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The Letter in PDF format

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In support of a European Code of Business Law

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To overcome the difficulties it faces the European Union has to prove that the integration process is still dynamic and that it can meet the needs of its citizens. The communities' historic competences in the single market justify action in the business area; harmonisation in this field is a logical continuation of the market's liberalisation. Indeed, it is difficult to create a true economic area if similar rules are not applied to all of the players.

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Front page! :

Europa First!



In Jean-Dominique Giuliani's opinion to the American slogan "America First" we must answer "Europa First" with three priorities: security/defence, economy, migration... [Read more](#)

Elections :

Presidential election in Germany on 12th February

On 6th June last the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Joachim Gauck, announced that he would not running for a second term in office in 2017. On 14th November the Christian-Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU) and the Social Democratic



Party (SPD) came to agreement over the name of his successor: Frank-Walter Steinmeier (SPD), the present Foreign Affairs Minister. The election will take place on 12th February... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

Think-tanks necessary more than ever before?



On the occasion of the publication of the Global Go To Think Tank 2016 by the University of Pennsylvania, the main international ranking of research centres, the IRIS is organising a conference on 26th January, "Think-tanks necessary more than ever before?" in which Jean-Dominique Giuliani, the Foundation's Chairman will be participating... [Read more](#)

Financial Crisis :

Entry into force of rules to facilitate corporate debt recovery



On 18th January new rules entered into force to enable the faster, easier recovery of debts by businesses and particularly SMEs from debtors who are established in other EU countries... [Read more](#)

Update of the IMF's work economic outlook



On 16th January the IMF raised the USA's growth forecasts by 0.1 points (+2.3%) and by 0.4 points in 2018 (+2.5%) in comparison with forecasts published three months ago. It is more cautious in regard to the rest of the world for which it has left its forecasts unchanged (+3.4% this year; +3.6% in 2018)... [Read more](#)

Sale of the Greek railway company



The Greek Court of Auditors approved the sale of the Greek railway company Trainose to the Italian group Ferrovie dello State on 16th January. The total revenue received by the Greek State by 2018 is estimated at 5.8 billion €... [Read more](#)

Migration :

New aid strategy for refugees and migrants in Europe



On 19th January the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and 72 other partners launched a new strategy designed to improve aid provided to refugees and migrants in Europe in 2017... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Mario Monti presents his recommendations for the future of EU financing



On 17th January former European Commissioner, Mario Monti, presented his recommendations on the future financing of the EU drawn up by the working group on own resources. They will be taken on board in the preparation of the next multi-annual financial framework... [Read more](#)

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Euro-American agreement on insurance and re-insurance



On 16th January the Commission welcomed the success of negotiations between the European Union and the USA on the insurance and re-insurance sectors. On 17th it published the state of negotiations on the

transatlantic treaty... [Read more](#)

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Parliament :

Antonio Tajani elected President of the European Parliament



and 5 questeurs... [Read more](#)

On 17th January the EPP (European People's Party) candidate Antonio Tajani was elected president of the European Parliament 351 votes in support in the fourth round of voting. On 18th MEPs elected the 14 Vice-Presidents (4 EPP, 5 S&D, 2 ALDE, 1 ECR, 1 Green, 1 GUE/NGL)

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Council :

Council Agreement on 700 MHz for wireless mobile broadband



The EU Member States confirmed on 20th January the agreement whereby the 700 MHz frequency will be available for wireless broadband by 2020 thereby enabling a transfer over to 5G... [Read more](#)

More efficient port services



On 23rd January the Council adopted rules designed to increase the financial transparency of ports and to create clear, fair conditions for access to the port services market across Europe as a whole... [Read more](#)

Results of the Fisheries and Agriculture Council



On 23rd January the Ministers responsible for Fisheries and Agriculture of the 28 Member States met in Brussels to discuss the work programme of the new Maltese Presidency of the Council. They also discussed recent developments in the milk and sheep meat markets... [Read more](#)

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Court of Justice :

Gibraltar and the UK are a single entity for the free provision of services



In the conclusions delivered on 19th January the Advocate General of the ECJ deemed that the UK and Gibraltar form a single Member State in terms of the provision of services... [Read more](#)

ECB :

Upkeep of support to the economy in the euro zone



On 19th January the European Central Bank (ECB) decided to maintain its key rate at 0% and said that it was "not yet" thinking of giving up its economic support policy... [Read more](#)

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European Agencies :

EUROPOL presents the "Diamond" Project



On 19th January EUROPOL hosted the first international conference on theft and burglary of jewellery. Bringing together more than 70 experts from the world over, it provided an opportunity to present the "Diamond" project that will take over from the "Pink Panther" project... [Read more](#)

Press Conference of the Director General of the European Space Agency

On 18th January the ESA Director General, Jan Woerner, gave details of the goals and projects for 2017. He also presented the new satellite

Germany :**Last speech by German President Joachim Gauck**

On 18th January German President, Joachim Gauck, said he was concerned with the situation of liberal democracy in Germany and more generally in Western Europe, which is threatened in his opinion by national withdrawal and populism... [Read more](#)

The German Constitutional Court rejects the ban of the far right party (NPD)

On 17th January the German Constitutional Court rejected the request to ban a far right party, the NPD, as it pointed out its weak following. "Unanimously the second chamber deemed that the NPD has anti-constitutional goals but at present there are no real elements that allow thought that action (by the party) would be crowned with success," indicated the President of the Court, Andreas Vosskuhle... [Read more](#)

