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The Letter in PDF format

The Foundation on  and 

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## Creation of a European Solidarity Funds - Directing Europeans' savings towards their growth companies

Author: Emmanuel Sales



Europe has an excess of savings and its companies lack equity. The creation of European sovereignty funds would help us respond to this challenge by providing medium-sized companies with fresh capital to ensure their development and independence.

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#### Foundation :

##### Schuman Report on Europe, the State of 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 paper version in French, published by Marie B, and in electronic format in French and English with contributions by leading personalities and the best experts. 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](#)

##### Table of health measures and travel conditions in Europe



Curfews, shop closures, restrictions of movement or lockdown, European countries are taking steps to deal with the upsurge of the pandemic and are trying to coordinate their actions. The Foundation offers you a summary of the health measures in place and travel conditions across Europe. An indispensable, regularly updated resource to help you understand the situation... [Read more](#)

##### Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress

The Union has launched the procedure to sanction Alexander Lukashenko, whom it no longer recognises as president after the "rigged" election of 9 August. Meanwhile, the Belarusian people are still protesting against his continued rule and for the release of



political prisoners. To follow this crisis, the Foundation provides you with a chronology of events and links to European reactions and initiatives... [Read more](#)

## Commission :

### Autumn Economic Forecasts



The EU's GDP is expected to fall by 7.4% and that of the eurozone by 7.8% in 2020, according to forecasts published by the Commission on 5 November, upwardly revised compared with July's forecasts (-8.7% and -8.3%). The Commission forecasts a recovery of 4.2% in 2021 and 3% in 2022, but the Union's GDP is not expected to return to its pre-pandemic level before the end of 2022. Debt in the eurozone, estimated at 85.9% of GDP in 2019, is expected to grow until 2022 and represent 102.6% of GDP. The unemployment rate is also expected to continue rising until 2021, reaching 8.6% in the EU and 9.4% in the eurozone. Inflation in the EU and the euro area is expected to reach 1.5% and 1.3% in 2022... [Read more](#)

### Wage equality between men and women in 2020



On the occasion of the European Equal Pay Day on 10 November, the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for values and transparency, Vera Jourova, Employment Commissioner Nicolas Schmit and Equality Commissioner Helena Dalli denounced the over-representation of women in the lowest paid jobs as well as the excessive wage gaps between men and women which the pandemic has further exacerbated. The pay gap between men and women is estimated at 14.1% in 2020, according to figures published by Eurostat... [Read more](#)

### Boeing/Airbus dispute: EU responds to US taxes



Brussels announced on 9 November customs sanctions against the United States in the dispute between Airbus and Boeing in an attempt to seek a negotiated end to the dispute, which has been going on for more than 15 years. "We have a World Trade Organisation (WTO) ruling on the Boeing case that allows us to impose taxes and that is what we are doing," said Commission vice-president Valdis Dombrovskis, adding that Brussels remained "open to a negotiated solution"... [Read more](#)

## Parliament :

### Budget: agreement with the Council on conditionality of rule of law



The Parliament and the Council reached a provisional agreement on 5 October on the creation of a conditionality mechanism which makes access by Member States to funds from the EU budget and the recovery plan conditional on respect for the rule of law and the Union's values. Funds will also be suspended if Member States are suspected of fraud or corruption with a view to preventing misuse of the Union budget. Beneficiaries such as students or farmers will be able to lodge complaints online to receive funds they have not received due to misconduct by their State... [Read more](#)

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### Vote in support of the Recovery and Resilience Facility



Parliament's Budget and Economic Affairs Committees voted on 9 November in favour of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the €672.5 billion instrument to support economic recovery. MEPs want at least 40% of each national plan to be devoted to climate change and at least 20% to digital technology. They also call for the funding to be available for 4 years (instead of 3), for Member States to be able to request pre-financing of up to 20% (instead of 10%), and for the Commission to report to Parliament every six months. Their position is expected to be the Parliament's negotiating mandate with the Council... [Read more](#)

## Council :

### Meeting of Economic and Financial Affairs Ministers



On 4 November, the 27 Economy and Finance ministers discussed a draft text against money laundering and the financing of terrorism, which provides for more harmonised rules and a European monitoring and support mechanism for national financial intelligence units. They

also discussed bad debts (where the debtor does not pay interest), legislative proposals on financial services and the amendment of the directive on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation... [Read more](#)

