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Carbon neutrality in Europe: how can it be achieved?

Author: Emmanuel Tuchscherer



After progress seen by the ecologists' lists in the European elections, everything is now in place to ensure that ecology and the acceleration of energy transition are a central priority for the next five years. A public debate involving European citizens will be necessary, however, in order to achieve the objective of carbon neutrality that the European Union has set itself for 2050 in a socially just manner, and without weakening Europe's competitive position.

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Elections :

Important lessons and results of the European elections



In the European elections held on 23rd-26th May, the progress of populist parties was contained due to increased support for liberals and ecologists. At European level a reduction in the left/right divide is observed, comparable to that seen at national level in many Member States, whilst the protest vote against current leaders remains a major factor... [Read more](#)

The Social Democratic Party wins the General Elections



On 5th June the Social Democratic Party came out ahead in the general elections with 25.9% of the vote, beating the outgoing Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen's party (23.4%). All of the parties on the left - the Social Democratic Party, the Social Liberal Party, the People's Socialist Party and the Unity List (ecologists), won 91 of the 179 seats in Parliament - of which 48 go to the social democrats. Mette Frederiksen, head of the Social Democratic Party and probably the future Prime Minister plans to form a minority

social democratic government, with the support of the centre left... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

The Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2019



In this year of the renewal of the European institutions the "Robert Schuman Report on the State of the Union 2019" is vital more than ever before to understand the state of the Union, its chances of gaining greater independence and influence over the international arena, thanks to the interdependence that it has created between its Member States. It brings together articles by the best experts and offers 33 original maps that summarize the main issues at stake, together with a unique series of commented statistics. Order your copy now!.. [Read more](#)

Permanent Atlas of the European Union



After the election for a greater understanding of the Union and what it does the Foundation offers its readers the "Permanent Atlas of the European Union", a book which provides a complete overview 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 site, in bookshops and in digital version. It is updated permanently... [Read more](#)

The Grand Turning Point - the European 21st Century



In the "Grand Turning Point" published by the Ecole de Guerre, contrary to the usual narrative - Jean-Dominique Giuliani shows that the European Union can rise to the new challenges set by the 21st century. Europe has succeeded well beyond the hopes of its Founding Fathers. It can still succeed in guaranteeing its place amongst the leading three powers in the world by the end of the century... [Read more](#)

European elections: a site for all of the results



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

Commission :

Draft budget 2020



On 5th June the Commission published its draft EU budget 2020 which will total 168.3 billion €. This will be the last budget of the Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) for the period 2014-2020. The appropriations allocated are devoted to several priority areas: competitiveness of the economy and youth, the strengthening of security and the fight to counter climate change... [Read more](#)

Economic recommendations country per country



On 5th June, the Commission published its per country recommendations. It recommended the end of the excessive deficit procedure launched against Spain. It deemed that an excessive deficit procedure based on the criteria of the debt was justified for Italy. It addressed a warning to Hungary and Romania, which are the focus of an Significant Deviation Procedure and asked the Council to recommend that these countries should correct this. Finally, the Commission adopted a report regarding Greece in virtue of a enhanced surveillance procedure and noted that the consistency of some measures with commitments given to European partners is not assured and poses risks to the achievement of agreed fiscal targets... [Read more](#)

Review of sustainable fishing



On 7th June the Commission presented a review of the implementation of the common fishing policy in the European Union and launched a consultation on the prospects of fishing in 2020. The Commission reiterated its attachment to sustainable fishing that is respectful of the

environment and which remains economically viable. A public consultation will be launched on 11th June... [Read more](#)

Council :

Conclusions of the Justice/Interior Council



The EU's Ministers of Justice and Interior met on 6th and 7th June and gave the Commission the mandate to negotiate international agreements involving e-evidence in criminal cases. They adopted the conclusions regarding the storing of data to counter crime and asked the Commission to undertake an indepth study of the balance to find between storage of this data for legal purposes and the protection of freedoms and fundamental rights. Interior Ministers adopted a partial general approach regarding the amendment of the return directive, to accelerate procedures, prevent the risk of absconding and secondary movements, and to increase the rate of return of migrants to their countries. They discussed other aspects of the reform of the migratory and asylum policy and exchanged views with the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees and the Director General of the International Organisation for Migration... [Read more](#)

