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The Letter in PDF format

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Euro zone, legitimacy and democracy: how do we solve the European democratic problem?

Author: Thierry Chopin



Since the start of the crisis thought about the reform to implement has been limited to the framework of the euro zone and to the response to provide to the deficit of political accountability that is affecting the democratic legitimacy of decision making at this level. But the challenge regarding democratic legitimacy being made to the European Union cannot just be restricted to the euro zone alone, nor can it be reduced to the simple question of accountability. [Read more](#)

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Foundation :

Europe and its security



In an editorial published on his site on 4th April, Jean-Dominique Giuliani, the Foundation's Chairman, calls on the States of Europe to do more in terms of defence to rise to present security challenges... [Read more](#)

Permanent Atlas of the European Union (3rd edition)



The third edition of the Atlas of the European Union is a work of reference that presents the Union, its institutions, each of its 28 Member States and a new feature - their overseas territories - via their history, their culture and their reality. A must if you want to know everything there is to know about Europe... [Read more](#)

Migration :

Greece: approval of law to return migrants



On 1st April the Greek parliament approved a law that opens the way for the return of migrants arriving in Greece back to Turkey, under the EU-Turkey agreement that aims to stem migratory flows to Europe... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Central European Defence Ministers



The Ministers for Defence Cooperation in Central Europe, i.e. Croatia, Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro met on 31st March and 1st April in Vienna asked for Frontex's means to be strengthened to counter migration and to guarantee the protection of the external borders... [Read more](#)

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UNHCR: conference on the distribution of Syrian refugees in Geneva



On 30th March the Conference on the Distribution of Syrian Refugees in Geneva concluded with further offers of resettlement places and other types of admission on humanitarian grounds by the participating States... [Read more](#)

European Civil Protection Mechanism



On 29th March a new delivery of equipment by way of the European civil protection mechanism took place notably in Greece. These deliveries are being made on the initiative of the Member States on a voluntary basis... [Read more](#)

Financial Crisis :

Cyprus ends the international aid plan linked to the 2013 crisis



On 31st March Cyprus officially and successfully concluded its financial assistance programme supported by the European Union and the IMF over the last three years, thanks to the implementation of structural reforms and the progressive recovery of its economy... [Read more](#)

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In 2015 Spain government deficit worsened in 2015



In 2015 Spain's public deficit worsened to lie at 5.16% of the GDP which is well over the figure forecast - this might oblige the next government to take austerity measures... [Read more](#)

The IMF believes that an acceptable plan in the Greek crisis is still a long way off



Discussions on the Greek debt are still far from complete in terms of an acceptable proposal on the part of the IMF, deemed Christine Lagarde, the IMF's General Director on 3rd April in a letter addressed to the Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras... [Read more](#)

IMF Report on Portugal



On April 1st the IMF published its conclusions on Portugal's third supervision programme. The country must continue its structural reforms and maintain those ongoing on the labour market and in the civil service... [Read more](#)

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IMF Report on Slovenia



In its conclusions on Slovenia on 29th March the IMF called on the government to step up private investment, to introduce fiscal adjustments and to make further efforts in terms of privatisation mechanisms... [Read more](#)

Report by the World Bank on Ukraine's financial prospects



The World Bank presented a report on the economic prospects of Ukraine on 1st April, which is still suffering following the conflict with the pro-Russian separatists in the east in the country... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Enabling insurers to invest in infrastructures more easily



On 1st April the Official Journal published a modification to the delegated act Solvency II which entered into force on 2nd April. It aims to make investments in infrastructures more attractive and cheaper to insurers... [Read more](#)

Programme to provide European milk to Syrian children



On 30th March the European Commission adopted a 30 million € programme, the last part of a 500 million€ support package to farmers, for the purchase of European milk to be taken to Syrian children... [Read more](#)

Report on Nuclear



[Read more](#)

Council :

European Sanctions against three Libyan leaders



On 31st March the EU adopted sanctions against three Libyan leaders for their "obstructive attitude" regarding the government of national unity which is trying to establish power in Tripoli... [Read more](#)

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Sanctions against North Korea



The 28 EU Member States approved a further round of sanctions against North Korea on 31st March - increasing the arsenal already in place, in response to a nuclear test and a rocket launch that were condemned by the international community... [Read more](#)

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Diplomacy :

EU/India Summit



On 30th March during the EU-India Summit leaders stepped up their economic, security, diplomatic and social cooperation with an agenda targeting 2020. In 2015 the EU registered a deficit of 1.3 billion € in its trade of goods with India, but a surplus of 0.3 billion € in the trade of services... [Read more](#)

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Fourth summit on nuclear security in Washington



American President Barack Obama convened on 31st March and 1st April in Washington the fourth summit on nuclear security, rallying more than 50 heads of State and government as well as representatives of various international organisations... [Read more](#)

Spain :

Spain: negotiations between the PSOE and Podemos to form a government



The leaders of the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) and Podemos (radical left) announced on 30th March that negotiations were starting again in view of forming a government. An agreement must be found before 2nd May, otherwise Spain will return to ballot... [Read more](#)

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France :

