

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021

issue 937

The Letter in PDF format

The Foundation on



and



The foundation application available on [Appstore](#) and [Google Play](#)

— I support the Robert Schuman Foundation —

## The European Central Bank's Strategic Monetary Policy Review: the key to a return to sustainable growth in Europe

Author: Nicolas Goetzmann



Until the autumn, the ECB is conducting an in-depth analysis of its monetary policy and how it can be adapted to current economic conditions. At the heart of the reflection is a possible redefinition of the price stability objective, which seems necessary to ensure the competitiveness of the euro area.

[Read more](#)

### Contents

**Foundation** : Atlas - Maritime/Strategy - Conference/Europe - Health/Europe - Belarus  
**European Council** : Belarus  
**Commission** : Corporate Tax - Innovation - Vaccination  
**Parliament** : Certificate/Covid - Recovery - Migration - China - Turkey  
**Council** : Economy/Finances - Eurogroup - Trade - Health - Culture - Future/Europe - Defence - Travel  
**Diplomacy** : Israel/Palestine - Africa  
**Court of Justice** : Aviation - Poland - Romania  
**ECB** : Stability  
**European Agencies** : Tourism  
**Spain** : Catalonia  
**France** : NATO  
**Italy** : G20/Health - Economy/Recovery  
**Ukraine** : Georgia/Moldova  
**Iceland** : Arctic  
**Studies/Reports** : Seas/Oceans - Taxation  
**Culture** : Literature/Europe - Prize/Enescu - Exhibition/Berlin - Exhibition/Paris - Exhibition/Madrid - Exhibition/Rome - Exhibition/Warsaw - Literature/Wales - Art/Paris  
**Napoleon's Bicentenary** : Exhibition/Archives - Exhibition/Malmaison

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

#### Foundation :

##### The Permanent Atlas of the European Union is available



The new edition of the Permanent Atlas of the European Union has been published by Marie B. This book reflects the latest political and economic changes in the European Union and its Member States. With more than 50 maps, texts and thematic sheets, the Atlas summarises the essential history and political as well as statistical realities of the Union. It is available in hard copy in French in bookshops and on our website. The digital version is available in French and English... [Read more](#)

##### Geostrategic context and maritime issues in 2021



[more](#)

Admiral (2S) Bernard Rogel, former Chief of Staff to the President of the Republic and Chief of Staff of the Navy, was the guest of a videoconference organised by the Foundation on 19 May, in partnership with the "Fondation de la Mer". The recording is available here... [Read more](#)

Citizens' Conference at the heart of Europe



Pascale Joannin was a guest at the Heart of Europe Citizens' Conference organised by Frédéric Petit, MP, on 18 May, to discuss Franco-German cooperation and the challenges facing the European Union. You can watch or watch the conference again... [Read more](#)

### Table of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



Bar and restaurant terraces reopened in the Czech Republic on 17 May and in France on 19 May. Since 19 May, cultural venues have reopened in France and the curfew has been extended to 9pm. In Italy, the curfew was changed to 11pm on 19 May, and all regions have been classed "low risk" since 24 May. In the Netherlands, indoor sports facilities, amusement parks and open-air museums or theatres reopened on 19 May and libraries on 20 May. In Austria, hotels and restaurants, shops, museums and cultural venues opened on 19 May. To follow the evolution of the situation, the Foundation offers you a complete map of the sanitary measures in place and the travel conditions across Europe. An essential, regularly updated resource for you to better understand the situation... [Read more](#)

### Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress



On 24 May, EU leaders decided to impose new sanctions on Belarus and to close EU airspace to Belarusian airlines in response to the hijacking of a Ryanair plane on 23 May and the arrest of a journalist and his girlfriend on board. These measures follow on from those taken by the Europeans since the rigged presidential election in August 2020, and the support given to the democratic movement in Belarus. To follow this crisis, the Foundation provides its readers with a chronology of events and links to European responses and initiatives... [Read more](#)

### European Council :

#### Meeting of heads of State and government



On the first day of the extraordinary European Council meeting in Brussels, EU leaders decided on new sanctions against Belarus, in response to the hijacking of a Ryanair plane and the arrest of a journalist and his girlfriend who were on board. They also held a strategic debate on Russia and condemned "illegal, provocative and destabilising Russian activities" towards the EU. They took stock of the implementation of the agreements with the UK and called on the UK government to respect them. They welcomed the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas and condemned "in the strongest terms" the kidnapping of the transitional President of Mali and the Prime Minister... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

