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The drafting of a European Business Code

Author: Valérie Gomez-Bassac



The Single Market is one of the vectors of European integration. Whilst the big companies are taking advantage of this, the small-medium companies (SME's) and the microenterprises only rarely succeed in taking their economic activities to European level. French MP Valérie Gomez-Bassac, author of a report on this issue, puts forward 25 measures to harmonise the EU's business legislation.

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Contents

Front page! : Editorial **Elections** : Romania - Spain **Commission** : Forecasts/Economy - Hearings - Commissioner/UK **Council** : Economy/Finances - Education - Eurogroup - Singapore **Diplomacy** : Council - China/Agreement - Uzbekistan **Court of Justice** : Catalonia **Germany** : 30 years/Fall of Wall - Review - Budget **France** : China **Greece** : China **Hungary** : Turkey **Poland** : Government **Czech Republic** : Luxembourg **UK** : Parliament **OECD** : Healthcare **IMF** : Growth/Euro Zone **Studies/Reports** : Industry - Work **Culture** : Exhibition/Barcelona - Exhibition/London - Exhibition/Brussels - Festival/Edinburgh - Boreales - Festival/Cognac - Design/Paris

[Agenda](#) | [Other issues](#) | [Contact](#)

Front page! :

Europe: neither a State nor an Empire



"After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Europe benefited from the "dividends of peace" and relaxed its meagre efforts towards defence. 30 years on Europeans must now think of themselves as an autonomous power to defend and promote their values and their interests," writes Jean-Dominique Giuliani... [Read more](#)

Elections :

Outgoing Romanian head of State, Klaus Iohannis leads in the first round



Outgoing President Klaus Iohannis supported by the National Liberal Party (PNL) came out ahead in the first round of the presidential election on 10th November in Romania, with 37.79% of the vote. He will face the Social Democratic Party's candidate (PSD) on 24th November, former Prime Minister Viorica Dancila, who won 22.32% of the vote... [Read more](#)

Spain remains ungovernable

The Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), led by outgoing Prime Minister



Pedro Sanchez came out ahead in the parliamentary elections that took place on 10th November in Spain, with 28% of the vote and 120 seats. It came out ahead of the People's Party (PP), which won 20.82% and 88 seats, Vox 15.09% and 52 seats, Unidas Podemos (UP), 12.84% and 35 seats. The centrists of Ciudadanos 6.79% and 10 seats. The formation of a majority government coalition will be more difficult than ever before... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Autumn forecasts



On 7th November the European Commission published its autumn economic forecasts. It is now forecasting growth of 1.1% of the GDP in 2019, in contrast to 1.2% during in its summer forecasts, then 1.2% in 2020, against 1.4% previously. In 2021 growth is due to reach 1.2%. It stressed that the labour markets remain strong und unemployment down but the external environment is not as favourable and uncertainty is growing... [Read more](#)

Adina Valean put forward as Commissioner for Romania



On 6th November the President elected of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen, approved the candidature of MEP Adina Valean (EPP) as European Commissioner responsible for Transport. She must now appear before the European Parliament's competent committee on 14th November just like the Hungarian and French candidates... [Read more](#)

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A British European Commissioner?



The President elect of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen wrote to the British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on 6th November to ask him to put forward a candidate for the post of commissioner and encouraged him to put forward a woman... [Read more](#)

Council :

Conclusion of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council



The Finance Ministers who met on 8th November adopted conclusions on the financing of climate action in view of COP25. They discussed projects for digital taxation and one involving stablecoins. They agreed to an agreement on the new rules regarding the exchange of VAT payment data, an agreement on simplified VAT rules for small businesses, as well as an agreement regarding the modernised framework for products subject to excise duties. They recommended the appointment of German Isabel Schnabel on the ECB's board to the European Council. For the first time they held joint council with the Education Ministers regarding the link between education, training and sustainable growth... [Read more](#)

Conclusions of the Education Council



On 8th November Education Ministers adopted conclusions regarding life-long learning, a resolution on the continued roll-out of the European area of education and debated the role of artificial intelligence in education and training. Ministers debated the major role played by education and training in the support of well-being and long term sustainable growth... [Read more](#)

Eurogroup Meeting



Meeting on 7th November Eurogroup discussed the autumn economic forecasts presented the same day by the Commission and investment to support growth. It provided its support to the candidature of Isabel Schnabel as a member of the ECB's board. It reviewed the reform of the European Stability Mechanism, as well as the discussions over the European deposit guarantee system and the budgetary convergence and competitiveness instrument... [Read more](#)

