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From the Barcelona Process to the Mediterranean Programme, a fragile Partnership with the European Union

Author: Pierre Mirel



Twenty-five years after the launch of a major initiative for peace, stability and prosperity around the Mediterranean basin, the European Union is trying to develop a new strategy in the region. The Commission's Mediterranean programme proposes a series of relevant actions, but they only partially address the situation, without sufficient resources.

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Front page! :

Robert Schuman acknowledged as "Venerable" by the Pope



On 19th June Pope Francis authorised the publication of a decree by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints recognising "the heroic virtues of the servant of God Robert Schuman" who thus becomes Venerable, a step in the process of beatification that began in 1990... [Read more](#)

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A turning point for NATO



US President Joe Biden's tour of Europe was marked by a NATO summit that highlighted the challenge posed by China. For Europeans, this development will result in a dilemma between defending freedom and their commercial interests, suggests Jean-Dominique Giuliani... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

The Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2021

The 2021 edition of the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union", a reference work for European decision-makers, has just been published in French and English by Marie B. Contributions by leading experts and personalities offer an assessment of European achievements and new forms of solidarity in the context of the pandemic, as well as a broad view of Europe's role in the world. It is available in French, in paper version on our website and in bookshops, and in digital version, or in English in digital version only. Order it here!.. [Read more](#)



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 Union's history and political and statistical realities. It is available in paper version in French in bookshops and on our website, and in digital version in French and English. Order your copy here... [Read more](#)

Map of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



Since 20 June, the curfew has been lifted in France and it is no longer compulsory to wear a mask in the street. On 18 June, Germany removed France, Greece, Belgium and several regions of Spain from its list of risk areas. The Netherlands and Belgium will lift a new set of restrictions on 26 and 27 June. In Portugal, restrictions on entering and leaving Lisbon were applied over the weekend to limit the increase in infections. To follow the developments in the situation and to find out about the entry conditions in the different EU Member States, the Foundation offers you a complete map of the measures in place. An essential, regularly updated resource for you to gain an understanding of the situation... [Read more](#)

Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress

On 21 June, the EU adopted sanctions against further individuals and entities involved in the Belarusian crackdown and the hijacking of a Ryanair plane. To follow the crisis since the rigged presidential election of August 2020, the Foundation offers you a chronology of events and links to European responses and initiatives... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Plenary Meeting of the Conference on the future of Europe



The first plenary session of the Conference on the Future of Europe took place on 19 June in Strasbourg. After a speech by the co-chairs of the Executive Council, citizens discussed the objectives and expectations of the Conference, procedural issues including the timing of the plenary sessions, citizens' panels, and other events. The citizens' panels will meet in September and October to prepare their contribution to future plenary debates, and the next plenary session is scheduled for 22-23 October... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Launch of first loan to fund the recovery plan



On 15 June, the Commission raised €20 billion on the capital markets by issuing a 10-year bond to start financing grants and loans to Member States under the Next Generation EU recovery plan. By the end of the year, it hopes to raise around €100bn in bonds and debt instruments... [Read more](#)

Agreement with USA on Airbus and Boeing



The Commission and the US reached an agreement on 15 June to temporarily settle the trade dispute over government subsidies to Airbus and Boeing. They agreed to fund research and development in a transparent manner and to refrain from granting funding or aid that would harm the other party. They also decided to suspend for 5 years the reciprocally imposed additional customs duties... [Read more](#)



On 16 June, the Commission approved the Horizon Europe work programme for the period 2021-2022. The research and innovation programme has a budget of €14.7 billion, including €5.8 billion invested in research and innovation to support the Green Deal, €4 billion to support the development of basic digital technologies and €1.9 billion to help repair the immediate economic and social damage caused by the pandemic... [Read more](#)



Court orders AstraZeneca to deliver 50 million doses of vaccine



On 18 June, the Court of First Instance in Brussels ordered AstraZeneca to deliver 50 million doses of vaccine to the European Union by 27 September, including 15 million doses by 26 July. If the company fails to meet these deadlines, it will have to pay a penalty of €10 per undelivered dose. The judges considered that the company committed a serious fault by failing to fulfil its contractual obligations with the EU... [Read more](#)



Council :

Meeting of Economy and Finance Ministers



On 18 June, the Economy and Finance Ministers took stock of the implementation of the recovery and resilience mechanism to help Member States cope with the consequences of the pandemic. They exchanged views on the direction to be taken regarding VAT rates and on the progress of the banking union. They gave Romania a new deadline for reducing its deficit and adopted new recommendations on stability and convergence programmes... [Read more](#)



Eurogroup Meeting



On 17 June, the Eurogroup Ministers met in Luxembourg to discuss the post financial assistance surveillance of Cyprus, Spain, Ireland and Portugal, as well as the tenth enhanced surveillance report on Greece, including confirmation of the release of the fifth tranche of debt relief.