Announcement of the date of German general elections

The next German general elections will take place on 24th September 2017... [Read more](#)

Bulgaria :**La conference of Rosen Plevnelyev and entry into office of Rumen Radev**

During his last press conference on 18th January the outgoing Bulgarian President Rosen Plevnelyev warned his successor against division within the European Union. Rumen Radev took office on 22nd January and he indicated that his first trip would be to Brussels... [Read more](#)

Denmark :**Denmark allows its soldiers to enter Syria**

On 20th February Denmark gave the green light to its special forces based in Iraq to enter Syria, as part of the international coalition against the jihadist movement IS... [Read more](#)

Italy :**Visit by the President of the Italian Council, Paolo Gentiloni, in Berlin**

On 18th January the President of the Italian Council Paolo Gentiloni met his German counterpart, Angela Merkel. They stressed the need to strengthen cooperation on migratory issues and to settle problems via a European method. They attended the German-Italian economic conference together... [Read more](#)

Lithuania :**Lithuania is to erect a fence on its border with the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad**

On 16th January the Lithuanian Home Affairs Minister Eimutis Misiunas, presented a plan to erect a fence along the country's border with the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad... [Read more](#)



Romania :

The Romanian President blocks a relaxation in the penal code



Romanian President Klaus Iohannis attended the Council of Ministers on 18th January to prevent a possible relaxation in the penal code via an emergency decree; this would have allowed some political leaders to avoid prosecution... [Read more](#)

UK :

Brexit: Theresa May unveils the UK's goals



On 17th January Theresa May, the British Prime Minister unveiled her goals for after the UK's exit of the EU. She declared that the final agreement will be submitted to both houses of Parliament... [Read more](#)

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Elections in Northern Ireland on 2nd March



On 16th January James Brokenshire, the British Minister responsible for Northern Ireland announced that the next elections in the parliament of Northern Ireland would take place on 2nd March after the political crisis caused by the resignation of Deputy First Minister and leading personality of Sinn Fein, Martin McGuinness on 9th January... [Read more](#)

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Post Brexit bank relocations



On 18th January the HSBC declared that a thousand jobs would have to be relocated to Paris when the UK left the EU. Goldman Sachs is thinking of relocating 1,000 of its employees to Frankfurt and JP Morgan 4,000. Lloyds wants to open a branch in Germany... [Read more](#)

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Ukraine :

The UK will continue to support Ukraine



On 20th January Michael Fallon, the British Defence Minister announced that the UK would continue to support Ukrainian forces against Russia... [Read more](#)

Ukraine attacks Russia at the International Court of Justice



On 17th January Ukraine launched proceedings against Russia at the International Court of Justice for violations of the Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism of 9th December 1999 and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 21st December 1965... [Read more](#)

Council of Europe :

Letter from Council of Europe's Secretary General to the Duma and the Council of the Russian Federation



The Secretary General of the Council of Europe Thorbjørn Jagland sent a letter to the presidents of both chambers of the Russian Parliament regarding his concern about a draft law that aims to decriminalise domestic violence in Russia... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Rise in inflation rates in Europe



According to figures published by Eurostat on 18th January the annual inflation rate in the EU lay at 1.2% in December 2016, against 0.6% in November and that of the euro zone lay at 1.1% in December 2016, against 0.6% in November... [Read more](#)

Surplus of 15.8 billion € in the EU's current account



According to Eurostat estimates on 19th January the EU's current account of the balance of payments recorded a surplus of 15.8 billion € in November 2016 and 11.8 billion in the services balance... [Read more](#)

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Studies/Reports :

OECD Report on the management of new healthcare technologies



On 16th January the OECD published a report on the management of new healthcare technologies... [Read more](#)

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World Bank: report on the financial sector in the Balkans



On 16th January the World Bank published a report on the financial sector in the Balkans in which it calls on political leaders to rebalance their financial sectors to encourage long term growth in the region... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Exhibition devoted to Michael Andrews



From 20th January to 25th March the Gagosian Gallery, London is organising an exhibition on the British artist Michael Andrews and his paintings of Scottish and Australian landscapes... [Read more](#)

Exhibition devoted to Willy Fleckhaus



From 20th January to 7th May an exhibition devoted to German designer Willy Fleckhaus is running at the MKG in Hamburg. More than 350 pieces of work by the artist will be on show during this exhibition... [Read more](#)

French Film Festival - Vilnius



From 26th January to 10th February the French film festival is taking place in Vilnius, Lithuania entitled "Winter Screens"... [Read more](#)

41st Arte Fiera in Bologna



From 27th to 30th January the 41st Arte Fiera, an international modern and contemporary art fair is taking place in Bologna, Italy... [Read more](#)

Essen is the Green Capital of Europe in 2017



On 21st January the town of Essen in Germany officially became Europe's Green Capital in 2017... [Read more](#)

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International Contemporary Art Fair in Paris



The international contemporary art fair is returning to Paris for the third year running from 27th January to 29th January with over 200 international exhibitors in attendance... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



23rd January
Brussels
"Agriculture and Fisheries" Council



26th January
Brussels
Eurogroup Meeting



27th January
Brussels
Economic and Financial Affairs Council

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