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The Letter in PDF format

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Restoring free movement in the Union

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After 3 months of lockdown and restriction of movement of European populations, the internal borders of the Union are expected to be almost fully reopened on 15 June. Freedom of movement, one of the cornerstones underpinning the functioning of the Union, has been severely disrupted by the virus. Its full implementation involves major economic challenges and will be an indicator of the strength of the Union's law and rules in the wake of an unprecedented crisis.

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Foundation :

The "Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2020" in digital version



The 2020 edition of the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union", a reference work for European decision-makers, is available in electronic version. With contributions by leading personalities and experts, original maps and annotated statistics, it offers a comprehensive view of the European Union and analyses the challenges facing Europe... [Read more](#)

Media and telecommunications streaming: a turning point



The Foundation is organising an online debate on 10 June from 17:00 to 18:30, on European media and telecoms as they face Covid-19, with Roberto Viola, Director General of DG CONNECT at the European Commission, Gérard Pogorel and Augusto Preta, authors of a study on the subject published by the Foundation... [Read more](#)

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End-of-lockdown seen from Europe



The Member States of the European Union are continuing to ease the lockdown of their populations and the resumption of social and economic activities. The Robert Schuman Foundation offers you a summary of the measures taken and the timetable planned by each State. A vital

resource for understanding the way out of the crisis and regaining a European "spirit"... [Read more](#)

Coronavirus :

Controls on the internal borders and freedom of movement of people



On 5 June, the Ministers of the Interior discussed the issue of internal border controls and the free movement of people. In view of the improved health situation in Europe, the majority of controls should be lifted by 15 June and by 30 June at the latest. They agreed that the remaining restrictions should be based on objective, non-discriminatory and proportionate epidemiological criteria. They discussed the opening of the Union's external borders and the gradual lifting of restrictions on non-essential travel, which is not expected to take place before 1 July... [Read more](#)

Adaptation of the 2020 the recovery plan budget



On 3 June, the Commission published a proposal to amend the Union's 2020 budget in order to implement part of the recovery plan. It calls for an increase of €11.5 billion in commitments for the year 2020 and an immediate payment of €6.5 billion. This increase in the budget is to be used to finance the European Strategic Investment Fund (€5 billion), the Sustainable Development Fund (€1.04 billion) and the React-EU initiative (€5 billion), which aims to mobilise cohesion funds to help Member States' economies in the face of the crisis. The increased budget will also be used to increase the capital of the European Investment Fund by €500 million... [Read more](#)

European Alliance for a vaccine



France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands announced on June 5 the creation of a European alliance for the Covid-19 vaccine. The alliance is committed to supporting the most promising vaccine research, ensuring a fair price for the vaccine and rapid information sharing between countries. In addition, the Commission pledged on 4 June €300 million to the International Vaccine Alliance (Gavi) as part of the global response to the coronavirus... [Read more](#)

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Recovery of the transport sector



Transport ministers discussed the recovery of the sector on June 4. They exchanged views on the initiatives to be put in place to foster a sustainable recovery, and on the medium- and long-term tools to achieve these objectives. Ministers stressed the need for a coordinated approach and welcomed the measures already implemented... [Read more](#)

National measures



In France, the StopCovid tracking application is available and heritage sites reopen on June 11th. In Belgium, bars and restaurants will reopen on the 8th, sports, cultural and leisure activities will resume and gatherings will be limited to 10 people. Germany, France, Belgium and other countries plan to reopen their borders on 15 June. In Austria, border controls with 7 countries were lifted on 4 June. In Spain, the entire territory has been taken out of phase 1 of lockdown, but the state of alert has been extended until 21 June. In Poland, weddings can bring together 150 people and cinemas, theatres, ballets, swimming pools and amusement parks have reopened. In the United Kingdom, people entering the country must self-isolate for 14 days and places of worship reopened on 15 June. In Ireland, travel within a 20 km radius is allowed, small retail shops and libraries reopen and sports training resumes... [Read more](#)