Ministers also discussed the functioning of the Exchange Rate Mechanism II and prepared for the Euro Summit on 25 June, which will focus on the banking union. Finally, the International Monetary Fund presented the results of its interim visit as part of its surveillance of the euro area... [Read more](#)



Meeting of Employment and Social Policy Ministers



At the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council on 14 and 15 June, ministers approved conclusions regarding access to innovative medicines and medical devices. They agreed on a strengthened role for the European Medicines Agency in preparing for and managing health crises. They adopted a recommendation establishing a European guarantee for children to combat social exclusion. They called on Member States to change their policies regulating teleworking and to take measures to mitigate the long-term impact of the pandemic on women... [Read more](#)



Position on extending roaming



On 16 June, the Council approved its mandate ahead of negotiations with the Parliament to extend and revise the system of mobile roaming on national terms that entered into force in 2017. The Council underlined the importance of increasing the transparency of value-added services and improving the quality of service and access to emergency services... [Read more](#)



Provisional agreement on the Eurovignette



The Council and the Parliament reached a provisional agreement on 16 June on tolls for heavy goods vehicles (Eurovignette Directive). The aim is to replace vignette systems with tolls that take better account of the environmental impact made by vehicles by 2029. In particular, Member States will have the option of introducing a combined toll system for heavy goods vehicles, which would combine distance- and time-based elements and integrate the two variation tools (the new CO2-based tool and the existing EURO class-based tool)... [Read more](#)



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Update of travel exemptions with third countries



On 18 June, the Council updated the list of third countries for which travel restrictions can be lifted. The list now includes Albania, Australia, Israel, Japan, Lebanon, New Zealand, Northern Macedonia, Rwanda, Serbia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, the United States and China on a reciprocal basis. Restrictions may also be lifted for residents of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

EU-Canada Summit



The President of the European Council, Charles Michel, and the President of the Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, met with the Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, for an EU-Canada Summit on 14 June. They discussed the objectives of their strategic partnership to overcome the pandemic, pursue a fair and sustainable global recovery, fight climate change, promote common democratic values and give new impetus to their bilateral trade agreement (CETA)... [Read more](#)

EU-US Summit



European Council President Charles Michel and Commission President Ursula von der Leyen met with US President Joe Biden on 15 June. The EU and the US want to strengthen their cooperation to end the pandemic, prepare for future global health challenges and foster global recovery, promote green growth, strengthen trade and investment, and promote democratic values. They also agreed to establish a bilateral technology council to strengthen cooperation in this area and a high-level climate working group... [Read more](#)

Communication on EU-Russia Relations



In a communication presented on 16 June, the Commission and the High Representative, Josep Borrell, underline that the European Union's relations with Russia are at a low ebb, and propose to focus them around 3 actions: distancing, pressure and dialogue. The document will be examined by the Heads of State and government at the European Council on 24 and 25 June... [Read more](#)

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Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers



Foreign Ministers decided on 21 June to impose restrictive measures against a further 78 individuals and 8 Belarusian entities involved in the repression and forced landing of a Ryanair flight in Minsk on 23 May. They discussed relations with Russia and extended sanctions against Crimea and Sevastopol. They also discussed the outcome of the presidential election in Iran. The ministers also met with their Turkish and Iraqi counterparts, Mevlut Cavusoglu and Fouad Hussein... [Read more](#)

Court of Justice :

Details of the authorities' supervisory powers in the respect of GDPR



In a judgment handed down on 15 June, the Court of Justice of the European Union clarified the conditions for the exercise of the powers of national supervisory authorities in relation to cross-border data processing. The assessment follows a preliminary question from the Brussels Court of Appeal, concerning the competence of the Belgian data protection agency to act against Facebook's surveillance of Internet users, even though the company is based in Ireland. According to the Court, national supervisory authorities can now challenge digital technology companies for breach of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), regardless of where the company's headquarters are located in the EU... [Read more](#)

