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The Letter in PDF format

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The rule of law in Poland or the false argument of the primacy of European law

Author: Eric Maurice



The Polish Constitutional Tribunal recently ruled that the Treaty on European Union is incompatible with the Polish Constitution. The government presents this decision as a defence of national sovereignty against the excessive imposition of EU law, whereas it is primarily intended to protect the government from judicial control over its justice reforms and their consequences for judges.

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Foundation :

Support the Foundation's activities



In 2021, the Foundation participated through its proposals and its active presence in European debates in the necessary evolution of common policies. While France will hold the presidency of the Council in the first half of 2022, the Foundation will step up its work to educate people about the European project and will continue its strategy of influence in Brussels, Strasbourg and within the Member States. More than ever, it needs your support to pursue its missions... [Read more](#)

Proud to be European



As part of the preparations for the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, on the initiative of the Robert Schuman Foundation, the Europeum Institute is organising a videoconference on 30 November at 2.30 p.m. on the theme of belonging and the common identity of Europeans... [Read more](#)

Patient monetary policy in a difficult recovery



At a conference organised at Sciences Po Paris by the School of Management and Innovation and the Foundation on 24 November, Fabio Panetta, member of the ECB Executive Board, spoke about the challenges posed by the unusual features of the economic recovery, and how monetary policy can respond... [Read more](#)

Map of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



Several countries have suspended flights from southern Africa. In France, masks must once again be worn in enclosed public places, the validity of tests has been reduced to 24 hours, and the health pass will only be valid for 7 months from 15 December onwards if the person has not had a third dose of vaccine. A state of health emergency has been declared in the Czech Republic until Christmas, bars and restaurants close at 10pm and gatherings are restricted. In Belgium, teleworking is mandatory 4 days a week, discos are closed and bars and restaurants close at 11pm. In the Netherlands, non-essential shops close between 5pm and 5am. In Italy, from 6 December to 15 January, people who have not been vaccinated will no longer have access to restaurants, bars, cinemas and theatres, and the validity of the pass will be extended to 9 months instead of 12. To follow the development of the situation and to find out what measures are in place in the EU Member States, the Foundation offers you a complete map of the measures in place. An indispensable, regularly updated resource... [Read more](#)

Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress

Opposition leader Svetlana Tsikhanovskaya spoke to the European Parliament on 24 November. She said that sanctions against the Belarusian regime "really work" and called on the EU to "continue to pursue a consistent sanctions policy". The day before, the Commission presented a proposal for sanctions against transporters/passengers involved in the trafficking of human beings through Belarus. To follow the latest developments in the crisis opened by the rigged presidential election of August 2020 and the repression of the democratic opposition, the Foundation offers you a chronology of events and links to European responses and initiatives... [Read more](#)

Tribute to Valéry Giscard d'Estaing



A tribute to former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing will be held at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 2 December, the anniversary of his death in 2020. On this occasion, you can read Jean-Dominique Giuliani's editorial in tribute to Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. The post office has also launched a commemorative stamp... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

European Semester and opinion on the budgets



On 24 November, the Commission launched the new cycle of the European Semester with the publication of its annual review of sustainable growth, its policy recommendations for the euro area, its proposal for a joint employment report and its opinions on the expansionary draft budgets of the euro area Member States for 2022... [Read more](#)

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More transparency on the capital markets



On 25 November, the Commission presented a number of proposals to boost European capital markets. It proposes to improve the transfer of information between companies and investors so as to broaden the sources of finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It calls for better access to public information about companies, and encourages long-term investment while maintaining a high level of transparency in capital markets... [Read more](#)

Sanctions against operators facilitating the smuggling of migrants



Following the instrumentalization of migrants by the Belarusian regime, the Commission proposed on 23 November measures to restrict the activities of transport operators who smuggle or facilitate the smuggling of migrants into the EU. This legal framework includes the limitation of the operations of the carriers concerned on the European market, the suspension of their licences or authorisations and a ban on transiting or flying over the

territory of the Union. The Commission specified that these targeted sanctions concern all types of transport (sea, land and air)... [Read more](#)



Recommendations regarding travel



On 25 November, the Commission suggested updating the rules on the coordination of free movement in the EU. From 10 January 2022, the validity of the Covid certificate would be reduced to 9 months, unless a booster vaccination has been given. The Commission has also proposed to simplify the rules on non-essential travel from outside the EU, to give priority to vaccinated travellers. It proposed an "emergency braking" system to delay the spread of possible new variants. On 26 November, it used this mechanism to restrict travel from southern African and other countries affected by the new Omicron variant... [Read more](#)



