

Tuesday 17th July 2018

issue 813

The Letter in PDF format

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The Foundation team wishes you a wonderful summer and invites you to check in again with us on 4th September

Strength in unity, the rebirth of a geopolitical fact

Author: Michel Foucher



Caught between an uncertain American ally, a threatening Russian neighbour and an insatiable Chinese appetite the European Union must assert its interests in the international arena. According to Michel Foucher, in this context Europe must first take stock of the new international order to revive the European project both from the internal and international points of view.

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Commission :

The Commission activates the enhanced surveillance framework for Greece



On 11th July the Commission adopted a decision to activate the enhanced surveillance framework for Greece, to support the implementation of reform after the successful completion of the support programme to the European Stability Mechanism (ESM). As of the end of the programme on 20th August Greece will be fully integrated into the framework of the European Semester... [Read more](#)

External investment plan: first projects in Africa and the EU's neighbourhood

As part of its external investment plan the EU gave the greenlight on 10th July to a series of financial guarantee programme to a total value of around 800 million €. This will help to mobilise around 8 to 9 billion € in public and private investments in Africa and in the Union's



neighbourhood. The plan aims to foster inclusive growth, the creation of jobs and sustainable development... [Read more](#)



Interim economic summer forecasts



On 12th July the Commission presented its interim economic forecasts for the summer of 2018. According to these forecasts growth is due to reach 2.1% this year and 2% next year. The Commission also stressed the uncertainty associated with trade tension, fuel prices and political tensions between the Member States... [Read more](#)



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Parliament :

Mario Draghi speaks to the European Parliament's Economic Affairs Committee



The President of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi spoke on Monday 9th July to the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee of the European Parliament. He spoke in support of a bank deposit insurance system in the euro zone deeming that risk sharing helps avoid economic destabilisation... [Read more](#)



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Council :

Per country recommendations regarding economic, budgetary and employment policies



On 13th July the Economy and Finance Ministers concluded the "European Semester's" financial 2018 - the annual monitoring process that aims to guarantee economic convergence and stability in the Union. They also studied the Austrian presidency's priorities from the economic and financial points of view, ie banking union, taxation and the 2019 budget... [Read more](#)



Eurogroup meeting conclusions



On 12th July the 19 members of the Eurogroup addressed the European deposit insurance system, the end of the aid programme to Greece (which will remain under "post-programme surveillance" by the Commission), and Bulgaria's request to join the EMU... [Read more](#)



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Informal meeting of Interior and Justice Ministers



On the invitation of the Austrian presidency of the Council the Justice and Interior Ministers met informally on 12th and 13th July in Innsbruck. Discussions notably focused on enhancing the protection of the external borders and the improvement of the cross-border judicial cooperation, from the civilian and trade points of view... [Read more](#)



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The EU and Japan sign a free trade agreement



On 17th July in Japan the EU signed its biggest Economic Partnership Agreement ever with Japan. It covers 600 million consumers and nearly one third of the world's GDP. The agreement will progressively do away with most tariff (1 billion € paid annually by European businesses) and non-tariff related trade barriers (notably on cars) and supports high standards in terms of labour, security, environment and consumer protection. The agreement is to be ratified by the European Parliament and the Japanese Diet... [Read more](#)



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Conclusions of the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council



On 16th July the "Agriculture and Fisheries" Council discussed the priorities of the Austrian presidency which are food safety and the vitality of rural areas. The presidency repeated that it wanted a "future CAP that was convivial, with easy access to all farmers whatever the size of their farm"... [Read more](#)



NATO :

Joint declaration on cooperation between the EU and NATO



On 10th July NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, the President of the Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker and the President of the European Council Donald Tusk signed a joint declaration on cooperation between the EU and NATO. The document speaks of several cooperation sectors such as military mobility, cybersecurity and even resistance to arms of massive destruction and hybrid threats. According to the document "NATO will continue to play a unique, vital role as a keystone in collective defence for all the countries of the Alliance.".. [Read more](#)

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Conclusions of the 26th summit



On 11th and 12th July the 26th NATO summit took place in Brussels. The question of defence spending was the focus of discussion. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stressed that since Donald Trump took office the countries of Europe and Canada had invested 41 billion more dollar in defence. NATO invited Macedonia to start membership discussions and announced the enhancement of the so-called "4 x 30" initiative, which comprises having 30 mechanised battalions, 30 air squadrons and 30 combat vessels deployable within 30 days... [Read more](#)