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Go ahead for the EU-Singapore trade agreement

The Council finally approved the trade agreement between the EU and



Singapore on 8th November. The agreement which reduces customs duties between both parties will enter into force on 21st November. The agreement to protect investments which go with this will enter into force when it has been ratified by all the Member States... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council



On 11th November the Foreign Ministers discussed the situation in Syria, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Bolivia and Hong Kong. They assessed the possibilities of reducing tension regarding the nuclear issue in Iran. They renewed sanctions against Venezuela, which comprises an arms embargo and a ban on the export of equipment that might be used for internal repression, as well as a ban on entering the Union and the freezing of assets of 25 people. They also adopted a framework for possible sanctions in response to illegal drilling by Turkey of the coast of Cyprus... [Read more](#)

EU-China Agreement on Geographic Indications



An agreement was concluded between the EU and China on 6th November to protect 100 European geographic indications (GI) in China, including Champagne, feta and Parma ham, and 100 Chinese GI's in the Union. China is the main destination for European agro-food exports, particularly products protected by a GI. The agreement which has to be approved by European Parliament is due to enter into force before the end of 2020... [Read more](#)

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EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council



The 15th meeting of the EU-Uzbekistan Cooperation Council took place in Brussels on 11th November. Discussions focused on the reforms in Uzbekistan and on issues such as the rule of Law, trade, investment and energy. The Council also reviewed negotiations started in 2018, for an enhanced partnership and cooperation agreement... [Read more](#)

Court of Justice :

Opinion on the election of a Catalan nationalist to the European Parliament



In an opinion published on 12th November the Advocate General of the Court of Justice deemed that the acquisition of the mandate of MEP results from the vote of the electorate alone and cannot be subordinate to the subsequent fulfilment of some kind of formality. Hence he agreed with the Catalan nationalist, Oriol Junqueras, whose election to the European Parliament in May 2019 was invalidated by the Spanish electoral committee because he did not swear oath on the Spanish Constitution, as requested by law. Mr Junqueras has been in prison since 2017 for the role he played in the attempted secession of Catalonia and was sentenced to 13 years in prison on 14th October. The opinion of the Advocate General is not binding for the Court... [Read more](#)

Germany :

30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall



On 9th November German President Franz Walter Steinmeier and the Chancellor Angela Merkel together with several heads of State of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe celebrated the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Several emotional ceremonies promoted freedom, European values and fundamental rights... [Read more](#)

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Interim review of the government



The German government published an interim review of its work on 6th November. The Christian Democratic (CDU)-Social Democratic (SPD) coalition said it was happy to have "introduced or already worked on two-thirds of the 300 measures featuring in the coalition's contract". The SPD must decide during its congress at the beginning of December whether it will continue its participation in the government... [Read more](#)

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Towards greater budgetary flexibility in Germany?



On 6th November the German "Experts", a group of economists responsible for providing the government with advice, called for fiscal easing "in the event of further slowing". In their annual report they deem that German growth might only rise to 0.5% this year and deplore an overly rigid framework which is preventing the government from reducing tax revenues via an increase in public spending... [Read more](#)

France :

Declaration by Emmanuel Macron and Xi Jinping



After his visit to China on 6th November, French President Emmanuel Macron held a joint press conference with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping. The two leaders insisted on their desire to renew and protect relations between the EU and China. They reasserted their "firm support of the Paris agreement which they deem to be an irreversible process and a compass for strong action on the climate.".. [Read more](#)

Greece :

Visit by the Chinese President



Chinese President Xi Jinping started a three-day State visit to Greece on 11th November which is to focus on economic cooperation. During the meetings with his Greek counterpart Prokopis Pavlopoulos and Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis he has insisted on China's wish to invest in the country, particularly in the port of Piraeus and to make Greece "a natural ally" of its economic projects in Europe... [Read more](#)

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Hungary :

Visit by Turkish President



On 7th November Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban hosted Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan as part of the fourth meeting of the Turkish/Hungarian High Level Strategic Cooperation Council. Discussions focused on migration... [Read more](#)

Poland :

New Government



8th November Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, designated to continue in this post by the Law and Justice Party (PiS), which won the general elections on 13th October, presented on his new government, which has not changed very much, except for the appearance of a minister for the Climate and that of the Treasury, whose competences were spread to date between other portfolios. This government has to approved by the parliament... [Read more](#)

Czech Republic :

