

FONDATION ROBERT SCHUMAN

Le Centre de recherches et d'études sur l'Europe



The Letter turns 20!

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Europe with consistency

Every week for the past 20 years, the Robert Schuman Foundation's Newsletter has been delivering essential information on European policies and institutions.

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The work of think-tanks is only important if it is carried out over the long term.

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This consistency is matched only by our commitment to raise awareness of a Europe that has changed the lives of its citizens and is constantly evolving to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Jean-Dominique GIULIANI
Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation

Exclusive interview with Jean-Claude Juncker: "Europe is a world power and unaware of it"

Author: Jean-Claude Juncker



In an exclusive interview granted on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Foundation's Newsletter, Jean-Claude Juncker gives his view on the development of the European Union, its past and future challenges. The former President of the Commission calls for a Europe that is aware of its strength and defends its interests. He notes that Europeans do not yet know each other well enough but believes that "we will have become better Europeans after the health crisis".

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Foundation :

The Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2020



The 2020 edition of the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union", a reference work for European decision-makers, is available in hard copy in French, published by Marie B, and in electronic format in French and English with the contribution of the highest personalities and the finest experts such as Thierry Breton, Wolfgang Schäuble or the head of the European Public Prosecutor's Office Laura Kodruta Kövesi. With original maps and annotated statistics, this book offers a comprehensive view of the European Union and analyses the challenges facing Europe. You can order it on our website... [Read more](#)

Speaking of Europe: how do you address the citizens directly?



The Foundation, which is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its weekly newsletter, is organising an online round table on 27 October to reflect on how to better involve citizens in European communication and information. Speakers will include Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President of the European Commission in charge of Promoting the European Way of Life; Fabienne Keller, MEP (to be confirmed), and Isabelle Ory, Brussels correspondent for Europe 1 and Radio Télévision Suisse Romande... [Read more](#)

Parliament in the time of coronavirus



The Foundation, in partnership with a European university research network initiated by the University of Lille in 2016 on the subject of "Parliament and Time", is launching a new series of reports aimed at reporting on "the impact of the health crisis on the functioning of national parliaments" in Europe. After France and the United Kingdom, the new publications look at Poland and Greece... [Read more](#)

Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress



More than 2 months after the "rigged" presidential election of 9 August, the Belarusian people continue to protest against the continued rule of Alexander Lukashenko. While opponent Svetlana Tsikhanovskaya gave Lukashenko until 25 October to leave power, European leaders on 16 October again condemned the violence directed against political demonstrators. To follow this crisis, the Foundation offers you a chronology of events and links to European responses and initiatives... [Read more](#)

Table of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



Faced with the resurgence of the Covid-19 pandemic in Europe, the 27 Member States of the European Union are taking new restrictive measures, such as curfews in the Paris region and several other cities in France, and are trying to coordinate their policies. The Foundation offers you a summary of the health measures in place and travel conditions across Europe. It is a vital, regularly updated resource to help you understand the situation... [Read more](#)

20 years of European news



In 20 years, Europe has grown, gone through several crises and changed a lot. On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of its weekly newsletter, the Foundation offers you this summary chronology of the key events in the life of the Union since 2000... [Read more](#)

Policies :

Cōnclusions of the European Council of 15 and 16 October

At the European Council of 15 and 16 October, the heads of State and Government expressed "concern" at the lack of progress in the negotiations with the United Kingdom, called for the negotiations to continue but also for preparations to be made



in the event of the absence of an agreement. They supported efforts to coordinate measures to combat the Covid-19 epidemic. They announced plans for a multi-sectoral investment programme with Africa, condemned the violence against demonstrators in Belarus, called on Turkey to stop its "provocations", and finally discussed climate targets with a view to taking a decision in December... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Employment and Social Affairs Ministers



On 13 October Employment and Social Affairs Ministers discussed the participation of workers and their support during the restructuring of businesses. They expressed the need to facilitate job reorientation and upgrade workers' skills as part of the transition to a green and digital economy. The issues of maintaining inclusive social dialogue in enterprise decision-making and gender equality in the labour market during the pandemic were also addressed... [Read more](#)

Tripartite Social Summit



The issue of economic recovery dominated the annual tripartite summit with the social partners, via videoconference on 14 October. Representatives of five trade union and employer organisations exchanged views with Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, European Council President Charles Michel, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the employment ministers of the countries of the current trio presidency of the Council (Germany, Portugal, Slovenia) on how to link the recovery plan to climate objectives, digital challenges and social justice, and on the place of social dialogue in this framework... [Read more](#)

Meeting of the General Affairs Council



The 27 Ministers for European Affairs, meeting in Luxembourg on 13 October, prepared the European Council of 15 and 16 October. Preparations for the Conference on the Future of Europe, which is due to reflect on further institutional reforms, are expected to start shortly. They also took stock of the discussions on the Multiannual Financial Framework and the negotiations with the United Kingdom. A review of the results of the rule of law report for five countries will take place at the next Council... [Read more](#)