### Commission :

#### Programme of corporate tax reforms



The Commission presented a draft reform of corporate taxation on 18 May. It proposes to reduce administrative obstacles through a single body of legislation, and also wants to make it compulsory for companies to publish their effective tax rates and to step up the fight against shell companies... [Read more](#)

#### New strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation



On 18 May, the Commission unveiled its global approach to research and innovation, which aims to put the EU in the lead. It wants to ensure reciprocity and a level playing field in international cooperation. In this respect, the Commission intends to present guidelines to counter foreign interference targeting EU research organisations and higher education institutions... [Read more](#)

#### New order of the Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccination



The Commission signed on 20 May a third contract with Pfizer-BioNTech to reserve an additional 1.8 billion doses of Covid-19 vaccine between the end of 2021 and 2023. The contract stipulates that the production site be established in the EU, that its essential components be sourced in the EU and that delivery to Member States be guaranteed from 2022... [Read more](#)

## Parliament :

### Preliminary agreement on the COVID certificate



Parliament and Council negotiators reached a preliminary agreement on 20 May on a digital certificate, which will be issued from 1 July to people who have been vaccinated, tested negative or recovered from the disease. The Commission will mobilise €100 million to make the tests affordable and accessible. The certificate will not be a travel document and will be in place for 12 months. Member States will not impose additional restrictions unless necessary. They will be obliged to accept certificates issued in other Member States for vaccines authorised by the European Medicines Agency and will be free to recognise other vaccines. The agreement was approved on 21 May and is expected to be voted on in the Parliament at the June plenary session... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

### Assessment of recovery plans



In a resolution adopted on 20 May, Parliament asked for relevant information on the implementation of the national recovery plans. MEPs asked the Commission to encourage Member States to engage with all national stakeholders on any future changes to the plans, or on any new plans, and to ensure that consultations take place... [Read more](#)

### New avenues for legal economic migration



In a report adopted on 20 May by 495 votes to 163 with 32 abstentions, MEPs say that legal migration channels would help reduce irregular migration flows and undermine smugglers and traffickers, attract the workers needed to make up for shortages in the European labour market and an ageing population, and promote integration.. [Read more](#)

### Refusal of any agreement with China as long as sanctions remain in place



MEPs are rejecting any agreement with China as long as sanctions remain in place. In a resolution adopted on 20 May by 599 votes to 30 with 58 abstentions, they condemn in the strongest possible terms the unfounded and arbitrary sanctions imposed by China on several European entities and individuals, including five MEPs. They claim that the Chinese decision is an attack on fundamental freedoms and urge the Chinese authorities to lift these unjustified restrictive measures... [Read more](#)

### In support of a suspension of negotiations



In a report voted on 19 May by 480 votes to 64 with 150 abstentions, MEPs called for the "formal suspension" of Turkey's EU accession negotiations if the current negative trend in the rule of law is not reversed in the country. MEPs expressed concern about the Turkish President's "hypercentralisation of power" and his confrontational foreign policy, which "clashes with EU priorities"... [Read more](#)

## Council :

### Informal Meeting of Economics and Finance Ministers



On 22 May, the Ministers of Economy and Finance discussed economic recovery, climate transition and the role of environmental taxes, the reopening of borders and tourism. They discussed the need to complete the national ratification processes of the Own Resources Decision, and stressed the importance of not withdrawing prematurely the aid put in place to support the sectors most affected by the crisis. They announced that a "Recovery Summit" will be held on 28 June in Lisbon, at which EU leaders will be invited to reflect on the future of European governance... [Read more](#)

### Eurogroup Meeting



Euro area Finance Ministers meeting on 21 May discussed fiscal and macroeconomic developments in the euro area and adopted their work programme for the second half of the year. They discussed adjustment mechanisms in the euro area and the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic. They exchanged views on the macroeconomic and budgetary situation with the Chair of the Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, Irene Tinagli... [Read more](#)

### Meeting of Trade Ministers



On 20 May, the Trade Ministers discussed trade relations with the United States, and issues related to the tariffs on steel and aluminium and their suspension in the context of the Airbus-Boeing dispute. They discussed WTO reform and negotiations, trade policy review and in particular the International Procurement Instrument, which aims to discourage discrimination against EU companies in third country procurement. The Council held an informal exchange of views with WTO Director General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and US Trade Representative Katherine Tai... [Read more](#)