International Seminar at Bercy on international financial architecture



French Finance Minister Michel Sapin called on 31st March to enhance the information system regarding financial flows that is affecting emerging countries in particular as he spoke at an international seminar at Bercy (Paris) on international financial architecture... [Read more](#)

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Romania :

Adoption of the SME initiative in Romania



On 29th March the European Commission adopted the "SME Initiative" in Romania, an aid programme to a total of 100 million €... [Read more](#)

UK :

Opening of the longest rail motorway in Europe



The new freight railway line VIIA Britannica linking Spain to the UK, the longest rail motorway in Europe entered into service on 29th March... [Read more](#)

The Bank of England's concern about the referendum on the EU



On 29th March the Bank of England published a press release on expressing its concern about the referendum that is to take place on 23rd June next. In its opinion the UK's exit from the EU is one of the main short term risks challenging the country's financial stability... [Read more](#)

Kosovo :

Entry into force of the Association and Stabilisation Agreement between the EU and Kosovo



The Association and Stabilisation Agreement (ASA) between the EU and Kosovo entered into force on 1st April and should help support Kosovo in the implementation of its reforms... [Read more](#)

Montenegro :

Visit by Milo Djukanovic in Brussels



On 29th March Montenegrin Prime Minister Milo Djukanović travelled to Brussels where he met Donald Tusk, Jean-Claude Juncker and Federica Mogherini. European leaders welcomed the progress made by Montenegro and called for continued work in the context of future elections... [Read more](#)

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Serbia :

Vojislav Seselj acquitted by the ICTY



The Serb ultranationalist Vojislav Seselj, accused of having committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in the 1990's was acquitted against all expectation on 31st March by the ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia)... [Read more](#)

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Turkey :

Amnesty International denounces the expulsion of Syrians by Turkey



In a report published on 1st April Amnesty International speaks out against collective expulsions of Syrian refugees organised by Turkey to Syria - which is a war zone... [Read more](#)

UN :

UN: upkeep of sanctions against Libya



On 31st March the UN Security Council extended permission and measures to sanction Libya until 31st July 2017 - which aim to prevent illegal oil exports notably via parallel institutions "that are escaping the authority of the government of national unity"... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Unemployment at 8.9% in the EU and at 10.3% in the euro zone



According to Eurostat on 4th April unemployment lay at 8.9% in the EU and at 10.3% in the euro zone in February 2016. This is the lowest figure registered in the EU since May 2009 and in the euro zone since August 2011... [Read more](#)

Deflation of 0.1% in the euro zone in March



According to a Eurostat press release published on 31st March the inflation rate in the euro zone was due to lie at -0.1% in March, i.e. 0.1 points more than in February... [Read more](#)

The USA and China are the EU's main trading partners



According to a press release by Eurostat on 31st March Europe's main trading partners in 2015 were the USA, the leading import country from the EU and China, the leading export country to the EU... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

2015 Annual Report by the Council of Europe



On 30th March the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe published its 2015 annual report on the monitoring of the implementation of the decisions taken by the European Court of Human Rights... [Read more](#)

Monetary developments in the euro zone



On 29th March the European Central Bank published a press release regarding monetary developments in the euro zone for February 2016 and on 1st April statistics on insurance businesses and pension funds in the euro zone... [Read more](#)

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Culture :

The books that have made Europe



The Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei in Rome is exhibiting 186 manuscripts and incunabula of great value including the first printed edition of Dante's Divine Comedy. The exhibition "The Books that made Europe: Latin and Roman manuscripts from Charlemagne to the invention of the printing press," is running until 22nd July... [Read more](#)

Joan Miro Exhibition in Frankfurt

The Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt is running an exhibition of major works by Joan Miro reflecting his fascination for the wall, used by the Catalan painter as a point of departure for his paintings... [Read more](#)



From Kandinsky to Pollock - Exhibition in Florence



The Palazzo Strozzi in Florence is hosting the exhibition "From Kandinsky to Pollock, the Art of the Guggenheim Collection" until 24th July, presenting European works of modern art as well as American paintings and sculptures from the 1950's and 60's... [Read more](#)

Paul Klee Exhibition at the Pompidou Centre in Paris



The Pompidou Centre in Paris is running a retrospective until 1st August bringing together around 250 works from some of the biggest international collections at the Paul Klee Zentrum in Bern, Switzerland and also from private collections... [Read more](#)

Exhibition of "Dutch Flowers" at the National Gallery



From 6th April to 29th August the National Gallery in London is running an exhibition devoted to Dutch painting "Dutch Flowers"... [Read more](#)

EuropArt Music Festival in Brussels



From 2nd to 9th April Brussels is hosting the EuropArt Music Festival which mixes different types of music - both romantic, impressionist and contemporary... [Read more](#)

Glasgow Art Festival



From 8th to 25th April the 7th Contemporary Art Biennale will be taking place featuring many artists... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



6th April

Frankfurt/Main
ECB Council of Governors
Netherlands

Referendum on the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine



7th April

Metz
18th Franco-German Council of Ministers



11th April

Luxembourg
Agriculture and Fisheries Council



11th to 14th April

Strasbourg
Plenary Session of the European Parliament



👍 I love the Robert Schuman Foundation's Letter

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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.

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