Updating of state aid criteria for projects of common European interest



On 25 November, the Commission presented new state aid rules for important projects of common European interest (IPCEI), which establish criteria for assessing state aid to such projects. From January 2022, they will have to involve at least four Member States, improve the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and respect the principle of not causing significant environmental damage... [Read more](#)



Parliament :

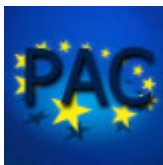
Approval of the 2022 budget



On 24 November MEPs approved the EU budget for 2022, which sets the ceiling for payment appropriations at €170.6 billion and for commitment appropriations at €169.5 billion. In addition, €143.5 billion will be spent on recovery plans... [Read more](#)



Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy



On 23 November, MEPs approved the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the main objective of which is to strengthen biodiversity and environmental and climate protection. From 2023, Member States will have to spend at least 35% of the agricultural budget on rural development and at least 25% of direct payments on environmental and climate measures. In addition, 10% of direct payments will go to small and medium-sized farms and a permanent crisis reserve will be available in case of price or market instability... [Read more](#)



European Strategy for critical raw materials



In a resolution adopted on 24 November, MEPs call for more investment in materials recycling to create a secondary market capable of strengthening Europe's strategic autonomy and resilience in the supply of critical raw materials. It calls for tighter controls on European waste management, including the creation of a new task force to coordinate national efforts... [Read more](#)



European Pharmaceutical Strategy



MEPs voted on 24 November to make medicines more affordable. They are calling for standardised drug approval times to ensure equal access to medicines for European citizens. MEPs also have asked the Commission to work on establishing a climate-neutral pharmaceutical industry and to ensure greater transparency in research funding... [Read more](#)



Fourth virtual citizens' panel



The fourth and final virtual citizens' panel of the Conference on the Future of Europe was held from 26 to 28 November, to discuss the role and place of the Union in the world and migration issues. The panels' conclusions will be presented to the conference's plenary assembly in December and January. All Europeans can contribute to the debates on the conference platform... [Read more](#)



Roberta Metsola candidate for the Presidency



The European People's Party (EPP) group elected Roberta Metsola as its candidate for the post of President of the Parliament on 24 November. According to an agreement made at the beginning of the legislature, the EPP is running for the Presidency for the second half of the term starting in January 2022. The vote is scheduled for the January plenary session... [Read more](#)



Council :

Meeting of Competitiveness Ministers



Competitiveness Ministers, meeting on 25 November, unanimously adopted their position on the proposed Digital Markets and Services Acts (DMA and DSA). They decided to impose clear obligations on digital platform services such as cloud services or mobile applications, and to ask for better protection of users' rights, as well as greater transparency and cooperation with national authorities... [Read more](#)



Meeting of European Affairs Ministers



On 23 November, the ministers responsible for European affairs adopted conclusions on the Union's resilience, which will be discussed at the European Council on 16 and 17 December. They discussed the EU's relations with Africa, the rise in energy prices and the state of play in the enlargement negotiations with the Western Balkans. They also took stock of the discussions with the UK on the Northern Ireland Protocol... [Read more](#)



Meeting of Research Ministers



On 26 November, the Ministers agreed on the implementation agenda of the European Research Programme ERR. In addition, the ministers approved the conclusions on "Space for All", which encourage the participation of all actors in the sector, including small and medium-sized enterprises. They stressed the sustainable use of space and the preservation of peace... [Read more](#)



Diplomacy :

Asia-Europe Summit, meetings with Nepal and the countries of Central Asia



On the occasion of the Asia-Europe Summit on 25-26 November, leaders recalled the importance of partnership and peace and security in both continents. On the situation in Afghanistan, they noted the importance of the role of the international community in maintaining stability in the region. At the ministerial meeting with the Central Asian countries on 22 November in Dushanbe, the participants confirmed their willingness to strengthen cooperation in addressing the problems related to developments in Afghanistan and to support a green and sustainable recovery from the pandemic... [Read more](#)



Friction with the UK over migration issues



Following the death of 27 migrants who were trying to cross the Channel to the UK on 24 November, the French, German, Belgian and Dutch interior ministers, as well as the European Commissioner for Home Affairs and representatives of Frontex and Europol, met in Calais on 28 November. They agreed to increase police cooperation against smuggling networks and to work on asylum reform and cooperation with countries of origin. The British minister did not attend the meeting, after Prime Minister Boris Johnson in a public letter asked France to agree to joint patrols and to take back migrants who had arrived in the UK... [Read more](#)



Court of Justice :

No suspension of the lifting of the immunity of Catalan independentists.