Commission Working Plan 2021



The Commission published its work programme for 2021 on 19 October. In addition to the implementation of the Green Deal, with in particular the proposed border carbon adjustment mechanism, the Commission's priorities are the updating of the Union's industrial and digital strategies and competition policy, the development of its social policies and the advancement of the banking union and capital market union. The Commission is planning a new strategy for the Schengen area and the development of a European digital identity... [Read more](#)

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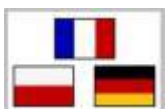
Diplomacy :

Sanctions against more Russian leaders



The Council adopted sanctions on 15 October against six members of the Russian presidential administration and a Russian entity involved in the attempted assassination of Alexei Navalny on 20 August. A businessman close to Russian President Vladimir Putin was also sanctioned for violating the arms embargo on Libya. The seven individuals are banned from travelling within the European Union and their assets have been frozen... [Read more](#)

Weimar Triangle Meeting



On 15 October, the German, French and Polish Foreign Ministers, Heiko Maas, Jean-Yves le Drian and Zbigniew Rau, met in Paris in the framework of the Weimar Triangle. In particular, they discussed European coordination in the face of the pandemic, the situation in Belarus and European sanctions against Russia. The Weimar Triangle is a discussion forum created in 1991 to strengthen the links between the three countries... [Read more](#)

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Switzerland: new negotiator with the European Union



Livia Leu, Ambassador of the Swiss Confederation in France, was appointed Secretary of State on 14 October to lead the negotiations that are due to resume soon for an institutional framework agreement with the European Union. The discussions, which have been going on for several years, have stalled over the directive on the rights of European citizens, State aid and accompanying measures to protect social rights. The rejection in a referendum on 27 September of a proposal to limit immigration to Switzerland by EU nationals could enable progress to be made in the negotiations... [Read more](#)



Economy :

Airbus/Boeing: the Union allowed to surcharge American products



On 13 October, one year after sanctioning it for its support for Airbus, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) authorised the European Union to take retaliatory measures against the United States for its aid to Boeing. The EU will be able to apply surcharges on \$4 billion of US imports into Europe, starting with Boeing sales... [Read more](#)



Consultation on the digital euro



On 12 October, the European Central Bank launched a public consultation and a series of tests on a virtual single currency. The consultation is designed to find out what the general public, the financial sector and institutions expect. It will run for three months. "Tests" will be conducted for six months. The ECB will then decide "around mid-2021" whether or not to launch the digital euro. If the green light is given, it will then take between two and four years for the initiative to become a reality... [Read more](#)



Extension of the temporary management of State Aid



On 13 October, the Commission decided to extend until June 2021 the temporary relaxation of State aid rules adopted on 19 March to support the economy during the pandemic. The provisional rules on support for business recapitalisation have been extended until September 2021. The new decision also allows States to contribute to the fixed costs borne by companies up to a maximum of €3 million per company... [Read more](#)



The Irish budget based on a hard brexit and no vaccine



On 13 October, the Irish government presented a budget for 2021 including an investment of €18 billion which should enable companies to "prepare for the unpredictability imposed on them by the Covid-19 and Brexit pandemics". The budget is based on two assumptions, that of a hard Brexit and the absence of a mass-available vaccine in 2021. This additional investment will be financed by debt and the government forecasts a deficit of €21 billion in 2021... [Read more](#)



Parliament asks for a budget increase of 39 billion €



Parliament's President David Sassoli called on the European Council on 15 October to facilitate an agreement between Parliament and Council on the draft Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027, based on MEPs' proposal to increase the budget by €39 billion. Discussions were suspended on 8 October and Parliament's negotiator, Johan van Overtveldt, accused the Council of distorting the MEPs'

position... [Read more](#)



IMF Economic Outlook



On 13 October, the IMF unveiled its global growth projections for 2020 and 2021. Economic recovery is being confirmed but world GDP is expected to contract by 4.4% in 2020. The contraction of GDP is worse in the euro zone and is expected to rise to 8.3% in 2020. The IMF projections for 2021, dependent on the maintenance of a healthy situation, are optimistic with an estimated 5.2% GDP growth in the euro zone in 2021, as in the rest of the world... [Read more](#)



Meeting of G20 Finance Ministers

On 14 October, G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors discussed economic recovery and the debt of poor countries. They announced the extension of the



moratorium on poor countries' debt for 6 months, until 30 June 2021, with the possibility of extending it again until the end of 2021. The participants also stated that "debt treatment beyond the suspension may be necessary on a case-by-case basis", paving the way for debt restructuring for some countries... [Read more](#)