### Meeting of Health Ministers



On 20 May, health ministers discussed the Union's vaccination plans and the variants in circulation. They stressed the importance of having the different technologies available and second generation vaccines, and the characteristics of each vaccine, the production capacity and the need to encourage vaccination in the strategy to be put in place for 2022-2023... [Read more](#)

### Meetings of Ministers of Culture, Audiovisual, Education, Youth and Sport



On 17 and 18 May, the ministers of Culture, Audiovisual, Education, Youth and Sport discussed the recovery and financing of the cultural and creative sectors, the digital transformation of the media and audiovisual sectors, sports innovation and the EU's sports diplomacy strategy. They discussed cooperation between education authorities at European level and approved conclusions to improve the participation of young people in decision-making processes... [Read more](#)

### Meeting of European Affairs Ministers



European Affairs Ministers met in Coimbra on 17 May to discuss the future of the Union and to launch the European Foresight Network at ministerial level, which is intended to strengthen the foresight analysis capacity of Member States and the Commission. The ministers also discussed the outermost regions with projects on sustainable tourism and renewable energy... [Read more](#)

### Meeting of the Military Committee



The EU Chiefs of Staff (CHS), meeting on 19 May in Brussels, elected the Chairman of the Military Committee, Austrian General Robert Brieger, who will begin his mandate on 1 June 2022. They discussed with High Representative Josep Borrell the latest developments in the strategic compass and called on Member States to contribute more to missions by providing personnel, resources and logistics to respond to launched operations... [Read more](#)

### Relaxation of restrictions on travellers from third countries



The Council decided on 20 May to relax the conditions of entry into the EU for travellers who have received a vaccine approved by the European Medicines Agency. Restrictions may also be lifted on travel from third countries where the number of cases of Covid-19 is between 25 and 75 per 100,000 population over the last 14 days. When the epidemiological situation in a third country worsens rapidly, Member States should adopt an emergency brake mechanism, temporarily restricting all travel to the EU. Member States are free to follow these recommendations or not... [Read more](#)

## Diplomacy :

### Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers



The Foreign Ministers discussed the situation in Israel and the Palestinian territories on 18 May. High Representative Josep Borrell called for an immediate end to the violence with the implementation of a ceasefire. He said the high number of civilian deaths and injuries was unacceptable. He condemned the indiscriminate rocket attacks by Hamas and recalled that Israel's right to self-defence should be exercised in a proportionate manner. After 11 days of conflict, a ceasefire was signed on 21 May. The UN Security Council called

on 23 May for "full respect" for the ceasefire in Gaza and recalled the importance of a comprehensive peace based on a two-state solution... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

### Summit on Financing African Economies



On 18 May, French President Emmanuel Macron hosted the Summit on Financing African Economies in Paris, which brought together some 30 African, European and international leaders to discuss the consequences of the health and economic crisis in Africa. The IMF and the World Bank offered to help finance the goal of vaccinating 40% of the African population. The leaders also discussed good governance and creating the right conditions for the economy and international investment... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

### Court of Justice :

#### Rejection of aid to airlines KLM and TAP



On 19 May, the General Court of the European Union annulled the Commission's decision approving €3.4 billion of financial aid from the Netherlands to the airline KLM in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. It also annulled a decision approving €1.2 billion in aid to the Portuguese airline TAP. However, it validated a third decision creating a €10 billion fund to support the solvency of strategic Spanish companies. The three rulings follow appeals by the airline Ryanair... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#) | [Other link](#)

#### Opinion of the Advocate General of the Union's Court of Justice regarding the delegation system of Polish judges



In an opinion delivered on 20 May, the Advocate General considers that the Polish system of delegating judges to higher courts does not provide sufficient protection to assure litigants that judges will not be subject to "external pressure". The opaque selection criteria and the possibility for the Minister of Justice to dismiss the delegated judge at any time are described as "very worrying". The Court will give its judgment on the matter at a later stage, in response to a request for a preliminary ruling from a Polish court.. [Read more](#)

#### Decision on the reforms of justice in Romania



The Court of Justice affirmed on 18 May the legally binding nature of the Commission's reports to Romania under the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism. Romania must take account of the requirements of these reports, particularly in the areas of judicial independence and the fight against corruption. The Court considers that the Romanian reforms undertaken between 2017 and 2019 concerning the organisation of the judiciary and the disciplinary regime applicable to judges are likely to be used as an instrument of political control and to call into question the independence of the judiciary... [Read more](#)