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Diplomacy :

5th Western Balkans Summit in London



On 10th July in London the 5th annual Western Balkans Summit took place. Representatives from all of the region's countries took part. British Prime Minister Theresa May announced that there would be greater support to the region and cooperation would be enhanced to counter corruption and cross-border criminal groups... [Read more](#)

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20th EU-China Summit



On 16th July the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and the President of the European Council Donald Tusk travelled to Beijing for the 20th EU-China Summit. In a context of rising trade tension in the world the meeting addressed several issues including the transfer of technology, mutual direct investments and the opening of the Chinese market to European businesses... [Read more](#)

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Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Ministers' Meeting



On 16th July the Foreign Affairs Ministers rejected the USA's request to isolate Iran economically and adopted a legal tool to protect European businesses established in that country against US sanctions, announced Federica Mogherini. They also assessed the situation in Libya, North Korea and discussed the Eastern Partnership... [Read more](#)

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Germany :

5th Sino-German government consultation



On 9th July in Berlin the 5th Sino-German government consultation took place. German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang signed 22 cooperation and trade agreements, whilst China is Germany's leading trade partner outside of Europe. Both sides also re-iterated their commitment to multilateralism... [Read more](#)

Austria :

Visit by Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz in London and Dublin



On 9th July the Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz travelled to London to meet Theresa May and to Dublin to see Leo Varadkar. They spoke of the Austrian presidency's priorities of the Council and especially the Brexit negotiations... [Read more](#)

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Spain :

Carles Puigdemont might be extradited to Spain

On 12th July the Supreme Court of Schleswig-Holstein in Germany decided to allow the extradition of former President of Catalonia, Carles Puigdemont to Spain but only on the grounds of "embezzlement" and



not for "rebellion" as wished for by Madrid. Whilst waiting for his extradition Mr Puigdemont remains a free man... [Read more](#)

Finland :

Defence Pact between Finland and Sweden



On Tuesday 10th July the Swedish and Finnish Ministers of Defence signed a cooperation pact in terms of defence between their two countries, in times of peace and war. This pact is the first of its kind between two nations that are not part of NATO and which have increased their defence budget significantly over the last few years. On 12th July Finland announced that it would sign an memorandum of understanding regarding Multinational Land Battle Decisive Munition (LBDM)... [Read more](#)

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France :

France wins the World Cup



On 15th July the World Football Cup came to an end with victory for France over Croatia (4-2), in an entirely European final. The European teams succeeded immensely in the competition with four teams in the semi-finals and 6 in the quarter finals. Croatia came second, ahead of Belgium, 3rd, and England, 4th... [Read more](#)

Czech Republic :

The government wins Parliamentary confidence vote



On Wednesday 11th July Andrej Babis's government coalition won the confidence vote in Parliament 105 votes against 91 thanks to the support of the communists. After two failed votes the Czech Republic now has a government comprising 10 ANO ministers and five from the Social Democratic Party (CSSD)... [Read more](#)

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UK :

Brexit: the UK publishes its vision of its future relations with the EU



On July 12th July the British government published a 104 page "White Paper" describing sectorally its expectations about its future relations with the EU. The document confirms the request for an "Association Agreement" including a free-trade area for goods, a flexible arrangement for services, a defence and security partnership as well as permanent participation by the UK in certain EU agencies... [Read more](#)

Albania :

GRECO Report



On 12th July the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) published a report on Albania. The document stressed the progress made by the country in the implementation of its recommendations in view of preventing corruption amongst parliamentarians, judges and prosecutors, but it invited Tirana to introduce a certain number of improvements and to complete the reforms now ongoing... [Read more](#)

Bosnia-Herzegovina :

3rd Stabilisation and Association Agreement Meeting with Bosnia-Herzegovina



On 13th July the 3rd Stabilisation and Association Council meeting between Bosnia-Herzegovina and the EU took place in Brussels. The general elections that are to take place on 7th October next were discussed, as well as public administration, the fight to counter organised crime and cooperation in terms of migration... [Read more](#)

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Macedonia :