Continuation of negotiations at the OECD regarding digital taxation



In response to the tax challenges raised by the digitisation of the economy, a consensus has been reached with a view to agreement by mid-2021 on the reform of digital taxation of multinationals as envisaged by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The report, adopted by the 137 countries in the inclusive framework discussing the reform, outlines the expected benefits: the total effect could represent between \$60 and \$100 billion per year, or up to about 4% of global corporate tax revenues, the OECD details... [Read more](#)

An OECD report points the UK's weaknesses



On 14 October, the OECD published an economic study on the United Kingdom that highlights the risks to growth posed by Brexit and the Covid-19 virus. The report points out that the UK is one of the OECD countries which has been hit hardest by the economic crisis and that even assuming Brexit with agreement, GDP is expected to contract by 10.1% in 2020 and activity will still be below pre-crisis levels by the end of 2021. The study highlights the importance of increasing investment in digital, infrastructure and vocational training, three areas where the UK lags behind other OECD countries, to improve economic prospects... [Read more](#)

Trade surplus figures



The eurozone recorded a surplus in international trade in goods of €14.7bn in August, while the EU recorded a surplus of €11.3bn, according to figures released by Eurostat on 16 October. The surplus was €14.4bn in August 2019 for the euro area and €10.6bn for the EU. In contrast, intra-euro area trade in goods fell by 4.6% in one year, and by 11.2% in the Union over the period January-August... [Read more](#)

Inflation down in September



Euro-zone annual inflation was -0.3% in September after a fall of 0.2% in August, according to figures published by Eurostat on 16 October. This negative rate is explained by the fall in energy prices, which was -8.2% in September. However, inflation varies between countries, ranging from -2.3% in Greece to +3.4% in Hungary. In the European Union, inflation stands at +0.3%... [Read more](#)

Fishing quotas in the Baltic Sea 2021



On 20 October the Ministers of Agriculture and Fisheries set the fishing quotas in the Baltic Sea for 2021. In particular, they decided to continue to allow only a "by-catch" quota for cod in order to protect this species, and to reduce herring quotas significantly. A moderate increase in the fishing of certain species such as salmon and sprat was decided... [Read more](#)

Research and Innovation :

Vaccine Roadmap



On 15 October, the Commission presented the steps for the deployment of future Covid-19 vaccines by Member States and invited Member States to develop a common vaccination strategy. Confirming the order of 800 million vaccines from three manufacturers, the commission announced that each Member State will have equal access to the first vaccine authorised by the European Medicines Agency, in a quantity proportional to the number of inhabitants. It called on national infrastructures and institutions to prepare for deployment and to launch information campaigns on the importance of the vaccines... [Read more](#)

The European Space Agency is developing programmes for the Moon and Mars



The European Space Agency (ESA) signed contracts on 14 October with European industrialists Airbus, Thales and Leonardo for the construction of a lander, a probe, a miniature laboratory as well as service, housing and communication modules, which will be used as part of ESA's participation in the American lunar programme Artemis and the Martian soil sample return campaign... [Read more](#)

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Strengthening of Franco-German technological cooperation



On 13 October, in two video conferences, French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Commissioner Thierry Breton, the French and German Ministers of Economy and European industrialists discussed the steps to be taken to consider joint projects on hydrogen, 5G telecommunications and data infrastructures (cloud). With regard to hydrogen technologies, France, Germany and the European Commission want to launch an important project of common interest by the end of the year that would allow public funding to be granted... [Read more](#)

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Society :

Report on energy and strategy regarding chemical products



On 14 October, the Commission adopted the 2020 report on the state of the energy union as well as a sustainability strategy for chemicals and a strategy to reduce methane emissions... [Read more](#)

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First review of cohesion actions to counter COVID-19



On 12 October, the Commission published a first assessment of the two investment initiatives in response to the coronavirus (CRII and CRII+), which allow Member States to take advantage of an increase in the rate of EU co-financing under cohesion policy funds. The EU has committed more than €13bn to help Member States respond to the health and economic crisis. A web page uploaded the same day provides scoreboards showing the use of funds by category and country... [Read more](#)

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Eurobarometer on the Common Agricultural Policy and the citizens



The Eurobarometer on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), published on 13 October by the Commission, shows an increase in citizens' satisfaction and knowledge compared to 2017: 73% of respondents are aware of its role, 76% are satisfied with it and 56% are aware of the European organic logo. Furthermore, 39% of respondents believe that support for agriculture, which represents 40% of the EU budget, is too low, with 56% believing that this share should increase... [Read more](#)

The Council of Europe issues warning about the use of personal data



On 12 October, the Council of Europe published a report on the protection of personal data in the context of the pandemic. The report points to the lack of a clear legal framework for certain actions, such as the use of surveillance drones during lockdown in Greece or France, but also to the lack of consent for data collection in Russia or Turkey, where the use of tracking applications is mandatory for contaminated persons. In Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and Portugal, some personal data have been published openly. The Council of Europe is calling for temperature measurements and customer records to be limited to "public interest" requirements, for a principle of proportionality to be respected and for these measures to be regulated by law... [Read more](#)

