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## A more United European Union to confront the challenges of a less secure world

Author: Jean-Claude Piris



Brexit, that is to take place on 31st October will change the EU's internal balance and will reduce its influence in the international arena. To rise to these challenges, the Union will have to avoid reassessing the treaties and on the contrary, improve the implementation of those that exist already. According to Jean-Claude Piris it might take 18 initiatives to ensure the respect of its fundamental values, reform the euro zone, develop its immigration policy and strengthen its security.

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#### Elections :

##### Egils Levits elected President of the Republic of Latvia



Egils Levits was elected on 29th May President of the Republic by 61 of the 100 members of the Saeima, the only house of Parliament in Latvia. A judge at the European Union's Court of Justice, Levits is 63 years old. He will enter office on 8th July... [Read more](#)

#### Foundation :

##### Permanent Atlas of the European Union



After the election, to improve your understanding of the Union and what it does, the Foundation offers you the "Permanent Atlas of the European Union", a book that provides a full panorama of the Union, the euro zone, each of its Member States and its overseas territories. It is available in paper version from the Foundation's website, in bookshops and in digital version. It is permanently updated... [Read more](#)

## The Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2019



The "Schuman Report on the State of the Union" 2019, a work of reference for European decision makers is available now. This year the renewal of the European institutions provides an opportunity for deep thought about the State of the Union, its chances of gaining more independence and influence in the international arena, thanks to the interdependence it has managed to create between its Member States. It brings together articles drafted by the best experts and offers 33 original maps which summarize the main European issues and a unique series of commented statistics. Order your copy now!.. [Read more](#)

## The Grand Turning Point - The European 21st Century



In the "Grand Turning Point" published by the Ecole de Guerre, Jean-Dominique Giuliani shows that the EU - contrary to popular discourse - has the means to rise to the new challenges of the 21st century. Europe has succeeded beyond the hopes of the Foundation Fathers. It might even succeed in guaranteeing its place by the end of the century amongst the three biggest world powers... [Read more](#)

## European elections: a website with all of the results



From the 23rd to 26th May, 427 million Europeans elected their MEPs for the next five years. Consult the results in the 28 Member States and the names of the 751 MEPs who will sit in parliament until 2024 on our website that is dedicated to these elections... [Read more](#)

## European Council :

### Informal Summit of European Leaders



The Union's heads of State and government met on 28th May for an informal summit mainly devoted to the choice of the person who will take over from J-C Juncker as the head of the Commission. They gave the task of starting negotiations over this issue between the Member States and the Parliament to the President of the European Council Donald Tusk. D. Tusk said that the principle of the "Spitzenkandidat", whereby the candidate of the group that came out ahead in the European elections should take the head of the Commission would not apply automatically and would still be submitted to the Council's agreement. Four posts will be available during the European Council on 20th and 21st June: the presidencies of the Commission, the European Council, the European Central Bank and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs... [Read more](#)

## Commission :

### European Funds for Strategic Investments



On 28th May the Commission published a report on the management of the guarantee fund of the Strategic Investment Fund 2018... [Read more](#)

### Report on hybrid threats



On 29th May the Commission published a report on the Union's resilience in the face of hybrid threats, which stresses that the Member States have moved forward in terms of countering disinformation, of cybersecurity and defence and the protection of critical infrastructures. The report also recalls the importance of cooperation between the Union's and the Member States. Finally, the report mentions cooperation with NATO and third countries in terms of continuing the introduction of coordinated resilience tests... [Read more](#)

### Appointments to lead the DG



On 29th May the Commission appointed Sabine Weyand, present deputy head negotiator for Brexit as Director General of the DG Trade in replacement of Frenchman Jean-Luc Demarty. Ditte Juul Jørgensen, the head of the cabinet of the Commissioner for Competition, Margrethe Vestager was appointed Director General of the DG Energy in

replacement of another Frenchman Dominique Ristori... [Read more](#)

### Report on the action plan on military mobility



On 3rd June the Commission published a joint report with the Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the implementation of an action plan on military mobility adopted in March 2018. The report describes the progress that has been made in terms of infrastructures, military requirements and the analysis of gaps between military and civilian needs. The report stresses that progress has also been made in the rationalisation of customs procedures, taxation on added value and the transport of dangerous goods. A proposal was made regarding the tax exemption on added value for military operations... [Read more](#)

### Annual assessment of the Enlargement Policy



On 29th May the Commission adopted its annual assessment of the enlargement policy and the implementation of the reforms in the Western Balkans and Turkey, which are candidate countries for EU membership. Regarding the Western Balkans, the Commission deems that the countries have made real progress and shown their attachment to a European future. It recommends the opening of membership negotiations with Albania and Northern Macedonia. However it deems that Turkey is drawing away from the EU and is experiencing regression in terms of the rule of law, fundamental rights and political plurality, which is impeding all progress in the negotiations... [Read more](#)