Visit to Luxembourg



Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babis made an official visit to Luxembourg on 7th and 8th November. He was hosted by the Grand Duke Henri, and met Prime Minister Xavier Bettel with whom he discussed main European issues like the single market, migration, the fight to counter climate change and the future of the multiannual financial framework. Mr Babis also lay a wreath on Jan Palach Square in the capital in tribute to the Czech student who set himself on fire in Prague in January 1969... [Read more](#)

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UK :

Dissolution of Parliament



British Parliament was dissolved on 6th November in view of the snap general election that will take place on 12th December. On 4th November MPs elected Labour Lindsay Hoyle as Speaker, in replacement of Conservative John Bercow who will no longer stand for election... [Read more](#)

OECD :

Spending on healthcare is due to increase faster than growth



In the Healthcare Panorama 2019 published on 7th November the OECD deemed that with an annual average increase of 2.7%, healthcare spending will rise above GDP growth over the next 15 years in nearly all Member States. By 2030 they will rise to 10.2% of the GDP in contrast to 8.8% in 2018... [Read more](#)

IMF :

Growth forecasts down in the euro zone



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecast a GDP increase of 1.2% in the euro zone in 2019, in contrast to 1.3% forecast in April, after 1.9% in 2018. This was due to slow growth in Germany (0.5% in 2019) and stagnation in Italy. France is due to grow by 1.2%. The IMF also stressed the impact of trade tension could spread to industry to that of services in a report published on 6th November... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Recommendations for industry



On 5th November the Commission published the recommendations made by a panel of experts, the Strategic Forum on Important Projects of Common European Interest, to strengthen Europe's competitiveness in six strategic industrial areas: connected, clean, autonomous vehicles; hydrogen technologies and systems; smart health; industrial internet of things; low carbon industries; cybersecurity. The report recommends amongst other things the pooling of public and private resources at European, national and regional level et the strengthening and integration of the single market... [Read more](#)

Development of labour market and wages



In the 2019 publication of the report on the development of the labour market and wages in Europe published on 8th November, the Commission stresses that the number of people in work in the EU, ie 241 million people, is at its highest level and the unemployment rate at its lowest since the start of the century. It notes however that living conditions have worsened in around half of the Member States and reviews skill mismatches in light of the changing world of work... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Eluard and Picasso in Barcelona



Until 15th March 2020 the Pablo Picasso Museum of Barcelona is showing via various works and texts the painter's relationship with French poet Paul Eluard in an exhibition focusing on the "Sublime Friendship"... [Read more](#)

Vinci at the National Gallery



To celebrate the 500th anniversary of the death of Florentine artist Leonardo da Vinci, the National Gallery is showing the exhibition "Leonardo - Experience a Masterpiece" until 12th January 2020. Four distinct areas are open to the public and invite them to note the "Virgin of the Rocks" in a new light... [Read more](#)

The History of Europe through Notarial Acts



The European Parliament in Brussels is hosting an exhibition from 11th to 25th November that pays tribute to notarial acts of great historic value from the 18th to the 20th centuries which have been kept in national archives. Also on show are the digital tools created by the notarial offices to provide a modern, efficient service to their clients and the States... [Read more](#)

Traditional Edinburgh "Fiddle"



From 15th to 17th November the 23rd "Fiddle Festival" is taking place in Edinburgh. The fiddle is the traditional instrument in Irish and Scottish folk music. This festival helps perpetuate this Celtic art... [Read more](#)

Boreales: festival of Nordic culture



The 28th Boreales will be taking place in Caen and across the whole of Normandy from 14th to 24th November. As every year the festival pays tribute to Nordic culture in all of its forms: literature, music, cinema, theatre, art and gastronomy. The festival is devoted to Norway... [Read more](#)

European Literature in Cognac



The European Literature Festival of Cognac, created in 1988 on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of Jean Monnet offers a privileged meeting space for writers and the public. From 14th to 17th November the festival is notably offering a exhibitions, debate and the screening of films. The 2019 festival will pay tribute to Dutch and Flemish literature... [Read more](#)

Design Fleamarket in Paris

LES PUCES DU DESIGN

À VIVRE DESIGN FAIR

The first historic market exclusively devoted to the design of the 1950's to 2000s, the Design Fleamarket will be taking place from 14th to 17th November in Paris... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



12th November 2019
Brussels
Defence Council



15th November 2019
Brussels
Budget Council



18th November 2019
Brussels
Agriculture and Fisheries Council

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