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The end of lockdown continues in Italy



Italy reopened its borders on 1 June. Museums continue to reopen, while theatres and cinemas will be able to resume their activities from 15 June... [Read more](#)

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Support measures to the economy

In France, the government has presented a plan to support French tech to the tune of over €1 billion, and a further deferral of social security contributions has been



announced. In Germany, the government coalition has agreed on a €130 billion recovery plan: VAT will be reduced from 19% to 16%, families will benefit from a one-off bonus of €300 for their children and the bonus for the purchase of an electric vehicle will be increased from €3,000 to €6,000. In Austria, companies that took on an apprentice during the health crisis will receive a bonus of €2 000. In Poland, loans granted to companies during the health crisis will not be taken into account for income tax purposes. In the United Kingdom, the government has granted £10 billion (€11.2 billion) in guarantees to insurance schemes for business-to-business transactions...

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ECB :

Extension of the programme to repurchase assets



The European Central Bank decided on 4 June to increase its Pandemic Emergency Procurement Programme (EPPP) by €600 billion to a total of €1,350 billion and to extend it until June 2021 instead of December 2020. The ECB expects euro area GDP to decline by 8.8% in 2020 due to the coronavirus crisis... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

Consultation of the digital services



On 2 June the Commission launched a public consultation on digital services legislation. The consultation aims to gather views, facts and figures from citizens, businesses, online platforms, academics, civil society and all interested parties to help the Commission define the future body of rules for digital services. The consultation, open until 8 September, covers topics such as online safety, freedom of expression and a level playing field in the digital economy... [Read more](#)

Consultations on a possible new competition tool



On 2 June, the European Commission published an initial impact assessment and an open public consultation inviting stakeholders to comment on the need for a possible new competition tool to address structural competition problems in an effective and timely manner. Interested parties can submit their views on the initial impact assessment until 30 June 2020 and respond to the open public consultation until 8 September 2020... [Read more](#)

New consultation phase regarding the European minimum wage



On 3 June the Commission launched the second phase of consultation on the project for a fair minimum wage guaranteed for all workers in the European Union. It considers that the coronavirus crisis still makes such a mechanism necessary. The Commission has been considering effective collective bargaining, the regular updating of minimum wages, the abolition of existing exemptions and the setting up of monitoring mechanisms... [Read more](#)

Strengthening of the rescEU funds



In anticipation of the risk of forest fires this summer, the European Union is reinforcing the European aerial fire-fighting fleet under the rescEU mechanism with two new fire-fighting aircraft that will be integrated into the reserve. In total, the rescEU fleet for 2020 is thus equipped with 13 aeroplanes and 6 helicopters... [Read more](#)

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4th round of negotiations with UK



At the end of the 4th round of negotiations on the new partnership between the European Union and the United Kingdom on 5 June, the chief European Union negotiator Michel Barnier announced that no major progress had been made in the areas of fisheries, economic reciprocity, governance and police and judicial cooperation. He felt that meetings should be stepped up to reach an agreement before the end of the year, and called on the UK government to respect the political declaration signed in 2019... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

MEPs ack for the restoration of the Schengen Area



In a resolution adopted on 4 June, Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs expressed its concern about free movement in Europe. MEPs call for free movement to be restored at regional level and for a recovery plan for Schengen to be put in place. They deplore the lack of co-ordination during the crisis regarding the reintroduction of border controls, and hope that European governance of the Schengen area will be established in the medium term, and that the area will be extended to all EU countries... [Read more](#)

Council :

Digital priorities for the future of the Union



On 5 June, telecommunications ministers discussed the lessons to be learned from the pandemic, Europe's digital competitiveness and sovereignty, and priorities for investment in digital. They also took stock of negotiations on the proposal for a regulation on e-Privacy, on the creation of a European centre of competence for cybersecurity and on 5G network security. They launched the adoption by written procedure of conclusions on the digital future of the Union... [Read more](#)

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Meeting of Justice Ministers