### Eurogroup Meeting



On 3 November, the ministers of the 19 members of the Eurogroup discussed the development of the world economy and the eurozone during the pandemic. They continued to prepare the implementation of the €672.5 billion Recovery and Resilience Facility. They took stock of the implementation of the measures introduced by the EU in the spring, such as the SURE programme, the European Investment Bank's Guarantee Fund and the credit line to support the health crisis. The priorities of the Supervisory Board of the European Central Bank and the Single Resolution Council were presented... [Read more](#)

### Agreement on Permanent Structured Cooperation



On 5 November, the Council established the conditions under which third states could participate in certain defence projects in the framework of permanent structured cooperation (PESCO). These conditions include respect for the Union's values and its security and defence interests, as well as the exchange of classified information with the Union. Meeting on the same day, the EU Chiefs of Defence discussed the amplification of terrorist threats and the mobilisation of armed forces following the resurgence of the pandemic, as well as the strengthening of cooperation between the European Union and NATO... [Read more](#)

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### Position of the InvestEU programme



On 4 November, the Council adopted its position for negotiations on the European investment support programme InvestEU, worth €23.5 billion. It is asking for 35% of the allocation for infrastructure renovation, 27.5% for research, innovation and digital technologies, 27% for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and 10% for training. The Parliament must adopt its negotiating mandate... [Read more](#)

### Meeting of Trade Ministers



Trade ministers met on 9 November to discuss the Commission's trade policies (TPR), the WTO and relations with the United States and China. They reiterated the need for reciprocity in the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI) negotiations with China and their commitment to a constructive trade agenda with the US. Some Ministers called for the inclusion of gender equality in the CAI. The TPR will lead to a Commission Communication setting out the trade policy guidelines for the next 5 years, in early 2021... [Read more](#)

## Diplomacy :

### Sanctions against Lukashenko and 14 Belarus leaders



On 6 November the Council adopted sanctions against 15 leaders of the Belarusian regime, including Alexander Lukashenko, for their role in the crackdown on the democratic movement. 59 people are now banned from entering the Union and have had their assets frozen. EU citizens and companies based in the EU are also banned from making funds available to them... [Read more](#)

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### Illegal drilling in the Mediterranean: extension of sanctions



On 6 November, the Council renewed for one year the sanctions against two Turkish nationals for drilling for oil in Cypriot territorial waters. Decided in February 2020, these restrictive measures consist of a ban on entry into EU territory and an assets freeze. In addition, people and entities from the EU are not allowed to make funds available to them... [Read more](#)

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### Response to the election of Joseph Biden



Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Charles Michel, as well as most European leaders congratulated Joe Biden following his election as the 46th President of the United States... [Read more](#)

**Austria :****Fighting to counter terrorism by all means**

On 3 November, Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz spoke out following the terrorist attack, on 2 November, responsibility for which was claimed by the Islamic state, leaving four people dead and 15 injured. He said that "we must and will fight terrorism by all means" but also warned against division and amalgamation which would play into the hands of terrorists. The event prompted many reactions from other EU countries...

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**France :****Emmanuel Macron asks for the reform of the Schengen Area**

During a trip on 5 November, French President Emmanuel Macron said he was in favour of a complete overhaul of the Schengen area of free movement. He called for better protection of internal borders to limit "secondary" immigration and also called for tighter controls at external borders. It calls for the interior ministers of the Schengen Member States to meet more regularly to decide on common rules. He indicated that he would make proposals to this effect at the next European Council...

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**Preparation for the French Presidency of the Council of the Union**

On 4 November, the Council of Ministers examined the broad outlines of the French Presidency of the Council of the Union in the first half of 2022. This Presidency will be devoted to 3 major themes: recovery, power, belonging, notably through the dual transition between climate and digital technologies and the Conference on the Future of Europe. A cultural committee will also be set up to give an additional dimension to the Presidency...

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**Lithuania :****Agreement of a coalition of rightwing parties for a government led by Ingrida Simonyte**

On 9 November, the leading right-wing coalition in the 25 October parliamentary elections, comprising the Homeland Union-Christian Democrats, the Liberal Movement and the Freedom Party, signed a coalition agreement to form a government led by Ingrida Simonyte, who led the Homeland Union-Christian Democrats list. The agreement also sets out the broad lines of policy to be pursued by the new government, including an increase in teachers' salaries, the legalisation of same-sex civil unions and a green deal...