### ECB :

#### Financial Stability Review



The ECB published its Financial Stability Review on 19 May, which provides an overview of potential risks to financial stability in the euro area. It considers that record high levels of government and corporate debt could derail recovery by destabilising the financial system as the economy gradually returns to normal... [Read more](#)

### European Agencies :

#### New Covid-19 safety label for European tourism



The European Committee for Standardisation published the new Covid-19 European safety label for tourism on 19 May. It was requested by the Commission to support the reopening of tourism in the EU. The seal will distinguish compliant and safe tourism establishments and ensure that they meet hygiene and cleaning requirements for virus prevention... [Read more](#)

### Spain :

Pere Aragonés elected regional president of Catalonia



On 21 May, Pere Aragonés, of the Republican Left of Catalonia (ERC), was elected regional president of Catalonia by 78 votes to 61. He will lead a coalition executive between ERC and Together for Catalonia (JxC), whose priorities are to obtain from the Spanish government the organisation of a self-determination referendum and the amnesty of pro-independence activists sentenced to prison or who fled abroad following the 2017 secession attempt. He took office on 24 May, reaffirming during his inaugural speech his commitment to "promote the social, green, feminist and democratic transformation that Catalonia needs"... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

**France :**

**Meeting with NATO Secretary General**



On 21 May, French President Emmanuel Macron received NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in preparation for the Alliance's summit on 14 June. They discussed the need to clarify NATO's role and strategic priorities, as well as the values and principles it stands for... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

**Italy :**

**G20: summit on health**



The first global health summit was held in Rome on 21 May, under the dual presidency of Italy as head of the G20 and the European Union, with the aim of keeping the Covid-19 pandemic under control, making vaccines available to everyone and everywhere, and preparing for future crises. The solemnly adopted "Rome Declaration" sets out the principles of this new global collaboration... [Read more](#)

**New economic support package**



On 20 May, the Italian government adopted new measures worth €40 billion, of which €15 billion will go to companies and self-employed entrepreneurs in difficulty who lost at least 30% of their revenue in 2020 due to the crisis. The tourism sector will benefit from more than €3 billion to boost its activity. These funds are in addition to the €32 billion already released in January as part of a previous rectifying budget for the affected economic sectors... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

**Ukraine :**

**Association with Georgia and Moldova**



On 17 May, Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova officially formed a "trio of associations" to establish closer cooperation on European integration. They reiterated their goal of becoming members of the European Union... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

**Iceland :**

**Ministerial meeting of the Arctic Council**



On 20 May, the Foreign Ministers of the 8 countries of the Arctic Council (Russia, USA, Canada, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Iceland) meeting in Reykjavik signed the Declaration in which they reiterated the Council's commitment to maintain peace, stability and constructive cooperation in the region, and the importance of immediately addressing climate change. They also adopted the Council's first strategic plan for the next decade. Finally, the Presidency of the Council was handed over to Russia for the next two years.. [Read more](#)

[Other link](#) | [Other link](#)

**Studies/Reports :**

**Report on the blue economy**



On 20 May, the Commission published a report on the EU Blue Economy, which provides an overview of the performance of the EU's economic sectors related to the oceans and coastal environment. The two sectors directly employed nearly 4.5 million people in 2018 and generated around €650 billion in turnover. The report notes trends in the EU blue economy, such as accelerating growth in the sector between 2013 and 2018, stable employment, a decrease in gross investment in tangible goods, and an emergence of marine renewables... [Read more](#)

## Publication of the annual report on taxation in the Union



The European Commission published its annual report on taxation in the EU on 18 May. It commends Member States for their support to households and businesses during the crisis but notes that tax revenues will decline in the post-crisis period. The report stresses the importance of taxation as a tool for economic recovery to support digitisation, energy transition, employment and fight tax evasion... [Read more](#)

## Culture :

### Winners of the Union's 2021 Literature Prize



The Union Prize for Literature (EURL), comprising experts in the fields of literature, publishing and bookselling from 41 participating countries, announced on 18 May the 13 winners for 2021... [Read more](#)

### Winners of the Enescu Prize



On 23 May, Yeon-Min Park from South Korea won first place for piano in the George Enescu International Music Competition. The jury also awarded her the title of the best interpretation of an Enescu sonata. First place for violin went to Valentin Serban from Romania and first place for cello to Jaemin Han from South Korea, who at 15 years old is the youngest winner of the competition. The competition has been held periodically since 1958 in honour of the famous Romanian composer George Enescu... [Read more](#)