On 4 June, Justice Ministers discussed the Commission's proposal on the waiver of debts, the aim of which is to determine which national law is applicable in the event of a dispute involving creditors from several countries. They addressed the retroactive nature of the measure, the inclusion of priority criteria and the principle of universality. The ministers also discussed the extradition of European citizens to third countries and the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on European judicial systems... [Read more](#)

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Reviving sports activities and competitions



On 2 June the Sports Ministers discussed the resumption of sports activities. They agreed on the importance of a gradual resumption, the introduction of health rules, cooperation between States for the resumption of the sector, and the importance of mobilising European funds, in particular Erasmus+, to support this resumption. Ministers also finalised their conclusions on the training of coaches, which were adopted by written procedure.

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Agriculture Ministers Meeting



On 8 June, the agriculture ministers gave their support to the biodiversity strategies and the "farm to fork" principle defined by the Commission. They called for an ambitious multi-annual budget and stressed the importance of good communication, common food labels, taking account of national specificities and financial support for farmers for the Green Pact to be a success... [Read more](#)

Development Ministers Meeting



On 8 June, Development Ministers discussed measures to combat the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, totalling €36 billion. These resources allocated to partner countries will be used to support health systems, facilitate socio-economic recovery, allow the movement of goods and investment in vaccine research... [Read more](#)

Conclusions of the European space policy



On 4 June, the Council adopted conclusions on the Union's space policy, which could play a role in managing climate change, ecosystem degradation, health crises, food security and migration. The Council has invited the Commission to strengthen its study of the "European new space" and emphasises the importance of developing innovation and research, but also of supporting Member States with less capacity in the space sector... [Read more](#)

Court of Auditors :

The Greening of the CAP deemed inadequate



In a report published on 5 June, the European Court of Auditors found that the greening measures of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) 2014-2020 have been insufficient in countering biodiversity decline. The auditors note a decline in biodiversity since 1990. They find that the

Commission has overvalued some CAP-funded measures, and has not put in place a sufficiently strong cross-compliance system and indicator to monitor the effects of the CAP on biodiversity... [Read more](#)

France :

GAIA-X European data infrastructure project



On 4 June, the French and German Ministers of the Economy, Bruno Le Maire and Peter Altmaier, presented the broad outlines of the GAIA-X project to create a European data infrastructure. They reasserted their commitment to give a central place to the issue of digitisation, which is essential for the competitiveness of companies and future jobs. 22 companies, 11 German and 11 French, have formalised their participation in the project, which is entering a new phase of development. The two ministers called on other European countries and companies to join the project... [Read more](#)

Poland :

Presidential election will take place on 28th June



The president of the lower house of the Polish parliament, Elzbieta Witek, announced on 3 June that the first round of the presidential election will finally be held on 28 June. Originally scheduled for 10 and 24 May, the elections could not be held because of the health situation... [Read more](#)

Kosovo :

New government



The Parliament of Kosovo invested the new Prime Minister, Avdullah Hoti, and his government on 3 June by 61 votes out of the 86 MPs present. The coalition government comprises the Democratic League of Kosovo, the Social Democratic Initiative, the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo and the Serbian Party. The previous government of Albin Kurti (Vetevendosje) was overthrown in March by a motion of censure tabled on the initiative of the LDK... [Read more](#)

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Council of Europe :

Annual report on corruption and transparency



In its 2019 report, made public on 3 June, the Council of Europe's anti-corruption body (GRECO) examines the anti-corruption measures taken in 2019 in Member States, affecting parliamentarians, judges, prosecutors and central governments. By the end of the year, 36% of the recommendations had been fully implemented - and only 27% of those concerning parliamentarians. 15 countries were placed under the GRECO 4th round non-compliance procedure (Armenia, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Monaco, Northern Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Turkey)... [Read more](#)

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Report on racism and intolerance in Austria