Conclusions of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council



The Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council met on 6th and 7th June to assess the progress achieved in the introduction of a trans-European transport network, as well as the project to improve the management of the vehicle rental market. Ministers spoke of the amendment to the tax system of the road system (Eurovignette), which aims to counter excessive traffic and greenhouse gas emissions. They adopted conclusions regarding the European digital policy after 2020: respecting ethic principles in the area of artificial intelligence, strengthening cybersecurity, developing 5G, increasing the number of women in the sector, countering the exclusion of vulnerable groups... [Read more](#)

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ECB :

The Council of Governors' Meeting



The Council of Governors of the European Central Bank met on 6th June and decided to leave its key interest rates unchanged (main refinancing operations, marginal lending facility and deposit facility). It deemed that the rates will remain at their present level until at least the end of the first semester of 2020. The Council also clarified the conditions for the new series of quarterly targeted longer-term refinancing operations (TLTRO III), which aim to protect favourable lending conditions in the euro zone. The ECB raised its inflation and growth forecasts slightly this year but reduced them for next year, pointing to increasing risks associated with protectionist trends... [Read more](#)

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Diplomacy :

G20 Finance Meeting



Meeting in Fukuoka (Japan) on 8th and 9th June the G20 Finance Ministers came to agreement on a plan to introduce the taxation of digital platforms at international level, whose details have to be discussed. They also debated the world economic situation and in particular trade tension which is perceived as a major threat... [Read more](#)

75th D-Day Landings celebrations in Normandy



The anniversary of the 75th D-Day landing on 6th June 1944 took place on 5th June in Portsmouth in the south of England and on 6th June in Normandy at the Ver-sur-Mer memorial and then at the American cemetery of Colleville-sur-Mer. Many heads of state and government were present on the occasion, notably French President Emmanuel Macron, American President Donald Trump, British Prime Minister Theresa May and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, as well as German Chancellor Angela Merkel... [Read more](#)

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Spain :

Pedro Sanchez asked to form a government

Pedro Sanchez was asked to form a new government on 6th June by King Felipe VI. The Socialist leader is going to have to put together a



majority. A new situation in the country which is not used to coalitions... [Read more](#)

Finland :

New government led by Antti Rinne



The leader of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) Antti Rinne was appointed Prime Minister on 6th June by President Sauli Niinistö and was sworn in by Parliament 111 votes in support against 74. On 3rd June he concluded a coalition agreement with the Centre Party of outgoing Prime Minister Juha Sipilä, the Green League, the Left Alliance and the Swedish People's Party to form a government after the elections that took place on 14th April... [Read more](#)

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Poland :

Government reshuffle



Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki reshuffled his government on 4th June, following the election of several ministers to the European Parliament. Among the seven new members of the cabinet appointed by President Andrzej Duda, are the Finance Minister Marian Banas; Interior Minister Elzbieta Witek; Ms Bozena Borys-Szopa, Family, Labour and Social Protection Minister and finally National Education Minister Dariusz Piontkowski. Jacek Sasin is now Deputy Prime Minister after the departure of Beata Szydlo... [Read more](#)

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Romania :

Proposal for a Pro-European National Pact



On 6th June Romanian President Klaus Iohannis invited all of the political parties to sign a national pact to consolidate Romania's position in the EU. This initiative follows the positive results in the referendum on the future of the legal system, notably related to corruption to scandals involving members of the party in office. These results will be integrated into legislation. Only the Liberal Party ALDE in the government coalition was against this pact... [Read more](#)

Czech Republic :

Demonstration against the Czech Prime Minister



More than 100,000 people demonstrated on 4th June in Prague demanding the resignation of the Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis, who is suspected of embezzling European subsidies, and also that of the Justice Minister Marie Benesova. Mr Babis, the second richest person in the country, is said to still be making profits from his business, Agrofert, which has benefited from EU grants since 2017 to a total of 17 million €. According to an audit report revealed by the Czech media, the Commission is about to ask for the reimbursement of this sum. Speaking on the same day to Parliament, Babis denounced a "questionable audit" and "an attack against the Czech Republic", maintaining that "no sums will be given back". A second audit report by the Commission challenged Babis again on 6th June, accusing him of a conflict of interests, more particularly related to the agricultural subsidies paid out to Agrofert... [Read more](#)