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**Poland :****Suspension of the Constitutional Court's decision regarding abortion**

The Polish government suspended publication in the Official Gazette of the Constitutional Court decision of October 22 restricting the right to abortion. The Tribunal's decision, which should have been published by November 2 in order to enter into force, triggered a wave of protest throughout the country...

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**UK :****Negotiations with the Union continue**

The President of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen and the British Prime Minister Boris Johnson exchanged views on 7 November on the progress of the negotiations for the future of relations between the European Union and the United Kingdom. "Progress has been made, but "major differences" remain, particularly on fisheries and fair competition. The EU's chief negotiator Michel Barnier arrived in London on 9 November to try to reach an agreement...

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**The Lords reject in part the internal market bill**

On 9 November, the British Lords voted by 433 votes to 165 in favour of withdrawing the clauses in the Internal Market Bill that breach the withdrawal agreement negotiated with the European Union and

international law. Clauses 44, 45 and 47 of the bill, supported by the government of Prime Minister Boris Johnson, provide new powers for British ministers over customs policy in Northern Ireland and the possibility of suspending the provisions of the withdrawal agreement adopted on 9 October 2019. This is a major defeat for the government as 44 Conservative Lords rebelled and voted to withdraw. The bill must now return to the House of Commons... [Read more](#)

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## Armenia :

### Ceasefire in the Nagorno Karabakh



Armenia and Azerbaijan signed a Russian-sponsored ceasefire on the night of 9-10 November to end their fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh. According to the agreement, the Azeri forces will keep the territories conquered since the beginning of the conflict at the end of September, and in particular Shushi, a town located between Stepanakert, capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, a self-proclaimed republic with an Armenian majority, and Armenia. In Yerevan, demonstrators invaded the Armenian Parliament to protest against the agreement... [Read more](#)

## Kosovo :

### Resignation and imprisonment of the President accused of war crimes



Kosovo President Hashim Thaci announced his resignation on 5 November after the Special Court in The Hague confirmed his indictment for war crimes during the conflict with Serbia in 1998 and 1999. The Speaker of Parliament Vjosa Osmani is acting as interim President. Detained in Scheveningen prison in The Hague, Thaci pleaded not guilty at his first court appearance on 9 November... [Read more](#)

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## Council of Europe :

### 70th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights



The European Convention on Human Rights celebrated its 70th anniversary on 4 November. It was signed in Rome on 4 November 1950 by the member states of the Council of Europe, and on behalf of France by Robert Schuman, then Minister of Foreign Affairs. On the occasion of this anniversary, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the 47 Member States re-asserted their commitment to unity in Europe and greater solidarity between nations. In a declaration not signed by Greece, Hungary, Turkey and Azerbaijan, the ministers recalled that the Convention "clearly sets out impassable 'red lines' that cannot be crossed, even in times of serious public health crisis"... [Read more](#)

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## ECHR :

### Condemnation of Greece for breach of freedom of expression



On 5 November the European Court of Human Rights condemned Greece for violating the freedom of expression of a journalist sentenced to 3 months in prison for publishing an article describing a high school headmaster as a neo-Nazi. The Court criticised the Greek court for not having sufficiently verified whether the exercise of the journalist's freedom of expression actually infringed the high school headmaster's private life. It considers that the conviction of the journalist had a deterrent effect on public debate and that the headmaster had exposed himself to public attention and journalistic criticism by publishing articles in favour of the dictatorship of the colonels and the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn... [Read more](#)

### Condemnation of Poland for evidence obtained under torture



In a ruling on 5 November, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the admission by Polish courts of statements extracted under torture by members of a criminal gang as evidence is contrary to the right to a fair trial. A Polish national had been sentenced to 12 years in prison for trafficking in cocaine on the basis of recordings obtained under torture, depriving the entire proceedings of fairness according to the Court... [Read more](#)

## OECD :

### Report on transnational corruption in the Netherlands

On 5 November, the OECD Working Group on Corruption published its assessment of the fight against transnational corruption in the Netherlands. The study welcomes the



increased efforts to combat corruption through the establishment of special investigation and prosecution teams. However, the study points out that, given the size and risk profile of the Dutch economy, the nine convictions currently handed down are insufficient. The OECD advises the Dutch government to reduce case processing times and improve the whistleblower protection regime... [Read more](#)



