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Wishful Brexiting - or the complicated transformation of what the British want into reality

Authors: Jérôme Gazzano, Andi Mustafaj



The definition of the transition period tallies with Theresa May's request and those repeated by businesses established in the UK, which have indicated they need at least a year to move their activities if necessary. By suggesting an impossible Brexit the UK is placing the burden of its effective definition on the European Union and by this is losing the very initiative of it.

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Front page! :

France, Europe's Troublemaker



In the wake of the European Council Jean-Dominique Giuliani explores Europe's response to the rapid change ongoing in the international arena... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

"European citizenship: reality or utopia?"



The section of the report and studies by the Council of State is organising a series of conferences devoted to citizenship. For their 5th conference devoted to European citizenship, Pascale Joannin, General Manager of the Foundation is to speak on 28th March alongside Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Jean-Jacques Kasel. The panel will be moderated by Jean-Claude Bonichot... [Read more](#)

Smuggling, Counterfeiting and the Financing of Terrorism



On 11th April in Brussels the Robert Schuman Foundation is organising a conference on the financing of terrorism and the answers that might be given to this. Notably with the participation of European Commissioners Julian King and Pierre Moscovici, Nathalie Griesbeck, the Chair of the European Parliament's special counter-terrorism committee, Pedro Serrano, Deputy Secretary-General of the European

External Action Service and others ... it is obligatory to enrol!.. [Read more](#)

European Council :

Conclusions of heads of State and government



On 22nd March the heads of State and government of the European Union adopted conclusions on employment, growth and competitiveness, as well as on the Paris Agreement, Digital Europe, the Western Balkans, Turkey's actions in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea and the attack in Salisbury. On 23rd they also adopted guidelines on the framework of post-Brexit relations with the UK... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

Towards a new corporate tax on businesses with significant digital establishment



On 21st March the European Commission put forward a new tax on turnover aiming to guarantee that digital business activities are taxed in the EU in a fair manner that encourages growth. These measures would help Europe play a key role at world level in terms of setting out tax legislation that is adapted to the modern economy in the digital era...

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Brexit: Michel Barnier and David Davis agree on transition



On 19th March the European Union's negotiator in chief Michel Barnier, and British Minister David Davis presented a draft agreement on the UK's withdrawal from the EU. An agreement was found on the period of transition and on citizens' rights. Issues concerning the governance of the withdrawal, normally granted to the ECJ, and the Irish border, are still pending... [Read more](#)

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Competition: Bayer can purchase Monsanto



On 21st March the European Commission announced that it would allow the purchase of Monsanto by Bayer in virtue of the regulation on mergers. This is subject to the concession of a wide range of activities, designed to remedy the overlapping of activities by both sides in the sectors of seeds, pesticides and digital agriculture... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Provisional agreement on posted workers



The new European rules aiming to improve the protection of posted workers in another Member State were concluded informally between negotiators of the European Parliament and the Council on 19th March. Workers who are posted temporarily in another country are to receive equal pay for equal work in the same place, according to this provisional agreement...

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Guaranteeing fair competition in air transport



The European Parliament's transport committee adopted new rules aiming to protect the EU's airlines better and to guarantee fair competition in air transport. The proposal is part of the Commission's work to guarantee that the European air transport sector remains competitive and that connectivity is protected... [Read more](#)

Strengthening of rules governing gas pipelines

The European rules governing the gas market must apply to all gas pipelines entering and exiting the Union, except in strictly limited cases, announced MEPs in the European Parliament's Energy Committee on



21st March. Economic sanctions against third countries must also be taken into consideration... [Read more](#)

Council :

The European elections will take place between 23rd and 26th May 2019



During a European Affairs Minister on 20th March it was decided that the European elections would take place between 23rd and 26th May 2019... [Read more](#)

Support to the EU's Social Dimension



On 21st March in Brussels the Tripartite Social Summit for growth and employment took place. In this context Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov (whose country is ensuring the rotating presidency of the Council) stressed the importance of strengthening the Union's social dimension, notably via social cohesion and the reduction of inequality. To do this sound foundations need to be built... [Read more](#)

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Diplomacy :

The European Union exempted from steel/aluminium duties



On 22nd March Robert Lighthizer, delegate for US Trade declared to the Senatorial Committee that the EU would be exempted from customs duties on steel and aluminium imports... [Read more](#)

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Court of Justice :

Cancellation of the Parliament's decision on trilogues



On 22nd March the Union's General Court indicated that the European Parliament must in principle provide access to documents regarding ongoing trilogues if a specific request is made. A trilogue is a three-party informal meeting in which representatives of Parliament, the Council and the Commission take part... [Read more](#)

Germany :

General Policy speech by Angela Merkel



On 21st March Angela Merkel presented to the Bundestag her government's guidelines for her fourth mandate. Deeming Europe to be Germany's future, emphasis was placed on the management of the migratory crisis and the joint challenges to meet, from social cohesion to the protection of the borders... [Read more](#)

Visit by the German Chancellor to Poland



German Chancellor Angela Merkel met Polish President Andrzej Duda and her counterpart Mateusz Morawiecki in Warsaw on 19th March. They stressed the importance of bilateral relations both from the economic, political and European points of view. They called for the revival of cooperation under the Weimar Triangle... [Read more](#)

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Cyprus :

Tax Convention with the UK



On 22nd March Cyprus and the UK signed the "New Convention to eliminate double taxation and the prevention of tax evasion and avoidance." This text, based on OECD criteria, aims to update a convention that entered into force in 1975, and to strengthen tax cooperation between the two countries... [Read more](#)

