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Schengen: from resistance to resilience?

Author: Yves Bertoncini



Regular predictions announcing the "death of the Schengen area" have been rather excessive, if not meaningless. Indeed, they echo the high tension that opposes the 26 countries sharing this area, notably becoming clear during the massive influx of refugees in 2015-2016 and then during the terrorist attacks of the last few years. Tension like this is symptomatic of a double crisis, whose causes must be identified to provide effective remedy: an often-mentioned solidarity crisis between the States of the EU, but also a confidence crisis, which reflects the difficulty in sharing a so-called area "without internal borders."

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Front page! :

Europ: Macron's Lesson



In his editorial "Europe: Macron's Lesson", published on 23rd April the Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation, Jean-Dominique Giuliani calls on the leaders of Europe to support the project embodied by the French President, that of a "Europe on the move"... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

For a better understanding of Europe, get your copy of the Schuman Report 2018



The Schuman Report 2018 on the State of the Union is available in French and English. This edition analyses the challenges that Europe faces, notably in terms of trade. With articles by the best experts, an exclusive interview with the French President Emmanuel Macron, unique maps and commented statistics, this book offers a complete overview of the EU. It is available in bookshops, on our website and in digital version... [Read more](#)

Commission :

EU-Mexico: agreement of principle on a new free trade treaty



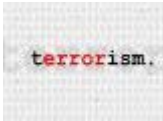
The free-trade treaty between the EU and Mexico has governed their relations since 2000. It will now be modernised after an "agreement of principle" that was signed in Brussels on 21st April... [Read more](#)

Protection for Whistleblowers



On 23rd April the European Commission launched a draft directive that aims to protect whistleblowers against retaliation from within or by the justice - drawing lessons from a series of world scale scandals... [Read more](#)

Security Union: facilitating access to electronic evidence



On 17th April the Commission put forward new rules aiming to help police and judicial authorities to obtain electronic evidence faster and more easily. This includes emails and documents on the cloud, which they need to undertake their investigations as well as to prosecute and convict criminals and terrorists... [Read more](#)

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Trade: free-trade agreements with Singapore and Japan



On 18th April the European Commission presented the trade and investment agreements to the Council between the EU and Singapore as well as the text for an economic partnership agreement with Japan. These stages mark the beginning of the ratification process at EU level... [Read more](#)

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The launch of membership negotiations with Albania and Macedonia



On 17th April the Commission unveiled its conclusions on the progress achieved by the States of the Western Balkans in view of a future membership of the EU. It recommends the launch of negotiations with Albania and Macedonia... [Read more](#)

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Parliament :

Speech by Emmanuel Macron to European Parliament



In a speech delivered on 17th April to MEPs in Strasbourg the President of the French Republic recalled the fundamentals of the Union emphasising the need to re-found European sovereignty as a complementary element to the national sovereignty of each individual State. Moreover he proposed a deepening of Economic and Monetary Union, the taxation of the web giants and financial support to local communities hosting refugees... [Read more](#)

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MEPs give greenlight to the management of the 2016 budget



MEPs approved the implementation of the EU's 2016 budget in plenary session on 18th April. They notably welcomed the reduction in mistakes regarding payments totalling only 3.1%, the lowest rate seen in the last ten years... [Read more](#)

Reduction of CO2 emissions and energy savings



On 17th April, MEPs set the goal of almost zero energy consumption by buildings in the EU by 2050. They also are also demanding a 30% reduction in CO2 emissions by transport, agriculture, buildings and waste in the EU as well as a CO2 balance, absorbed by forests by 2030, in order to reach the Paris climate goals... [Read more](#)

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New rules for organic food



On 19th April MEPs adopted rules to stimulate organic production to guarantee its quality at European level... [Read more](#)

Council :

Conclusions of the "General Affairs" Council



On 17th April the European Affairs Ministers addressed the reform of the European electoral law and the issue of the rule of law in Poland. They also attended the Commission's presentation of its new enlargement package... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Joint declaration by the G7 countries