### Guidelines on the free flow of non-personal data



On 29th May the European Commission published new guidelines on the interaction between the free flow of non-personal data and the Union's rules in terms of data protection. The guidelines aim to help businesses - particularly SME's to understand the interactions between these new rules and the general data protection regulation (GRDP), notably regarding the mixed datasets, comprising both personal and non-personal data... [Read more](#)

## Council :

### Conclusions of the Competitiveness Council



During the Competitiveness Council that took place on 27th and 28th May Ministers discussed the single market and industry and agreed on the need for the Union to have a strong industrial base that can face up to world-scale competition whilst rising to the challenges set by digital transformation and the transition towards a circular economy. They asked the Commission to develop a long-term industrial policy (in view of 2030). Ministers also discussed the digital single market and the competitiveness of the European tourism sector. Finally they debated measures to strengthen the EU's role in the area of space... [Read more](#)

## Court of Justice :

### Renewal of the composition of the EU's General Court



On 29th May the Council appointed 14 judges to the EU's General Court, one of the two courts comprising the EU Court of Justice. These appointments are part of the framework to renew the General Court: the mandates of 23 judges will end on 31st August. 9 additional judges will join the Court on 1st September... [Read more](#)

## Austria :

### Appointment of an interim government led by a woman



On 28th May for the very first time Austrian President Alexander van der Bellen appointed a woman, Brigitte Bierlein, head of the Constitutional Court, as interim Chancellor. She is responsible for implementing government policy until the next election planned for September. This appointment follows the "Ibiza Scandal" which led to the fall of Chancellor Sebastian Kurz and his government, in the wake of a vote of no confidence by Parliament on 27th May... [Read more](#)

**Belgium :****Didier Reynders and Johan Vande Lanotte appointed informateurs by the King**

On 30th May King Philippe of Belgium tasked Didier Reynders of the Reform Movement and Johan Vande Lanotte of the Flemish Socialist Party to sound out the possibilities of finding a majority in the Federal Parliament after the general elections on 26th May. The election increased the weight of the nationalists and far right in Flanders and increased the score of the far left and ecologists in Wallonia... [Read more](#)

**Denmark :****General election on 5th June**

Just before the election on 5th June the polls forecast a 10 point lead for the Social Democratic Party ahead of the outgoing Prime Minister's party, the Liberals... [Read more](#)

**Finland :****Likely government coalition**

Antti Rinne, leader of the Social Democrats, announced that he had formed a coalition which would include 117 of the 200 MPs in the Eduskunta (Parliament) and five parties. Apart from his own party he intends to join forces with the outgoing Prime Minister's Centre Party, the Greens, the Left Alliance and the Swedish People's Party... [Read more](#)

**France :****Conclusions of the IMF consultation mission**

On 3rd June the IMF published the conclusions of its mission in France in which it deems that reforms must be maintained and stepped up. The IMF highlights its concern regarding the level of the government debt in France, which is the highest in Europe, reiterating the need to deregulate the labour market and support investment, but it also acknowledges that a social consensus around the reforms is necessary for their success. On the same day Christine Lagarde, the IMF General Director discussed the issue with French President Emmanuel Macron... [Read more](#)

**Greece :****General election convened for 7th July**

Following the poor results of his party, SYRIZA, in the European elections on 26th May, Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras convened a snap election on 7th July, three months ahead of the normal date. On 2nd June SYRIZA also suffered defeat in the local and regional elections. The main opposition party, New Democracy (ND) won the two main towns, Athens and Thessaloniki, as well as 12 of the 13 Greek regions... [Read more](#)

**Czech Republic :****Reimbursement of 17.4 million € in subsidies**

Several Czech media published a document on 1st June presented a draft report of the Commission's audit whereby the Commission is demanding the reimbursement of 17.4 million € in European subsidies from the Czech government led by Andrej Babis. It deems that he is still making profits from his agri-food business Agrofert and is therefore in a situation in which there is a conflict of interest. The sum matches the total amount of European subsidies received by Agrofert since February 2017. Andrej Babis has denied this information and maintains that the Czech Republic is under no obligation to reimburse the subsidies whilst the Czech Finance and Regional Development Ministries confirmed have received a provisional draft version of the audit report... [Read more](#)