Estonia :

Cooperation with France in the area of digital governance

Estonian Minister for Entrepreneurship and Information Technology,



Urve Palo signed a cooperation agreement with the French Secretary of State for Digital Affairs, Mounir Mahjoubi in the areas of e-governance and digital governance... [Read more](#)



France :

International Francophonie Day



The international day of French-speaking countries and French speakers took place on 20th March and the 23rd week of the French language and French-speaking countries took place between 17th and 25th March. Every year this festival provides French speakers from around the world an opportunity to celebrate the French language in all its diversity. More than 1500 events were organised on this occasion in over 70 countries... [Read more](#)



Ireland :

Meeting between Leo Varadkar and Angela Merkel



On 20th March Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar met German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin to discuss the agenda of the European Council meeting (the focus of which are notably Brexit, trade and digital taxation)... [Read more](#)



Italy :

Election of the leaders of the two houses of Parliament



Following discussions by the various parties, the two houses of the Italian Parliament elected their leader on 24th March. The leader of the House of Deputies is now Roberto Fico of the Five Stars Movement, the Senate will go to Elisabetta Alberti Casellati of Forza Italia. She will be the first woman ever to lead the Senate... [Read more](#)



Luxembourg :

State visit by the Grand Duke of Luxembourg



The Grand Duke of Luxembourg was on a visit to France from 19th to 21st March. It was the first by the Grand-Duke in 40 years. On 20th March the French and Luxembourg Prime Ministers Edouard Philippe and Xavier Bettel signed four agreements to strengthen work between the two countries, notably in the area of transport... [Read more](#)



Poland :

Rule of Law: Warsaw answers Brussels



Poland gave its answer to Brussels' criticism of its controversial judicial reforms which expose Warsaw to an unprecedented European procedure that may lead to sanctions, said a press release on 20th March, "the deadline" for Poland to respond to the recommendations made regarding the rule of law... [Read more](#)



Memory Law deemed unconstitutional



On 22nd March the Polish Prosecutor General and present Justice Minister, Zbigniew Ziobro deemed the controversial law on the Shoah unconstitutional. This law provides for terms in prison of up to three years for those who might "attribute responsibility or co-responsibility of the nation or the State of Poland for the crimes committed by the German Third Reich.".. [Read more](#)



Undertaking legislative reform to combat foreign bribery



According to a press release by the OECD on 22nd March Poland must rapidly make progress to introduce the main recommendations made to it by the OECD's working group on bribery to which it had not made any follow-up, if the country is to combat foreign bribery... [Read more](#)



Portugal :

Joint declaration by Portugal and the Commission



On 22nd March Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa and the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker made a joint declaration to launch discussions for the introduction of a pilot reform in Portugal. This will aim to support training, notably via apprenticeship and the training of adults, and will receive the support of the European Structural and Investment Funds... [Read more](#)

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Slovakia :

Peter Pellegrini appointed Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovakia



Slovakian President Andrej Kiska officially appointed the new Prime Minister Peter Pellegrini and his government on 22nd March. This appointment aims to bring the political crisis to an end, caused by the death of an investigative journalist... [Read more](#)

Kosovo :

Parliament ratifies the agreement on the border with Montenegro



On 21st March the Kosovar MPs ratified the agreement signed in 2015 on the definition of the border with Montenegro. The ratification of this agreement was one of the last conditions set by the EU to liberalise short-stay visas for Kosovars... [Read more](#)

Montenegro :

Deputy Prime Minister at the European Parliament



On 20th March the Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro, Zoran Pazin spoke to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament. He stressed the importance of "the support of the country's European partners" in the accession process and insisted on the work achieved by Montenegro in view of finalising rapidly negotiations over the chapters 23 and 24 (rule of law)... [Read more](#)

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Eurostat :

Migration: 650,000 first-asylum requests in 2017 in the EU



On 20th March Eurostat published figures showing that in 2017 650,000 first asylum requests were made for international protection in the Member States of the EU, i.e. nearly half the number in 2016... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Immigration: the key role played by education in integration



A report published on 19th March by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on the request of the European Commission confirmed the need to promote inclusive education and common values... [Read more](#)

The number of prisoners rises in Europe, with prisons almost full



The number of prisoners in Europe rose slightly in 2016 and prisons are still overcrowded in countries like France and Belgium for example, notes the Council of Europe in a study published on 20th March... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Delacroix Exhibition at the Louvre

From 29th March to 23rd July 2018 an exhibition devoted to Eugène Delacroix is taking place at the Louvre Museum. Born of the partnership with the Metropolitan Museum of Art it will bring together more than 180



works of art, including paintings as well as certain written pieces of the work by the artist... [Read more](#)

Heidelberg Spring



Until 21st April Heidelberg is hosting "Spring", a classical music festival first established in 1966. More than 30 concerts and recitals are on the programme as well as some master classes... [Read more](#)

Easter Festival - Aix-en-Provence



For the 6th Easter Festival and until 8th April Aix-en-Provence is offering visitors various master-classes, musical performances and concerts... [Read more](#)

Easter Festival - Baden Baden



Until 2nd April Baden Baden is putting on an Easter Festival with a mix of concerts, operas and operas such as Parzifal by Wagner with the Philharmonic Orchestra of Berlin... [Read more](#)

Easter Festival - Salzburg



Until 2nd April the Easter Festival of Salzburg is taking place with works such as Puccini's Tosca, Mozart's Double Concerto, Schumann, Schubert, Mahler's Third Symphony and the Satyricon by Bruno Maderna... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



26th March

Varna

Meeting of EU and Turkish leaders

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