### Ten candidates for the post of Secretary General



On 2 November, the OECD published the official list of candidates nominated by member countries for the post of Secretary-General of the organisation, currently held by José Ángel Gurría of Mexico. Of the 10 candidates, 6 come from European Union Member States. The candidate selected by the OECD Council after interviews with its members will take office on 1 June 2021 for a five-year term... [Read more](#)

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### IMF :

#### France's economic outlook



On 2 November, the IMF published a report on France's economic outlook. It forecasts GDP growth of 5 to 6% in 2021, which will depend on the development of the pandemic and the measures adopted to deal with it. It recommends continuing to provide strong and flexible financial support in the context of the second wave... [Read more](#)



### Studies/Reports :

#### Third programme of Union action in the field of health



On 6 November, the Commission published its report on the implementation of the EU Health Action Programme 2018. 9.1M€ were spent on seven projects to encourage the transfer of good practice and help scale up at national and EU level. 7.9M€ were spent on strengthening capacity to tackle health threats, laboratory capacity and the implementation of the International Health Regulations... [Read more](#)



#### Report on consumer credit contracts



On 5 November, the Commission published a report on the Consumer Credit Contracts Directive (2008), which aims to foster the emergence of a single market for credit and strengthen consumer protection. While the report concludes that the directive has been "partially effective" in these two areas, it stresses the added value of the directive and the benefits for the consumer. The objective has been achieved in terms of awareness: 72% of citizens are aware of the right of withdrawal and 82% are aware of the right of advanced repayment... [Read more](#)



#### Preparedness for Brexit is inadequate



In a report published on 6 November, the National Audit Office (NAO) highlights the UK's lack of preparation with less than 2 months to go before the end of the transition period for its withdrawal from the European Union. It notes that the transit zones for trucks are not ready, that computer systems have not been tested and that there are not enough customs officers. In the scenario of no agreement with the Union, up to 7,000 lorries could find themselves stuck in Kent with up to 2 days waiting to cross the Channel... [Read more](#)



### Culture :

#### Le Greco at the Prado



Until 28 February, the Prado Museum is hosting five paintings by El Greco on loan from the Church of Our Lady of Charity in Illescas. The works are exhibited next to the canvases of the altarpiece by Dona Maria de Aragón, which are kept in the museum, providing a contrast between two essential sets of the painter's final work... [Read more](#)



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#### Online exhibitioin at the Tokyo Palace

Until 3 January 2021 the online exhibition "Anticorps" (Antibody) at the Tokyo Palace will be exploring the theme of the new relations we have developed in the time of



physical distancing. It brings together the works of some twenty artists from the French and international art scene. The concepts of intimacy are notably approached with the figurative paintings of Xinyi Cheng or the work "Abstracted/Family" by Koki Tanaka, which explores the family sphere in the context of lockdown... [Read more](#)

#### German theatre online



The Berliner Festspiele is putting online 3 plays performed this year: "Le Misanthrope" by Molière, filmed in Berlin, "Hamlet" by Shakespeare, filmed in Bochum, and "L'humain apparaît dans l'Holocène", a "visual poem" by the German director Alexander Giesche first performed in Zürich on 23 January... [Read more](#)

#### Jazz online in London



From 13 to 22 November, the EFG London Jazz Festival, one of the world's largest of its kind, will be held entirely online. This 9-day festival aims to draw together world-class artists such as Orphy Robinson with young British creators and musicians for several dozen concerts over 9 days... [Read more](#)

#### Vogue Photo Festival in Milan



As part of the 5th edition of this year's Photo Festival organised by Vogue in Milan, more than 140 photos by 30 photographers are on display outdoors, in the vicinity of Porta Venezia Park, until 22 November. To complement these exhibitions, screenings, discussions on fashion photography and extensive retrospectives will be held online from 19 to 22 November... [Read more](#)

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#### Arte Concert Festival



From 13 to 15 November, the Arte Concert Festival is offering filmed concerts at the Gaité lyrique in Paris, London and Los Angeles. On the bill: Sebastien Tellier, Yelle and London Grammar... [Read more](#)

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#### Agenda :



11-13 November 2020  
Brussels  
European Parliament Plenary Session

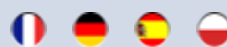


13 November 2020  
Videoconference  
Meeting of Interior Ministers



16 November 2020  
Videoconference  
Meeting of Agriculture and Fisheries Ministers

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