

— I support the Robert Schuman Foundation —

Organising Brexit



The Robert Schuman Foundation is launching the BrexLab, an analysis laboratory that will focus on the negotiations in view of the UK's exit of the European Union. As soon as the British express their wish, in line with article 50 of the Treaty on European Union, long discussions will begin between the two sides. Complicated and technical, but important and even vital for many economic sectors, the latter will come under the scrutiny of public opinion and these negotiations will sometimes be difficult to interpret. The BrexLab will

bring together a panel of leading experts on European issues who will endeavour to analyse the course of the discussions and developments so as to provide those involved with a vital interpretation of events. The results of its work will be addressed confidentially to entities and institutions who would like to receive them. A brief analysis will be published regularly for a wider audience. The BrexLab is an initiative put forward by the Robert Schuman Foundation and two committees at the French Senate: the Committee for European Affairs and the Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and the Armed Forces.

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Foundation :

Schuman Report on Europe



The "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union 2017", the 11th edition has just been published and is available now in bookshops and on the Foundation's site. Order it so that you can understand all present and future European issues... [Read more](#)

European Council :

Conclusions of the President of the European Council

On 9th March the European Council published its conclusions



(employment, growth, security, defence, migration) which were those of the President and not the Council since they were not accepted by Poland which in this way wanted to express its discontent with the re-election of Donald Tusk... [Read more](#)

Re-election of Donald Tusk as the head of the European Council



On 9th March the heads of State and government re-elected Donald Tusk as President of the European Council for a second mandate of two and a half years until 30th November 2019... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Fines of 155 million € for trade cartels



On 8th March the European Commission set fines to a total of 155 million € on six car air conditioning and engine cooling suppliers € 155 million in cartel settlement in the European Economic Area... [Read more](#)

Council :

CAP post-2020



On 6th March 28 the Agricultural Ministers indicated that they wanted to reform the CAP after 2020 in response to environmental challenges, to ensure generational renewal and to guarantee a place for farmers in the food supply chain... [Read more](#)

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Tripartite social summit on growth, employment and fairness



On 8th March participants in the social summit recalled the role played by the single market and free-trade in the prosperity of the European economy. Social partners have asked the European Union for more investment... [Read more](#)

Adaptation of the financial framework to new priorities



On 7th March the European Affairs Ministers debated the fight to counter terrorism, the reform of the Schengen Code and of the adaptation of the multi-annual financial framework for 2014-2020 to new priorities... [Read more](#)

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Extension of restrictive measures



On 13th March 2017 the Council extended for a further six month period, i.e. until 15th September 2017 the restrictive measures linked to actions that compromise or threaten the territorial, sovereignty and the independence of Ukraine. These measures comprise a freezing of assets and a ban on entering the EU... [Read more](#)

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EU-Algeria Partnership



The EU and Algeria adopted their joint partnership priorities during an Association Council on 13th March 2017. The partnership priorities establish a renewed enhanced political cooperation framework. The European Commission also presented its annual report on the State of Relations between the EU-Algeria... [Read more](#)

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Court of Justice :

VAT rate on books, periodicals and digital newspapers



According to a decision by the European Union's Court of Justice on 7th March the exclusion of digital books, newspapers and periodicals from the application of a reduced rate of VAT where they are supplied electronically is not contrary to the principle of equal treatment... [Read more](#)

Confirmation of fines against Samsung



In a decision on 9th March, the Court upheld the fines imposed on Samsung SDI and Samsung SDI (Malaysia) for their participation in the cartel on the market for tubes for television sets and for computer monitors between 1996/1997 and 2006... [Read more](#)

ECB :

The ECB Council of Governors



On 9th March the ECB Council of Governors did not change its interest rates and revised its forecasts of GDP growth for the euro area for 2017 and 2018 upwards. Geopolitical risks have grown in the world, warned Mario Draghi who spoke in support of the euro, a source of "solidarity" ahead of several elections in Europe... [Read more](#)

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European Agencies :

Successful launch of the VEGA rocket



The rocket VEGA that is to place the Sentinel-2B satellite in orbit for the European Earth Observation programme Copernicus successfully lifted off from Kourou on 6th March... [Read more](#)

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Crime in the digital era



Whilst 5,000 organised criminal gangs have been detected in Europe, it is vital for European police forces control digital technologies to arrest criminals who are using these means warned Europol on 9th March... [Read more](#)

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Germany :

Angela Merkel defends an open, strong Europe



In her declaration on 9th March German Chancellor Angela Merkel defended the interests of the European Union. She highlighted the positive effects of recent economic growth, the importance of solidarity in the immigration crisis and the defence of European security. She warned Turkey of any types of excess... [Read more](#)

German Trade Surplus



Germany's trade surplus rose slightly in January 2017 to reach 18.5 billion € according to provisional data published on 10th March by the Federal Statistics Office, Destatis... [Read more](#)

Estonia :

Parliament's support to priorities of the Estonian Presidency of the European Council



The programme defined by the Estonian government for the Presidency of the European Council in the second half of 2017 has won the support of the Parliament's European Affairs Committee... [Read more](#)

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France :

Opel/Vauxhall joins the PSA Group



On 6th March the car manufacturer PSA announced the purchase of the European car branch of General Motors, Opel for a total of 2.2 billion €... [Read more](#)

Greece :

Greece - hopes for growth revised downwards

The supposed return to growth by Greece in 2016 was broken on 5th



March by revised data from the Greek statistics office... [Read more](#)

Hungary :