On 26 November, the Vice-President of the European Court of First Instance rejected a new request to suspend the lifting of the immunity of MEPs Carles Puigdemont, Antoni Comin and Clara Ponsati. He considered that the three Catalan pro-independence activists were not exposed to a risk of serious and irreparable harm as they still benefit from their immunity when they travel to attend Parliament meetings... [Read more](#)



Germany :

Coalition Contract between the SPD, the Greens and the FDP



On 24 November, the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Greens and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) presented their coalition agreement to govern Germany for the next 4 years. The 177-page text focuses on European cooperation, investment, an overhaul of the social system and the ecological transition. Olaf Scholz (SPD) will be Chancellor, Annalena Baerbock (Greens) Minister of Foreign Affairs and Christian Lindner (FDP) Minister of Finance. The agreement now has to be accepted by each party before a investiture vote in the Bundestag in early December. The Foundation has published an analysis of this agreement to understand what is at stake for Germany and Europe... [Read more](#)

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Croatia :

Strategic Partnership with France



During an official visit to Zagreb on 24-25 November, French President Emmanuel Macron and Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic signed a strategic partnership that strengthens their cooperation in areas such as education, the economy and the need to ensure stability and prosperity in South East Europe. The two countries also signed an agreement for the delivery of 12 Rafale aircraft... [Read more](#)

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Estonia :

Meeting with Estonian Prime Minister



French President Emmanuel Macron received Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas on 24 November. They discussed the situation on the Polish-Belarusian border and in Ukraine. They also discussed the European commitment in the Sahel to fight terrorism, the development of a European defence system, climate change and digital regulation... [Read more](#)

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France :

Interview with the Pope



French President Emmanuel Macron met with Pope Francis at the Vatican on 26 November. They discussed at length issues of the "world in crisis" such as the climate, the management of vaccines and the crisis in Lebanon... [Read more](#)

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Italy :

Quirinal Treaty for enhanced cooperation with France



On 26 November, the President of the Italian Council, Mario Draghi, and the French President, Emmanuel Macron, in the presence of the Italian President Sergio Mattarella, signed the Quirinal Treaty on enhanced cooperation between the two countries. The treaty has three specific objectives: to work together on the European scene, to bring civil society in both countries closer together and to establish common strategic guidelines... [Read more](#)

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Czech Republic :

Petr Fiala appointed Prime Minister



Petr Fiala, leader of the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), was appointed Prime Minister by Czech President Milos Zeman on 28 November. He will head a coalition government between his party and the Christian Democratic Union-People's Party (KDU-ČSL), the TOP 09, the Pirate Party, the Mayors and Independents (STAN), which is expected to comprise 18 ministers... [Read more](#)

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Romania :

Investiture of Nicolae Ciuca as Prime Minister



The Romanian Parliament swore in the new government led by Nicolae Ciuca of the National Liberal Party (PNL) on 25 November. The coalition composed of the PNL, the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Magyar Democratic Union of Romania (UDMR) has 21 ministers, including one woman... [Read more](#)

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Sweden :

Magdalena Andersson elected again as Prime Minister



The Social Democrat Magdalena Andersson was elected Prime Minister by the Swedish Parliament on 29 November. She was first elected on 24 November but was outvoted a few hours later during the vote on the budget... [Read more](#)

Iceland :

Katrin Jakobsdottir's new government



Outgoing Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir was reappointed as head of government in Iceland on 28 November. This coalition government, between her left-green party, the Independence Party and the Progress Party, includes 12 ministers, 5 of whom are women... [Read more](#)

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Switzerland :

The Covid Act approved by referendum



In a vote held on 28 November, 62% of the Swiss people approved the Covid Act, which provides for the introduction of a health pass in restaurants, cinemas and cultural venues. The vote was marked by a high turnout... [Read more](#)

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Council of Europe :

Europe and the Challenge set by History



The Council of Europe Observatory on History Teaching in Europe is organising its annual conference on 2 and 3 December in Strasbourg and online. The conference will involve local actors, such as local authorities, schools, institutes and museums. The Observatory is chaired by Alain Lamassoure, President of the Foundation's Scientific Committee, who recently published a study on the subject... [Read more](#)