In a joint declaration on 17th April the leaders of the G7 countries - Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, USA and the EU unanimously condemned the use of chemical weapons in the attack on 7th April in Eastern Ghouta and re-iterated their support the intervention by the USA, France and the UK in Syria on 13th April... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Emmanuel Macron in Berlin



French President Emmanuel Macron was in Berlin on 19th April to discuss the reform of Europe with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. This meeting aimed to prepare for the Franco-German Council of 19th June. The French President recalled the need to promote European responsibility and solidarity in the euro zone. The Chancellor called for work to be undertaken via compromise and the reform of the European stability fund... [Read more](#)

Andrea Nahles elected head of the SPD



Former Employment Minister Andrea Nahles was elected on 22nd April as head of the SPD. Aged 47 she is the first woman to lead the party, taking over from Martin Schulz. She won 66% of the vote... [Read more](#)

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Cyprus :

Informal meeting between the Cypriot President and the head of the Turkish community



On 16th April the Cypriot President Nikos Anastasiadis met the head of the northern part of the island, Mustafa Akinci, together with the UN's Special Envoy to Cyprus, Elizabeth Spehar. "Frank" discussions focused on the prospect of further dialogue (under the auspices of the UN), and an agreement of principle on the management of certain crossing-points... [Read more](#)

Spain :

ETA announces its dissolution



On 18th April the Basque terrorist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) founded in 1959 announced that it had programmed its dissolution for the end of next month - May. Its disarmament was finalised in April 2017... [Read more](#)

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France :

Canadian PM Justin Trudeau visits France

On 16th and 17th April Canadian PM Justin Trudeau made an official visit to France and met with President Emmanuel Macron, as well as the French PM Edouard Philippe. He also spoke at the National Assembly... [Read more](#)



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Launch of European Citizens' Consultations



On 17th April the French President Emmanuel Macron launched the citizens' consultations in Epinal in the Vosges. These consultations are to provide citizens with an opportunity to exchange views about their expectations of Europe... [Read more](#)

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Greece :

Budgetary Surplus 2017



Greece achieved a budgetary surplus in 2017 of 0.8% of its GDP and a primary surplus of 4%, going beyond the goals set by its creditors (IMF and EU) for the second year running said Elstat on 23rd April... [Read more](#)

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Ireland :

The Fishing industry prepares for the consequences of Brexit



On 20th April the representatives of the fishing industry met the Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Business, to exchange views on the potentially negative effects of Brexit on the fishing sector... [Read more](#)

Malta :

Daphne Project: international media investigation into the death of a journalist



On 17th April the first results of the investigation of the "Daphne Project" involving nearly 18 international media were published. This project aims to throw light on the assassination of the Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia, on 16th October last and to continue her investigation on cases of corruption on the Mediterranean island... [Read more](#)

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The Netherlands :

The State appeals in the case of British expats



On 19th April the Dutch State asked the Amsterdam Court to cancel its decision to refer to the ECJ regarding the issue of the status of British expats after Brexit. In what seems to be the first case of this type on the eve of the UK's exit from the EU, 5 Britons living in the Netherlands and two expat associations, concerned about losing their rights had taken the Dutch government to court in January... [Read more](#)

UK :

Lords amend the bill on Brexit



On 18th April the House of Lords approved an amendment that challenges the project to leave customs union, as they assessed the Brexit withdrawal bill. This amendment supported by the members of the majority and the opposition was adopted 348 votes in support 225 against... [Read more](#)

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Turkey :

Presidential and legislative elections on 24th June



Turkish President Erdogan announced on 18th April that a snap election would take place on 24th June next. The regional situation justifies the change over to an executive system in his opinion, whilst the previous constitutional reform already provided him with more power... [Read more](#)

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WTO :