The Council of Europe's Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) published its sixth report on Austria on 2 June. ECRI notes some progress since the previous report, in 2018, notably for LGBT+ persons with the recognition of a third gender and the legalisation of marriage for persons of the same sex. The report notes the efforts to combat hate speech online but is concerned more generally about the rise in Islamophobia and xenophobia in the country... [Read more](#)

Report on racism and intolerance in Denmark



The Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) published on 2 June conclusions on the implementation of its priority recommendations addressed to Denmark in 2017. The country has partially implemented the recommended comprehensive system of data collection on racist, homophobic and transphobic incidents related to hate speech and is working towards improving the ethnic mix in schools... [Read more](#)

Agencies :

New centre for the fight to counter financial crime



On 5 June, the European police cooperation agency Europol launched a new specialised centre for the fight against financial and economic crime with 65 experts to help Member States recover money stolen by organised crime more easily. In particular, the agency will have to tackle attempts to misappropriate EU recovery funds... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Rise in unemployment in April



Eurostat data published on 3 June showed that the unemployment rate was 6.6% in the European Union and 7.3% in the euro-zone in April, compared to 6.4% and 7.1% respectively in March. This corresponds to about 14 million unemployed people, of whom 11.9 million were in the euro-zone... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Report on the European Union in the World



On 2 June Eurostat published a statistical portrait of the European Union in comparison with the 16 non-EU G20 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Russia, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States). The report covers three main themes: people and society, economy and business, environment and natural resources. In particular, Eurostat noted that in 2018, 6% of the world's population were living in the EU, the second largest contributor to world GDP... [Read more](#)

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Report on the European Funds for Sustainable Development



On 2 June the Commission published a report on the implementation of the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD), a pillar of the external investment plan. The EFSD is designed to finance investment in particular in the Union's neighbouring countries and in Africa. €3.1 billion of mixed grants and guarantees have already been allocated under this heading, out of an estimated total of €4.6 billion. This is expected to raise €47 billion of investment. The report thus underlines the relevance of the EFSD, in particular through its mainstreaming of sustainable development objectives (SDOs), and its capacity to support innovation in the private sector... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Black suns at the Louvre-Lens



The Louvre-Lens Museum has reopened its doors and is extending until January 25, 2021 the "Black Suns" exhibition, on the history of this colour in art, from the Egyptians to Pierre Soulages. Admission is free until June 30... [Read more](#)

Re-opening of the museums of Madrid



Madrid's three major museums reopened their doors on June 6th. The Prado Museum focuses a selection of about 200 works on a third of its surface until September 13. At the Reina Sofia Art Centre, part of the collections and an exhibition by the Italian artist Mario Merz are accessible. In addition to its permanent collection, the Thyssen Bornemisza Museum offers an exhibition on Rembrandt and the portrait, and an exhibition by the American artist Joan Jonas... [Read more](#)

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Contemporary art in Munich



The Brandhorst Museum in Munich houses more than 700 contemporary works, including one of the world's most important collections of Andy Warhol. It is currently holding a retrospective for its 10th anniversary, an exhibition of books from its collections, and an exhibition devoted to the British multimedia artist Mark Leckey... [Read more](#)

Warsaw's pomp and secrets

The Royal Castle in Warsaw offers "The Extraordinary Gift of the King", an exhibition on the earthenware service offered by Stanislaus II to Sultan Abdülhamid, and "The Secrets of the Castle Gardens", an open-air tour to discover the history of the place brought to light by archaeological digs... [Read more](#)



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11 virtual ways to visit the British Museum

The British Museum Still closed to the public, the British Museum offers 11 ways to enjoy its collections and activities online, including virtual galleries, podcasts, videos and audio tours... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



9th June 2020

Meeting of Economy and Finance Ministers

Meeting of Employment and Social Affairs Ministers

Meeting of Trade Ministers



11th June 2020

Eurogroup Meeting

Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers of the Eastern Partnership



12th June 2020

Meeting of Health Ministers

Meeting of Industry Ministers



15th June 2020

Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers

Meeting of the Energy Ministers

Meeting of Ministers responsible for cohesion

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