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Recommendation on digital violence against women and girls



On the occasion of the UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on combating violence against women and domestic violence (GREVIO) has highlighted gaps in the Istanbul Convention with regard to violence committed through technology. It calls for a revision of the legislation to include the digital dimension and to end violence against women, including online... [Read more](#)

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GRECO reports on Sweden and Denmark



The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) published a report on 24 November assessing Sweden's progress in preventing corruption against parliamentarians, judges and prosecutors and a similar report on Denmark on 25 November... [Read more](#)

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ECHR :

Turkey condemned for the arbitrary detention of 427 magistrates



The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) condemned Turkey on 23 November for the alleged arbitrary detention of 427 judges after the failed coup of July 2016... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Reports on foreign investment and export controls



On 23 November, the Commission published two reports on foreign investment in the EU and the control of exports abroad. The first report highlights the effectiveness of the new foreign investment screening framework that came into force in October 2020. The new regulation, which came into force in September, aims to strengthen the control of dual-use technologies, including cyber surveillance tools... [Read more](#)

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Culture :

Everyday life as Seen by the Dutch Masters

Until 27 March 2022, the Kunsthalle Hamburg is presenting an exhibition entitled "Everyday life as seen by the Dutch masters", which features 150 paintings by Dutch painters of the 17th century depicting Dutch society at the time... [Read more](#)

Magritte Exhibition in Liège



Until 6 March 2022, the Boverie Museum in Liège is offering visitors the chance to enter the spirit of Surrealism through the "Inside Magritte" exhibition, an immersive experience designed to awaken all the senses through an original presentation of the emblematic works of Belgian painter René Magritte... [Read more](#)

Klimt Exhibition in Rome



The Museum of Rome is devoting an exhibition to Gustav Klimt until 27 March 2022, highlighting his role as a co-founder of the Viennese artistic and cultural revolution and examining his relationship with Italy. 200 works are on display, including paintings, drawings, period posters and sculptures by Klimt and the artists who were close to him... [Read more](#)

Gaudi Exhibition in Barcelona



The National Art Museum of Catalonia is devoting an exhibition to the architect Antoni Gaudi until 6 March 2022. More than 650 pieces are on display as if they were his studio. The exhibition will be shown at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris in spring 2022... [Read more](#)

Dürer's Travels



Until 27 February 2022, the National Gallery in London is devoting an exhibition to the German Renaissance painter Albrecht Dürer. Paintings, drawings and photographs show how the artist's travels led to an exchange of ideas with Dutch and Italian Renaissance artists... [Read more](#)

Amsterdam Light Festival



The Amsterdam Light Festival will take place from 2 December to 23 January 2022, with illuminations of the city centre and various light artworks... [Read more](#)

La Biennale Paris



Until December 5, the ephemeral Grand Palais in Paris is hosting the 32nd edition of the Biennale. The international art fair brings together more than sixty participants from galleries and major dealers in art, antiques and design, as well as high-fashion houses (jewellers and watchmakers) from around the world... [Read more](#)

Napoleon's Bicentenary :

Napoleon's Apotheosis



On 2 December, the anniversary of Napoleon's coronation and the battle of Austerlitz, the Cathédrale Saint-Louis des Invalides will host a concert entitled "Apothéose de Napoléon" (Napoleon's Apotheosis), organised in partnership with the Fondation Napoléon, with the Chœur de l'Armée française (French Army Choir) and the symphony orchestra of the Garde républicaine... [Read more](#)

L'Aiglon

From 3 to 5 December, the André Malraux theatre in Rueil-Malmaison is offering a performance of L'Aiglon, a play by Edmond Rostand in 6 acts. Directed by Maryse

"Le Tambour de la Moskova" wins 'Le Point's' Wolinski Cartoon Prize 2021



Belgian writer and cartoonist Simon Spruyt has been awarded the Wolinski Prize for Cartoons 2021 by the weekly magazine Le Point for his album Le Tambour de la Moskova (The Moskva Drum), inspired by an episode of Leo Tolstoy's novel War and Peace, about the Russian campaign... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



30th November 2021
Brussels
Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council



2nd December 2021
Strasbourg
Tribute to Valéry Giscard d'Estaing at the European Parliament



2nd-3rd December 2021
Brussels
Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council



6th-7th December 2021
Brussels
Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Council

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