The EU turns to the WTO



On 16th April the EU turned to the WTO as China has done in the issue of customs duties being imposed on US imports of steel and aluminium. Russia did the same on 19th April... [Read more](#)

IMF :

World economic outlook



On 18th April the IMF confirmed its growth forecasts for the year at 3.9%. Its forecasts for 2018 for the developed countries lie at 2.5% against 2.3% in 2017; a 0.2% rise also for the euro zone at 2.4% for Germany at 2.5% and the same for France 2.1%. The IMF deems however that the trade war may impede growth... [Read more](#)

IMF & World Bank Spring Meetings



The spring meetings of the IMF and the World Bank took place in Washington from 16th to 22nd April. The IMF's Managing Director Christine Lagarde laid out her world action plan, notably speaking of a "window of opportunity" to take and reasserted her support to a fair, multilateral trade system based on rules and cooperation... [Read more](#)

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Eurostat :

Asylum Requests in the EU in 2017



The 28 EU Member States agreed on the protective status for 538,000 asylum seekers in 2017, a figure that was down by 25% in comparison with 2016. They also received nearly 24,000 relocated refugees according to a Eurostat study published on 19th April... [Read more](#)

Annual inflation rate up to 1.3% in the euro zone



According to figures published by Eurostat on 18th April the annual inflation rate in the euro zone lay at 1.3% in March 2018, against 1.1% in February. A year earlier it lay at 1.5%... [Read more](#)

Europe 2020 Indicators on Employment



In 2017 the employment rate of the population aged 20 to 64 in the EU lay at 72.2% up in comparison with 2016 (71.1%). The aim of the Europe 2020 strategy is to reach a total employment rate of the 20-64 year olds of at least 75% in the EU by 2020... [Read more](#)

Eurobarometer :

According to Europeans how fair is life in the Union?



According to a new survey most Europeans think that life is fair in general but they are concerned about justice, political decisions and wage inequality... [Read more](#)

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Studies/Reports :

Meeting of G20 Finance Ministers



On 20th April the G20 Finance Ministers were not able to completely rule out the risk of a trade war. The meeting ended on the observation that there was disagreement about settling trade tension... [Read more](#)

[Report on main obstacles to migrant integration](#)



On 17th April the Commission and the OECD published a report that covers the main obstacles to migrant integration and provides a response via real strategic recommendations... [Read more](#)

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Public Opinion: concern about globalisation



The Bertelsmann Foundation published a study on globalisation on 19th April that was undertaken in 12 countries. This showed that in the developed and emerging countries the effects of free-trade are largely feared... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Canaletto at the Museum of Rome



Until 19th August the Museum of Rome is offering an exhibition of the works of Giovanni Antonio Canal (1697-1768) otherwise known as Canaletto. This exhibition celebrates the 250th anniversary of the Venetian artist's death; it presents work that has never been seen before in Italy: 42 pictures, including some masterpieces, 9 drawings as well as 16 books and archive documents... [Read more](#)

"Hieroglyphs - Symbolist drawings 1890-1910" Copenhagen



Until 12th August the Danish National Gallery is running an exhibition entitled "Hieroglyphs - Symbolist drawings 1890-1910" in which visitors are invited to discover the works of artists like J.F. Willumsen, Johannes Holbek and Jens Lund, who developed a new visual language in art at the end of the 19th century... [Read more](#)

Klimt: digital immersive exhibition at the Atelier des Lumières



The Atelier des Lumières in Paris is organising a unique digital exhibition until 11th November. It offers visitors a panorama of the major representatives of the Viennese artistic world and in particular Gustav Klimt. Work is projected and set to music, giving visitors an exceptional immersive experience... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



24th and 25th April

Brussels

Conference on aid to provide for the future of Syria and the countries in the region



26th April

Frankfurt/Main

Meeting of the Council of the Governors of the ECB



27th April

Sofia

Eurogroup Meeting



27th and 28th April

Sofia

Informal meeting of Economy and Finance Ministers

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