Macedonia: 14th Stabilisation and Association Agreement Meeting

On 13th July the 14th Stabilisation and Association Agreement meeting



with Macedonia took place in Brussels together with the High Representative Federica Mogherini, the Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn and a Macedonian delegation. The EU re-iterated its wish to open membership negotiations in June 2019 "on the basis of constant progress and tangible results". It congratulated the country on the signature of the agreement over the issue of its name with Greece... [Read more](#)

World Bank :

France and Italy decline in the ranking of world economies



France and Italy were relegated to 7th and 9th place (6th and 8th respectively in 2016) in the 2017 ranking of the world's economies published by the World Bank on 9th July. The GDP of India rose beyond that of France for the first time, hot on the heels of the UK (5th) and the GDP of Brazil supplanted that of Italy (9th). The USA remains in the lead of the ranking followed by China, Japan and Germany... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

The EU's population up on January 1st 2018



According to figures published by Eurostat on 10th July the EU's population was estimated on 1st January 2018 at 512.6 million residents against 511.5 million the previous year. With a higher number of deaths in comparison with births the natural variation in population of the EU was negative in 2017. The demographic variation recorded (+1.1 million inhabitants) is therefore due to a positive migratory balance... [Read more](#)

EU/G20 Comparative Statistics



On 11th July Eurostat published its 5th "Union in the World" study which depicts comparative statistics with other G20 member States. It emerges from the study that the EU's share in the world population has halved in the last 50 years. Although the G20 members generated 86% of the world's GDP in 2016, the USA represented 25% in 2016, and the EU, 22%... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Subsidiarity and proportionality: the task force presents its recommendations



The "subsidiarity, proportionality and doing less more efficiently" task force chaired by Mr Timmermans, the First Vice-President of the European Commission delivered its final report to the President of the Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker on 10th July. The report concludes that a new working method is required to enable local and regional authorities and national parliaments to contribute more effectively to the drafting of EU policies and new legislation... [Read more](#)

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Development of employment and the social situation in Europe



On 13th July the Commission published its annual 2018 edition of the Report on the Development of Employment and the Social Situation in Europe (ESDE). The document attests to an improvement in the labour market and the social situation: with nearly 238 people in work, the employment rate has never been as high in the EU. But the report stresses structural challenges in terms of inequalities, but also "uncertainties" and the "risks" linked to technological innovation, demographic development and globalisation... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Salzburg Festival



The Salzburg Festival will be taking place from 20th July to 30th August. It is offering a prestigious programme of major names in opera, theatre and classical music... [Read more](#)

The Royal Palace in Brussels opens its doors



From 21st July to 2nd September the Royal Palace in Brussels opens its doors to the public. Do not miss the works by Jan Fabre, Marthe Wéry, Michaël Borremans and Dirk Braeckman, as well as the throne room...

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Festival of Bayreuth



From 25th July to 29th July the Bayreuth Festival will be taking place. The festival offers audiences a series of 10 of Richard Wagner's main operas ...

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Ramatuelle Festival



On 28th July the Ramatuelle Festival will be opening its doors to the public. This festival in Provence is the 72nd of its kind and will be offering theatre plays, concerts and other shows to visitors...

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Edinburgh Festival



The International Edinburgh Festival is taking place from 3rd to 27th August. This festival offers audiences theatre plays, opera, classical music, dance and artistic exhibitions...

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Sziget Festival



The Sziget Festival will be taking place from 8th to 15th August in Budapest. The best artists from the world of pop/rock and electro are on the week's line-up...

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Veranos de la Villa Festival - Madrid



Since the start of the summer until the end of August the Veranos de la Villa Festival is taking place with 75 events in Madrid in 36 different venues. On the line-up: dance, singing shows, theatre plays and circus, in tribute to the first Mayor of Madrid Enrique Tierno Galvan...

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Agenda :



16th July
Brussels
"Foreign Affairs" Council "Agriculture Fisheries" Council
Beijing
EU-China Summit



16th and 17th July
Brussels
EU-CELAC Ministerial Meeting



17th July
Tokyo
EU-Japan Summit



20th July

20
Jul

Brussels
"General Affairs" Council (Article 50)

26
Jul

26th July
Frankfurt/Main
ECB Council of Governors

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