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Austria- a return of the People's Party (ÖVP) - Liberal Party (FPÖ) coalition?

Author: Corinne Deloy



On 15th October next, 6.4 million Austrians aged 16 and over will be appointing the 183 members of the National Council (Nationalrat), the lower house of Parliament. 16 political parties are running in the election which is record. According to the most recent poll by Research Affairs, published on 14th September, the ÖVP is due to come out ahead with 35% of the vote. It is due to draw ahead of the Liberal Party (FPÖ), which is due to win 25% and the SPÖ, which is due to win 24% of the vote. The Greens-Green Alternative, NEOS, New Austria (NEOS), a liberal party led by Matthias Strolz, and the Peter Pilz List are due to win 5% of the vote each. In view of these voting intentions, a government coalition with the ÖVP and the FPÖ, led by Sebastian Kurz seems to be the most likely option.

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Front page! :

Germany, an election at the heart of Europe



Jean-Dominique Giuliani assesses the new German policy after the elections of 24th September and summarises the main challenges to which the new German majority will have to rise... [Read more](#)

Elections :

A fourth mandate for Angela Merkel?

The Bundestag elections are taking place on 24th September next. Angela Merkel seems to be on course to win a fourth mandate. Indeed, according to the most recent Infratest Dimap poll, her party is credited with 37% of the vote whilst her social democratic rival from the SPD is



due to win only 20%. The question remains about the other party which will form a coalition with her... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

Judicial Reform: the Commission sends a reasoned opinion to Poland



On 12th September the European Commission issued a reasoned opinion to Poland regarding its judicial reforms that are said to be threatening the independence of the justice system and of being discriminatory against women. Poland has one month to comply with the European requirements otherwise the Commission might turn to the

ECJ... [Read more](#)



Trade: new framework for the filtering of direct investments



During his speech on the State of the Union on 13th September President Juncker put forward a framework for the filtering of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI's) in the EU. The Commission will create a cooperation mechanism with the Member States and will play the role of a filter to guarantee "national security" and "public order"... [Read](#)

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New code of conduct of Commission members



During the speech on the State of the Union on 13th September, President Juncker announced the updating of ethic rules applying obligatorily to Commission members. The "waiting period" has been extended to two years, the idea of conflict of interest defined, transparency increased and an enhanced independent ethics committee established... [Read more](#)



Reform of the Citizens' Initiative and Political Party funding



Frans Timmermans, the Commission's First Vice-President announced on 15th September that the age required to support a European Citizens' Initiative would be reduced from 18 to 16, whilst greater transparency regarding the financing of European parties will be introduced... [Read more](#)



Speech on the State of the Union: JC Juncker wants to take advantage of the "favourable winds"



Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, gave his speech on the State of the Union on 13th September. He called to take advantage "of a rise in confidence" in Europe to strengthen Member States' integration by extending the euro, the Schengen area and cooperation. Read on Jean-Dominique Giuliani's editorial on this issue...

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Parliament :

Single Residence Permit for third country citizens



On 13th September MEPs adopted a single residence permit for third country residents. Member States have been concerned since 2009 about the extent and the sophistication of the falsification of the model in force at present... [Read more](#)



Development of free WIFI everywhere in Europe



MEPs adopted a new initiative on 12th September that aims to develop free internet access in public places across Europe. By 2020 the WIFI4EU initiative should enable more than 6000 local communities in the EU to deploy rapid, free WIFI connection... [Read more](#)



EU States step up their cooperation against gas shortages



An EU country that faces gas shortages will be able to call on the other Member States according to a resolution adopted by European Parliament on 12th September. The new cooperation rules established four "risk groups" within which the States will be able to implement preventive emergency measures in the event of a supply crisis... [Read more](#)

Creation of a special committee on terrorism



European Parliament has approved the list of 30 members of the new special committee on the fight to counter terrorism. This committee should identify the dysfunctions in terms of the fight to counter terrorism and cross-border cooperation. Nathalie Griesbeck (ALDE, FR) has been elected to chair this committee... [Read more](#)

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Council :