### Picasso & the Women of Alger



The Berggruen Museum in Berlin is presenting the exhibition Picasso & The Women of Algiers until 8 August. This exhibition, that had been scattered across the world, brings together most of Picasso's post 1954 oil paintings for the first time in Germany in 65 years. This series of paintings offers a new perspective on painting and is unique in Picasso's oeuvre in its artistic variation... [Read more](#)

### Magritte and Renoir in Paris



Until 19 July, the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris, together with the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, is presenting the exhibition "Le surréalisme en plein soleil" (Surrealism in the sunlight), which brings together some sixty paintings and forty drawings confronting René Magritte with the works of Auguste Renoir which inspired him... [Read more](#)

### Claudia Comte's nature in Madrid



The Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid is showcasing Swiss artist Claudia Comte's passion for the oceans in "After Nature", a contemporary art exhibition that runs until 22 August. The exhibition brings together a series of sculptures reflecting the fundamental role of coral reefs in the production of oxygen on Earth. It is complemented by a mural which, through its graphics, forms and materials, encourages the viewer to become immersed... [Read more](#)

### The Time of Baroque in Rome



Until 3 October, Palazzo Barberini in Rome is presenting the Time of Baroque, an exhibition of 40 works by the great protagonists of Baroque culture, from Pietro da Cortona to Nicolaus Poussino and from Bernini to Guido Reni. The main theme of the exhibition is time, a concept studied in all its forms and variations through masterpieces by Italian and foreign artists, most of whom lived in Rome in the 17th century... [Read more](#)

### Soviet societies and totalitarianism in Warsaw



The Zacheta Art Gallery in Warsaw is presenting "The Cold Revolution" from 27 May to 19 September, an exhibition on the establishment of communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe featuring more than 400 photographs, paintings, films and other items... [Read more](#)

## Festival of Hay-on-Wye



The Hay-on-Wye Literature Festival in Wales is running online this year from 26 May to 6 June. There are video lectures on literature and nature, as well as workshops and book readings by authors for children... [Read more](#)

## Opening of the Bourse de Commerce, a new museum of contemporary art



On 22 May, a new contemporary art museum opened in Paris. Housed in the historic Bourse de Commerce building, businessman François Pinault's collection includes some 10,000 works by 350 different artists, representing creation in all its forms (sculptures, paintings, videos, photographs) from 1960 to the present day... [Read more](#)

## Napoleon's Bicentenary :

### Drawings at the National Archives



Until 19 July in the exhibition "Drawing for Napoleon", the National Archives in Paris are presenting the treasures of the imperial secretariat of State, the administrative machinery at the heart of Napoleonic power. More than a hundred documents are on display that served to win Napoleon's support for several projects related to the development of communications and industry, regional planning and many other subjects. Some of them are drawn by the painters Jacques-Louis David or Jean-Baptiste Isabey, and by the engraver Dominique-Vivant Denon... [Read more](#)

### 1001 faces in Malmaison



Until 6 September, the national museum of the Château de Malmaison, where Napoleon lived, is organising the exhibition "Napoleon with 1001 faces", which offers an opportunity for visitors to discover the face of the emperor, following the changes in his features throughout his life and in representations after his death... [Read more](#)

## Agenda :



26-27 May 2021  
Brussels  
Agriculture and Fisheries Council



27 May 2021  
Lisbon  
Informal Meeting of Foreign Ministers  
Videoconference  
EU-Japan Summit



27-28 May 2021  
Brussels  
Competitiveness Council



28 May 2021  
Lisbon  
Informal Meeting of Defence Ministers



30 May  
Cyprus  
General elections

The Letter is also available in:





**The Letter's Editorial Team :**

Stefanie Buzmaniuk, Helen Levy ;  
Mathieu Moiroud, Anne-Célia Cordier,  
Arthur Allier, Eléonore de Saint Sernin, Martin Muller,  
Jean-Toussaint Battestini, Alejandra Butcher

**Editor-in-chief: Eric Maurice**  
**Publishing Director: Pascale Joannin**  
**N° ISSN : 2729-6482**

Contact/Suggestions  
[info@robert-schuman.eu](mailto:info@robert-schuman.eu)

---

**The Robert Schuman Foundation**, created in 1991 and acknowledged by State decree in 1992, is the main French research centre on Europe. It develops research on the European Union and its policies and promotes the content of these in France, Europe and abroad. It encourages, enriches and stimulates European debate thanks to its research, publications and the organisation of conferences. The Foundation is presided over by Mr. Jean-Dominique Giuliani.

You no longer wish to receive our letters. {LINK}