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13 year prison sentence for the leaders of the Greek Neo-Nazi Party



On 14 October, the Criminal Court of Athens sentenced the leader of the Greek neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party, Nikolaos Michaloliakos, to 13 years in prison, convicted on 7 October of leading a "criminal organisation". Among the 6 other party cadres, MEP Ioannis Lagos was also sentenced to 13 years in prison. The court also sentenced party member Yorgos Roupakias to life imprisonment for the murder of rapper Pavlos Fyssas in 2013... [Read more](#)

Dismantling of a money laundering network



An international operation involving 16 States led to the arrest on 15 October of 20 people suspected of belonging to the QAAZZ criminal network that carries out money laundering. This operation was part of a joint investigation between Portugal and the United States in which 14 Member States participated through Europol. Some 40 searches were carried out in different States, Latvia, Bulgaria, the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy and criminal proceedings were initiated by the United States, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Spain... [Read more](#)

New European sanctions regime



On 19 October, the Commission proposed a strengthening of the European sanctions regime against persons or entities guilty of serious human rights violations. The new regime, which includes measures such as the freezing of assets and a ban on entering EU territory, will make it possible to target people anywhere in the world, regardless of where human rights violations are committed and who they are. The Commission would also be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the ban... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Launch of new European Bauhaus



On 14 October, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced the launch of the new "European Bauhaus", inspired by the German artistic and architectural movement founded under the Weimar Republic. This space for collaboration, dialogue and innovation between European architects, artists, engineers, scientists and students aims to "bring the Green Deal into the home" and "underline the appeal of a sustainable lifestyle". The first phase will focus on energy efficiency, green digital innovation and demographic transition... [Read more](#)

Andy Warhol in Vienna



Until 31 January 2021, the Museum of Contemporary Art of the Ludwig Foundation in Vienna is hosting an exhibition devoted to Andy Warhol. The exhibition focuses mainly on the artist's works from 1960 to 1980, and features marbled paper sculptures that have never been shown before... [Read more](#)

Renaissance at the Louvre



Two exhibitions devoted to the Renaissance are on show at the Louvre: "Albrecht Altdorfer. Master of the German Renaissance" until 4 January 2021 and "Body and Soul, from Donatello to Michelangelo. Italian Renaissance Sculptures" until 18 January 2021... [Read more](#)

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A photographic history of Dublin



From 28th October to 14th February 2021, the Museum of Modern Art in Dublin is hosting an exhibition of photographs from Dr David Kronn's collection spanning the last 25 years. Through the images of photographers such as Gilles Caron, David Farrell, Tony O'Shea, Gilles Peress and Ursula Schulz-Dornburg, the exhibition traces the events and locations of the conflict in Northern Ireland and puts it into perspective with the international context of the time... [Read more](#)

Frida Kahlo in Milan



The exhibition "Frida Kahlo, inner chaos" is on view at the Fabricca del Vapore in Milan until 28th March 2021. It immerses visitors in the artistic, personal and spiritual life of the artist thanks to animated installations, a sensory video in enhanced reality, but also a reconstruction of her private universe through everyday objects... [Read more](#)

Female artists at the Prado



The exhibition "The Uninvited. Episodes on women, ideology and visual arts in Spain" is on display until 14 March 2021 at the Prado Museum in Madrid . The exhibition includes some of the most representative masterpieces created by women from 1833 to 1931, from Rosario Weiss to Elena Brockmann... [Read more](#)

Prize :**Parliament launches a journalism prize in honour of Caruana Galizia**

On 16 October, the European Parliament launched the Caruana Galizia Prize for Investigative Journalism, on the third anniversary of the murder of Maltese anti-corruption journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia. The prize will be awarded annually from October 2021 onwards and will include an award of €20,000. In its current version, the next EU budget will provide €68 million in grants for press freedom and media education... [Read more](#)

Appointment of Sakharov Prize finalists

The finalists for the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize were selected on 12 October by a joint vote between the Foreign Affairs and Development Committees. The democratic opposition in Belarus, represented by the Coordinating Council, the Guapinol activists and Berta Caceres, an Amerindian environmental activist killed in 2016, and the Archbishop of Mosul, Najeeb Moussa Michael, are the nominees for the award on 22 October... [Read more](#)

Agenda :

19-20 October 2020

Luxembourg
Agriculture and Fisheries Council

19-23 October 2020

Remote Plenary Session at the European Parliament



23 October 2020

Luxembourg
Environment Council

25 October 2020

Lithuania
General Elections (second round)

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