Extension of sanctions linked to actions taken against Ukraine



On 14th September the EU decided to extend the sanctions taken out against Russia until 15th March 2018 because of the latter's infringement of Ukraine's territorial integrity... [Read more](#)

The EU increases the European Fund for Strategic Investments



On 13th September the Commission welcomed the agreement between the European Parliament and the Member States regarding the European Fund for Strategic Investments that will be brought up to 500 billion euro by 2020 and be extended to new sectors like sustainable agriculture and fishing... [Read more](#)

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Eurogroup Meeting



The euro zone must first pinpoint its internal problems before thinking about institutional reforms that are supposed to regulate it declared the 19 Finance Ministers of the euro zone on 15th September. They reviewed the progress achieved in the ongoing economic adjustment programme in Greece... [Read more](#)

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Discussions on migration and the fight to counter terrorism



On 14th September the 28 European Ministers of Justice and Internal Affairs discussed immigration and the fight to counter terrorism... [Read more](#)

Economy and Finance Ministers' Meeting



The 28 Economy and Finance Ministers met in Tallinn on 15th and 16th September. They discussed the need to develop new rules on digital tax and to counter fiscal optimisation strategies implemented by large web companies (GAFA). They committed to reach a joint agreement by December... [Read more](#)

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Informal European Development Ministers' Meeting



European Ministers responsible for Development met in Tallinn on 11th September notably to address the issue of the external investment plan, the new European tool to help investment in the countries of Africa as well as those neighbouring the Union... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Climate: the world is progressing towards the Paris Agreement

In Montreal on 16th September the Environment Ministers of around 30 countries resolutely moved towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement. They reasserted the "irreversible and non-negotiable" nature of the agreement in spite of the USA's withdrawal, that was re-iterated by the White House due to terms "that were not more favourable towards the



Americans.." [Read more](#)

Acting against disinformation on the Internet



The EU's diplomatic service has launched an internet site designed to counter on-line disinformation. The site called "EU vs. Disinfo" is devoted to the compilation of false information or mistaken rumours, playing them off against real facts, together with documented statistics... [Read more](#)

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Court of Justice :

Rejection of the implementation of the precautionary principle regarding GMOs



In a decision delivered on 13th September the ECJ maintained that "Member States may not adopt emergency measures" regarding GMOs "unless there is clear evidence that there is a serious risk to health or the environment." The precautionary principle is rejected because GMOs have "already been the focus of a full scientific assessment.." [Read more](#)

Google challenges the Commission's fine



Following the Commission's decision on 27th June imposing a fine of 2.42 billion € on Google for abuse of dominant position on the search engine market, the American giant appealed to the ECJ in a challenge against this decision... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Opening of car fair in Frankfurt



Until 24th September around 1000 exhibitors from 39 countries are presenting their innovations at the 67th International Car Fair in Frankfurt. Chancellor Angela Merkel stressed on 14th September the importance of this sector for the labour market and growth and insisted on the vital nature of reviving confidence in it after the Volkswagen scandal... [Read more](#)

Estonia :

Estonia commits to Ukraine territorial integrity



Estonian Foreign Affairs Minister Sven Mikser met his Ukrainian counterpart Pavlo Klimkin on 14th September 2017. The crisis in the east of Ukraine was discussed in particular and Mr Mikser reasserted the EU's commitment to maintaining the integrity of the Ukrainian territory, as well as the priority given to the Eastern Partnership. The Estonian Minister of the European Council intends to maintain a constant commitment regarding the Ukrainian issue... [Read more](#)

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Finland :

Refugees: Finland prepared to double its reception quota



Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä said he was prepared to raise the refugee quota hosted by his country to 2000 in order to relieve the distribution system between the EU's Member States. Following a downturn in the situation in Syria the initial quota of 750 refugees per year was raised to 1,050 in 2015... [Read more](#)

France :

Jean-Yves Le Drian in Russia: establishment of the Trianon Dialogue



The French Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and his Russian counterpart Serguey Lavrov signed the Trianon Dialogue on 11th September that focuses on the launch of a Franco-Russian forum. The latter aims to develop exchange and cooperation between Russian and French societies... [Read more](#)