European Agencies :

European Inventor Award



The European Patent Office (EPO) announced on 17 June the winners of the European Inventor Award 2021, in the categories of industry, research, SMEs, non-EPO countries, as well as the Lifetime Achievement and People's Choice Awards. The Office also announced the creation of a new award for the 2022 edition, the Young Inventor Award, for individuals under the age of 30... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Meeting between German and Polish Presidents



Polish President Andrzej Duda hosted his German counterpart, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, on 17 June, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the German-Polish cooperation treaty signed in 1991. Andrzej Duda called the treaty "a crucial element of Polish and German history" and said that bilateral relations were "stronger than ever"... [Read more](#)

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Austria :

Summit of the Western Balkans in Vienna



On 18 June, Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz welcomed the heads of government of Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Northern Macedonia, the Albanian Minister for Infrastructure and Miroslav Lajcak, the EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the repatriation of illegal migrants, the fight against Covid-19 and the prospect of the Western Balkans joining the EU... [Read more](#)

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France :

Meeting between Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel



German Chancellor Angela Merkel hosted French President Emmanuel Macron on 18 June to prepare for the European Council on 24 and 25 June, where discussions will focus in particular on migration and Russia. They discussed economic and defence industry cooperation between France and Germany. They also discussed the pandemic and warned of the continuing risk of variants... [Read more](#)

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Banque de France macroeconomic forecasts



On 14 June, the Banque de France published its macroeconomic forecasts for 2021, 2022 and 2023. After an 8% decline in GDP in 2020, it forecasts growth of 5.75% for 2021, 4% in 2022 and 2% in 2023. At this rate, France will exceed its pre-Covid output level in the first quarter of 2022. Inflation is expected to stand at 1.5% in 2021 and 1.2% in 2022 and 2023. A more sustained use of the surplus savings accumulated by households during the crisis could accelerate the pace of recovery... [Read more](#)

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Sweden :

Vote of no confidence in the Prime Minister



On 21 June, the Swedish Parliament passed a motion of no confidence in Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, 181 votes to 109 and 51 abstentions. The vote was triggered by the far-right Sweden Democrats party as the government coalition is in crisis over a proposed liberalisation of regulated rents. This is the first time a prime minister has been overthrown by parliament. If Stefan Löfven does not call early elections, negotiations will start to try to form an alternative coalition... [Read more](#)

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Armenia :

General election results



According to the official results, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian's party, the Civil Contract, won the 20 June early parliamentary elections with 55,02% of the vote. The main opposition party, former President Robert Kocharian's Block Armenia, won 21.04% of the vote... [Read more](#)

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UK :

New government in Northern Ireland



Paul Givan, Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), was confirmed by the Northern Ireland Assembly as the new First Minister on 17 June, succeeding Arlene Foster who resigned. Michelle O'Neill of Sinn Féin was reappointed as Deputy First Minister. The compromise reached between the two parties to allow for a new executive led to the resignation of DUP leader Edwin Poots due to internal opposition... [Read more](#)

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Council of Europe :

Refugees Rights: work with the Agency for Fundamental Rights



On the occasion of World Refugee Day on 20 June, the Council of Europe and the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights announced that they will be stepping up their cooperation on the protection of human rights on European borders. The two institutions are preparing a new publication on European standards for effective remedies, complaints mechanisms and investigations at borders... [Read more](#)

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New status for the Platform for Drug Policy Cooperation



The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe revised the status of the Council of Europe's Platform for Co-operation on Drug Policy (Pompidou Group) on 16 June, on the occasion of the Group's 50th anniversary, thereby enabling it to become an international reference point for human rights in drug policy. This strengthens the cooperation between the Pompidou Group and the European Union and provides an adequate political and legal framework... [Read more](#)

New governor of the Development Bank



The Italian Carlo Monticelli was appointed Governor of the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) on 16 June for a five-year term starting on 18 December. Currently Deputy Governor in charge of the CEB's financial strategy, he will succeed Rolf Wenzel... [Read more](#)

UN :

Antonio Guterres reappointed as Secretary General



On 18 June, the UN General Assembly reappointed Portugal's Antonio Guterres to a second five-year term as UN Secretary-General, beginning on 1 January 2022... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Surplus international goods trade



