
[info@robert-schuman.eu](mailto: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}](#)