Meeting between the German Chancellor and the French Prime Minister in Berlin



On 15th September German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe met in Berlin. Edouard Philippe defended the reforms undertaken in France and prepared the way for the next European proposals made by President Emmanuel Macron just days after the election of the Bundestag in Germany and a very likely fourth mandate for the Chancellor... [Read more](#)

UK :

The House of Commons



On 12th September the House of Commons voted in support 326 votes in support against 290 the bill repealing European law. This bill enables the repeal of the European Communities Act of 1972 and to transpose European law into British law... [Read more](#)

London is still the world's leading financial market



The Global Financial Center Index published the ranking of the top world financial markets on Monday 11th September and London remains at the top with a 24 point lead over the second market, New York. Frankfurt lies 11th whilst Luxembourg and Paris lie in 14th and 26th respectively. Will it be the same after Brexit?.. [Read more](#)

Sweden :

Military manoeuvres with NATO



Until 29th September half of the Swedish army together with 20,000 American, French, Danish, Estonian, Lithuanian and Finnish troops will be simulating a mock attack of Stockholm and the island of Gotland. This exercise named "Aurora 17" aims to test the response capability of NATO's troops against aggression from a third country... [Read more](#)

Kosovo :

Ramush Haradinaj, new Prime Minister



After three months of negotiations following the general elections, Ramush Haradinaj, former chief of the Liberation Army of Kosovo was appointed Prime Minister of the country. Accused of war crimes by the ICTY and finally acquitted Mr Haradinaj was also arrested in France in January 2017 on Serbia request before being released in April... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Inflation rate rising



According to a Eurostat study on 18th September the annual inflation rate of the euro zone lay at 1.5% in August 2017, against 1.3% in July 2017. A year ago it lay at 0.2%. The EU's annual inflation rate lay at 1.7% in August 2017, against 1.5% in July 2017. A year ago it lay at 0.3%... [Read more](#)

EU and euro zone surplus



According to Eurostat figures published on 15th September the euro zone recorded a trade surplus of 23.2 billion € in July 2017, and the EU a surplus of 8.8 billion €... [Read more](#)

Employment up by 0.4% in the EU and the euro zone in the second quarter



The number of people in work increased by 0.4% in the EU and the euro zone between the first and second quarter of 2017 announced Eurostat on 13th September. In comparison with the same quarter the previous year employment increased by 1.5% in the EU28 and by 1.6% in the euro zone... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Paris: "L'Europe autrement", the photographic exhibition by Atelier Néerlandais



From 21st September to 17th December the Atelier Néerlandais with "L'Europe autrement" (Europe otherwise) is offering a vision of Europe via three series of photographs: "Parliaments of the European Union" by Nico Bick, "Nation" by Otto Snoek and "The Europeans" by Henri Cartier-Bresson... [Read more](#)

Grand Palais



From 21st September to 29th January 2018 the Grand Palais is organising an exhibition paying tribute to the American photographer Irving Penn, who was notably made famous for his shots of celebrities like Alfred Hitchcock, Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali... [Read more](#)

Zurich: Photographic exhibition by Miroslav Tichy



Until 5th November photographs by Czech artist Miroslav Tichy are on show at the "Photobastei" in Zurich. The female body is the focus of this artist's work who sometimes draws over his pictures, associating painting and photography... [Read more](#)

International Cinema Festival in San Sebastian



From 22nd to 30th September the 65th International Film Festival is taking place in San Sebastian - this is deemed to be one of the biggest festivals in the country... [Read more](#)

Basquiat Exhibition "Boom for Real" in London



The Barbican in London is running an exceptional retrospective devoted to the artist Jean-Michel Basquiat from 21st September to 28th September 2018. It is the first time that the UK is hosting a major retrospective devoted to this prodigy of contemporary art who died in 1988 aged 27... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



24th September

Germany
General Elections
France
Senatorial Elections (Part renewal)



25th September

Brussels
"General Affairs" Council (article 50)

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