UK :

Resignation of Theresa May



British Prime Minister Theresa May officially left office as leader of the Conservative Party on 7th June. She will continue to manage current affairs until the party has chosen a new leader. Ten MPs are running for her succession. Conservative MPs will vote on 13th to 20th June to appoint two finalist candidates, who will be decided upon by all of the party's members during a vote that will take place in the week of 22nd July... [Read more](#)

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Slovenia :

Fourth Three Seas Initiative Summit



On 5th and 6th June, the leaders of 12 States participating in the Three Seas (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia), as well as the President of the Commission Jean-Claude Juncker met in Ljubljana in Slovenia. All declared together that they support cohesion in the EU, economic development in the region and the strengthening of transatlantic links... [Read more](#)

Sweden :

Meeting between Stefan Löfven and Emmanuel Macron



Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven was hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron on 7th June. The two leaders decided to strengthen the Franco-Swedish partnership for innovation and green solutions, notably in terms of mobility and sustainable urban transport and innovation in support of social integration. In a joint statement they laid out their positions regarding the future of the European Union and said they intended to organise a conference on a "Europe Open to All" by the end of the year... [Read more](#)

Kosovo :

Meeting between Angela Merkel and Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj



On 6th June, German Chancellor Angela Merkle hosted Kosovar Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj. Their discussions focused on economic cooperation. Mr Haradinaj asked for the acknowledgement of his country by Serbia to guarantee the stability of the Western Balkans... [Read more](#)

Moldova :

New government, new president and dissolution of Parliament



Moldovan President Igor Dodon was removed from office by the Constitutional Court on 9th June and replaced by Prime Minister Pavel Filip, who immediately dissolved Parliament. The decision follows the formation of a government coalition on 8th June between Igor Dodon's Socialist Party, which is close to Russia, and the pro-European alliance, ACUM. Maia Sandu (ACUM) was chosen to be Prime Minister but P. Filip's Democratic Party of Moldova led by oligarque Vladimir Plahotniuc qualified the formation of the coalition as a "coup d'etat". New elections will take place on 6th September... [Read more](#)

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Switzerland :

Postponement of signature of the Framework Agreement with the EU



On 7th June the Swiss Federal Council (government) postponed the signature of the framework-agreement negotiated with the EU. Whilst expressing its "overall positive assessment" of the draft agreement it addressed a letter to the European Commission to ask for more detail about three controversial points: State aid, wage protection and the directive on European citizenship which widens access to social allocations. The Commission said that it interpreted the initiative as a "an overall positive development"... [Read more](#)

The Federal Council reject an initiative to limit immigration



On 7th June the Federal Council expressed its opposition to the people's initiative "For a moderate immigration" which aims to negotiate with the EU the end of the agreement on free movement of people or to denounce it unilaterally. The Federal Council deems that the initiative could challenge all of the bilateral agreements that have been made with the European Union... [Read more](#)

European Agencies :

Cocaine: record seizures in Europe in 2017



The record seizure in 2017 of more than 140 tonnes of cocaine in Europe goes together with the arrival on a increasingly competitive market of new players, including innovative methods bear witness to an "uberisation" of trafficking, according to a report unveiled on 6th June by the European Drugs Agency (EMCDDA)... [Read more](#)

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Eurobarometer :

Perception of the euro outside of the euro zone



On 7th June the Commission published a Eurobarometer on the euro undertaken in April 2019 in all Member States that have not yet adopted the single currency. In all of the seven Member States involved (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Sweden), 56% of those interviewed deem that the euro has positive effects in the countries which have adopted it. However only 49% of them would like their country to adopt the common currency and 72% deem that their country is not ready for the euro... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Inflation down in the euro zone