**Romania :****Apostolic Journey by the Pope**



Pope Francis undertook a three-day visit to Romania, a country which is mainly Orthodox from 31st May to 2nd June. It was the first Papal visit since 1999. Pope Francis beatified seven bishops killed in Romanian under the communist regime and paid tribute to all the victims. He also met the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church and called for brotherly existence between the different religions. He met the Roma community... [Read more](#)



**Ukraine :**

**Decision on the liberation of the sailors held in Russia**



In a decision published on 25th May the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea demanded the liberation of 24 Ukrainian sailors captured in the Azov Sea in November last by Russian military forces. It also demands the end of the immobilisation of three ships from the Ukrainian fleet and this, in respect of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea... [Read more](#)



**ECHR :**

**Rejection of the complaint by the Catalan independentists**



On 28th May the European Court of Human Rights unanimously rejected the complaint lodged by the former president of the Catalan Parliament, Carme Forcadell, against the Spanish Constitutional Court's decision to prevent the holding of a session in Parliament on 9th October 2017, during which Carles Puigdemont, then President of the Region, planned to proclaim the independence of Catalonia. The Court took the decision to "protect constitutional order." According to the ECHR, the interference in the right to the freedom of reunion might reasonably be considered as a response to an "urgent social need" and "necessary in a democratic society" particularly to maintain order, security and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others... [Read more](#)



**WTO :**

**Additional mandate for negotiations over e-trade**



On 27th May the Council adopted an additional mandate for negotiations at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to enable the Commission to take part in multi-lateral negotiations over e-trade. The aim of these negotiations is to introduce international rules encouraging world e-trade to facilitate the functioning of businesses (notably SMEs) and to strengthen consumer trust in the online environment... [Read more](#)



**Culture :**

**Fra Angelico and the emergence of the Florentine Renaissance**



Until 15th September, the Prado Museum in Madrid is devoting an exhibition to the Italian artist Fra Angelico, which presents the Florentine Renaissance period between 1420 and 1430 using the most famous of his paintings as its support... [Read more](#)



**Leonardo da Vinci, London**



On the occasion of the 500 years of the death of Leonardo da Vinci, the Royal Collection Trust is running an exhibition "Leonardo da Vinci: a life in drawing" at Buckingham Palace, London until 13th October. More than 200 drawings by the artist are on show... [Read more](#)



**Sean Scully's abstraction in Vienna**



From 7th June to 8th September the Irish-American artist Sean Scully, known for his abstract art comprising coloured rectangles and strips is on show in the exhibition "Eleuthera" in the Albertina Museum, Vienna. "Eleuthera" is a series of 23 paintings showing private moments in the artist's life between pastels, oil on canvas and photographs... [Read more](#)



### "Red" exhibition at Valetta's Museum of Art



Until 20th June the Museum of Art in Valetta at the Palazzo de la Salle is running the exhibition "Red" by the Maltese artist Andreana Boldarini. For her first exhibition she highlights different shapes of the female body... [Read more](#)

### Félix Fénéon or the distant arts



Until the 29th September the Quai Branly Museum in Paris together with the Orsay Museum and the Orangeries are showing the collection of Félix Fénéon who defended an open vision of artistic creation in a time when art was turning towards modernity and who worked for the acknowledgement of non-Western arts... [Read more](#)

### Raoul Dufy Exhibition in Le Havre



Until 3rd November the André Malraux Modern Art Museum in Le Have is running an exhibition devoted to Raoul Dufy. The work on show reveals the deep attachment this 20th century artist had for his town, its urban landscapes and its maritime views... [Read more](#)

### Biennale of Venice



The 58th Biennale of Venice, entitled "May you live in interesting times" is taking place until 24th November. On this occasion the city is adopting the colours of contemporary art. Meeting point at the Arsenal and in the Giardini, but also in the museums, palaces and streets... [Read more](#)

### Switzerland :

#### Adoption of a regulation regarding the Schengen Area



The Swiss National Council approved on 3rd June, 160 votes to 20 a regulation introducing the adoption of Schengen's legal bases, notably the Border Codes regarding entries and exits of third country citizens to and from Switzerland as well as the automation of identity controls on the borders, two measures that will enter into force in 2021. This new system aims to improve the quality of controls and the efficacy of the fight to counter terrorism and crime on the borders of the Schengen area... [Read more](#)

### Agenda :



3rd June 2019  
Bucharest  
Informal Meeting of Agriculture Ministers



5th June 2019  
Denmark  
General Elections



5th-6th June 2019  
Portsmouth and Normandy  
Commemorations of the 75th anniversary of D-Day in Normandy



6th June 2019  
Frankfurt  
Meeting of the ECB Council of Governors



6th-7th June 2019

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Brussels  
"Justice and Internal Affairs" Council  
Brussels  
"Transport, Telecommunications and Energy" Council

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