Hungary takes position over Brexit



On 7th March the Hungarian Foreign Affairs Minister Péter Szijjártó spoke for the first time on a "fair agreement" between the EU and the UK... [Read more](#)

The Netherlands :

Most recent polls ahead of the general elections of 15th March



The most recent polls on 12th March for the elections on 15th March in the Netherlands show that the People's Liberal and Democratic Party (VVD) led by Prime Minister Mark Rutte is slightly ahead of Geert Wilders Freedom Party (PVV) by some 3%... [Read more](#)

UK :

New outlook for the British budget



The British authorities revised their growth forecast to 2% in 2017 which did not prevent the government presenting a frugal budget to parliament on 8th March ahead of the upheaval expected with Brexit... [Read more](#)

Reform of English law post-Brexit



A report by the House of Lords Constitutional Committee has attracted the government's attention to the legislative modifications that will be necessary post-Brexit so that the exit of European law and the replacement of European regulations by British laws can be organised... [Read more](#)

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The House of Lords amends the draft bill on Brexit again



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On 7th March the House of Lords adopted an amendment regarding the obligation to have Parliament approve the UK's exit of the EU 366 votes against 268. MPs had a right to veto over the final decision. The text is to be examined again in the House of Commons on 13th March... [Read more](#)

Migration :

The Council of Europe issues a warning about the protection of child refugees



On 6th March the Council of Europe presented a report devoted to the protection of refugee children against exploitation and sexual abuse. In 2015 337,000 children were registered as asylum seekers, of whom 88,300 were unaccompanied and 60% of these unaccompanied children have disappeared... [Read more](#)

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The Hungarian Parliament voted in support of the detention of migrants



On 7th March the Hungarian Parliament adopted a law that is contrary to EU law providing for the systematic detention of all migrants who enter the country. Migrants will be placed in "transit zones" where they will be held whilst waiting for a final decision regarding their asylum request... [Read more](#)

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Poland finally signs the agreement for the HQ of Frontex



The European Agency Frontex will build its own HQ in Warsaw on land made available to it according to an agreement signed on 9th March

with the Poland government. Established in Warsaw since 2005 Frontex had to rent its premises to date... [Read more](#)



The International Organisation for Migration needs 25 million \$ for the Ukraine



The International Organisation for Migration needs 25 million \$ to finance its aid projects for 180,000 who are in a humanitarian crisis in the east of Ukraine... [Read more](#)



Council of Europe :

The Venice Committee issues a warning to the Turkish regime



On 10th March the Venice Committee adopted an opinion whereby the proposals to revise the Turkish Constitution would comprise a "dangerous regression" for democracy... [Read more](#)



UN :

Ukraine lodges a complaint against Russia before the International Court of Justice



From 6th to 9th March the International Court of Justice looked into the complaint lodged by Ukraine against Russia due to its support of separatist groups in the East of Ukraine. Ukraine hopes that the Court will acknowledge the fact that Russia is infringing international law and its commitments... [Read more](#)



OECD :

OECD Interim Economic Outlook



On 7th March the OECD presented its short-term outlook for the world economy whereby world growth will lie at 3.3% in 2017, against 3% in 2016, and 3.6% in 2018... [Read more](#)



Eurostat :

GDP increase



According to a study by Eurostat on 7th March GDP increased by 0.5% in the EU and by 0.4% in the euro area in the 4th quarter of 2016... [Read more](#)



Significant gaps between men and women



According to a Eurostat study on 6th March women only represent 35% of European managers and they earn 23% less than their male counterparts... [Read more](#)



Studies/Reports :

World Bank report on Digital Europe



A report by the World Bank on 7th March on Digital Europe insists on the work to be made by Europe to put the digital economy into value... [Read more](#)



Report on male/female equality in Europe

On the occasion of the international day of Women's Rights, the Commission published a report on equality between men and women on 8th March... [Read more](#)



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Culture :

Aberdeen Jazz Festival



From 15th to 19th March the town of Aberdeen in Scotland is organising a jazz festival that brings together around one hundred European and international artists, during indoor and external concerts... [Read more](#)

The Mediterranean in clair-obscur in the Borghese Gallery



Until 21st May the Barberini Palazzo, together with the MUZA (Muzeum Nazzjonali tal-Arti) of La Valette and the National Galleries of Ancient Art is hosting the works of Ribera, Stomer and Mattia Preti, in an exhibition called "The Mediterranean in clair-obscur, Ribera, Stomer and Mattia Preti from Malta to Rome".. [Read more](#)

Saint Patrick Festival



From 16th to 19th March the Saint Patrick festivities are taking place in Ireland and the UK. This festival is celebrated in honour of Saint Patrick, a missionary who converted Ireland to Christianity. Tradition has it that people dress in green, the colour of clover and the symbol of Ireland... [Read more](#)

Rik Wouters Exhibition in the royal fine arts museums of Belgium



Until 2nd July the royal fine arts museums of Belgium are organising a retrospective devoted to Rik Wouters. A prominent figure of fauvism Rik Wouters left brilliant, colourful artwork behind. His extraordinary career made him the inevitable Master of Modern Art in Belgium... [Read more](#)

Exhibition "21 rue La Boétie" at the Maillol Museum



Since 2nd March the exhibition "21 rue La Boétie" reviews the career of the major art trader Paul Rosenberg. Around 60 works of modern art - (Picasso, Léger, Braque, Matisse, Laurencin) are on show. Many works are directly linked to the trader, whilst others refer to the historic and artistic context of the period... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



13th to 16th March
Strasbourg
Plenary Session at the European Parliament



15th March
The Netherlands
General Elections

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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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