According to figures published by Eurostat on 4th June the euro zone's annual inflation rate is down to 1.2% in May, against 1.7% in April. Energy was due to experience the highest rate in May (3.8% against 5.3% in April), followed by food, alcohol and tobacco (1.6% against 1.5%), services (1.1% against 1.9%) and industrial goods, energy apart (0.3% against 0.2%)... [Read more](#)

Unemployment rates down



According to figures published on 4th June by Eurostat, unemployment in the EU lay at 6.4% in April 2019, which was stable in comparison with March 2019 and down in comparison with April 2018 (7%). It is the lowest rate since January 2000. In the euro zone unemployment lay at 7.6%, down in comparison with March 2019 (7.7%) and April 2018 (8.4%). This is the lowest rate recorded in the euro zone since August 2008... [Read more](#)

The GDP and the rise in employment



According to figures published on 6th June by Eurostat, the GDP rose by 0.4% in the euro zone and by 0.5% in the EU in the first quarter of 2019 in comparison with the previous quarter. The highest rates of growth were recorded in Croatia (+1.8%), in Hungary and Poland (+1.5%). Employment increased in the first quarter of 2019 by 0.3% in the euro zone as it also did in the EU. The highest employment growth rates were noted in Hungary, Spain and Greece... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Water quality in European bathing sites



According to the annual report on the quality of bathing water published on 6th June just over 85% of bathing sites in Europe that were controlled satisfy the strictest water quality standards in terms of cleanliness, i.e. an excellent quality of water. The results published give a good indication of the sites where the water quality for bathing will probably be the best this summer... [Read more](#)

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Report on the Charter of Fundamental Rights



On 5th June, the Commission published its annual report on the Charter of Fundamental Rights and its implementation within the Member States. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Charter and the report shows that the national jurisdictions increasingly refer to it in their decisions and ask for the advice of the European Court of Justice. However the Charter is not yet fully put to its best use and remains relatively unknown, notably at national level. Improvements remain possible: the non-respect of the rule of law and legislation in terms of asylum is still a problem in some parts of the Union... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Prague Quadriennale



From 6th to 16th June the 14th Quadriennale of Prague is showing many types of scenography bringing together architecture, the visual arts, and the theatre under the banner "Imagination, Transformation and Reflection" with the participation of artists from more than 60

countries... [Read more](#)

International photographic festival in Lodz



From 13th to 30th June the town of Lodz in Poland is hosting the international photographic festival which notably focuses on contemporary photography and the way it is exhibited. Conferences, discussions and debates are organised to explore the place of contemporary photography in the digital era... [Read more](#)

"Street Dreams" or the influence of hip-hop on fashion



Tribute is being paid to the hip-hop culture in the exhibition "Street Dreams - how hip-hop took over fashion" which will take place from 15th June to 15th September at the Kunsthal of Rotterdam. Between music, contemporary works, photos and videos, the exhibition follows the aesthetic development of streetwear in the world fashion industry... [Read more](#)

Keith Haring in Liverpool



From 14th June to 10th November, the New York underground pop-artist, Keith Haring is on exhibit at the Tate Liverpool showing over 85 pieces of work... [Read more](#)

"Dans les coulisses de la Paix" Meaux



The Great War Museum of Meaux is running an exhibition until 8th December entitled "Dans les coulisses de la paix", covering the period from November 1918 to the signature of the Versailles Treaty on 28th June 1919. Nearly 130 items are on show... [Read more](#)

Tribute to James Joyce at the Bloomsday Festival



Until 16th June the Bloomsday Festival in Dublin is celebrating the literature of James Joyce whose narrative "Ulysses" took place on 16th June 1904. Concerts, readings and even visits of the places depicted by the author are being organised in his honour... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



13th June 2019
Luxembourg
Eurogroup Meeting

EU-Armenia Partnership Council



13th-14th June 2019
Luxembourg
"Employment, Social Policy, Healthcare and Consumer" Council



14th June 2019
Luxembourg
"Economic and Financial Affairs" Council



17th June 2019
Luxembourg
"Foreign Affairs" Council
Luxembourg
EU-Jordan Association Council

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