International trade in goods recorded a surplus of €13 billion for the EU and €10.9 billion for the euro area in April, according to figures released by Eurostat on 15 June. Compared with April 2020, exports of goods from the euro area to the rest of the world rose by 43.2% and exports of goods from the EU by 43.4%. All Member States recorded an increase in extra-EU exports, except Cyprus and Ireland... [Read more](#)

Sharp increase in annual inflation rates



Annual inflation rose by 2.3% in the EU and by 2% in the euro area in May, according to Eurostat figures published on 17 June. The Member States with the lowest annual rates were Greece (-1.2%), Malta (0.2%) and Portugal (0.5%), while the Member States with the highest were Hungary (5.3%), Poland (4.6%) and Luxembourg (4%)... [Read more](#)

Eurobarometer :

Wide support by Europeans for vaccination



According to the latest Eurobarometer survey published on 17 June, 75% of people in the EU believe that vaccines are the only way to stop the pandemic. Almost 7 out of 10 respondents (69%) are already vaccinated or want to be vaccinated as soon as possible, and 79% intend to be vaccinated by the end of the year. The survey highlights significant variations between Member States and by age, with people under 45 being more hesitant. In contrast to opinions on the actions of national governments, a relative majority are satisfied with the way the EU has handled the vaccination strategy (47% satisfied, 45% dissatisfied)... [Read more](#)

Culture :

Maurizio Pollini at the Milan Scala

The Italian pianist Maurizio Pollini will perform a unique concert at La Scala in Milan on 25 June. He will perform classics by Frédéric Chopin... [Read more](#)

The Bourges Spring



The 45th edition of the Printemps de Bourges festival is taking place from 22 to 27 June. Several big names are on the programme, such as Jean-Louis Aubert, Alain Souchon, Gaël Faye and Philippe Katerine... [Read more](#)

Exhibition on the Salzburg Festival



The Salzburg Museum is hosting "The Great Theatre of the World - 100 Years of the Salzburg Festival" until October 31, an exhibition offering an overview of the history of the festival and its development. The exhibition includes video and audio material, photos, costumes, stage props, extensive archives and artist installations... [Read more](#)

Europavox Festival in Clermont-Ferrand



The Europavox festival, a reflection of Europe's music scene, is being held in Clermont-Ferrand from 25 to 27 June. Benjamin Biolay, Philippe Katerine, IAM and the singer Pomme are among the big names on the bill. Due to health restrictions, the audience will be limited to 5 000 spectators per day... [Read more](#)

Exhibition of astronomy-photographer of the year



Until 30 August, the Royal Greenwich Museum is hosting an exhibition of over 100 images from the World Space Photography Competition. These pictures will show every twinkling star in detail on backlit screens, from the aurora borealis to distant galaxies... [Read more](#)

Photo España 2021



The 24th edition of the "Photo España" photography festival will be held until 30 September. In 86 exhibitions featuring the work of 376 photographers, the festival has designed a programme that addresses the effects of the pandemic on cultural practices around the world. It also gives visibility to pan-African photography, as well as to international women photographers such as Margaret Watkins, Barbara Morgan and Ouka Leele... [Read more](#)

Xawery Dunikowski in Warsaw



The Krolikarnia, a branch of the National Museum in Warsaw, is organising a new exhibition of paintings, sketches and photographs by the Polish sculptor Xawery Dunikowski until 14 November. This is the first exhibition devoted to a lesser known dimension of his work... [Read more](#)

Napoleon's Bicentenary :

Napoleon and Bertrand, the heroes' return



Until 31 October, the Bertrand Museum in Châteauroux presents "Napoleon and Bertrand, the heroes' return", an exhibition of works, objects and clothes that belonged to the Emperor and his loyal general, from their stay in St Helena between 1815 and 1821, until the return of Napoleon's ashes in 1840... [Read more](#)

Fontainebleau Night

From 24 June to 31 July, the Compagnie Intersignes is performing the play "Napoléon, la nuit de Fontainebleau" at the Folie Théâtre in Paris. Written and directed by Philippe Bulinge, the play tells the story of the night of 12 to 13 April 1814... [Read more](#)



Agenda :



22 June 2021
Luxembourg
General Affairs Council



23-24 June 2021
Brussels
Plenary Session European Parliament



24-25 June 2021
Brussels
European Council



25 June 2021
Brussels
Euro Summit



28-29 June 2021
Luxembourg
Agriculture and Fisheries Council

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