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The Letter in PDF format

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Europe-India: new strategic challenges

Author: Karine Lisbonne-de Vergeron



EU-India relations have gained momentum in recent years, particularly since Brexit. Trade, geopolitical issues and defence are the main drivers in this strategically important relationship for both sides. The strategic strengthening of the Indo-European dialogue thus marks an important turning point both economically and geopolitically in the context of the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific region.

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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 development of joint policies. While France will hold the presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2022, the Foundation will increase its efforts to raise awareness of the European project and will continue its strategy of influence in Brussels, Strasbourg and within the Member

States. Now more than ever, it needs your support to continue its activities... [Read more](#)

European recovery after the pandemic



As part of the preparations for the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the De Gasperi Foundation is organising a videoconference on 16 December on the theme of recovery in post-pandemic Europe. Online enrolment... [Read more](#)

The Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2021

If you have not yet had the opportunity to read the 2021 edition of the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union", a reference work published by Marie B. you can still do so. It is available in hard copy in bookshops and on our website, and also in digital format. Order your copy here... [Read more](#)



The Permanent Atlas of the European Union



The fifth edition of the unique Permanent Atlas of the European Union provides a comprehensive and easily accessible overview of the European Union, the euro area and each of its 27 Member States. It is available in hard copy on our website and in bookshops, or in English in digital form... [Read more](#)

Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress

On 12 December, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced additional EU support of €30 million for Belarusian youth, independent media, exiled SMEs and cultural actors. To follow the latest developments in the crisis triggered 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](#)

Map of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



France, Belgium and Ireland have closed discos. In Ireland, tables are limited to 6 adults in bars and restaurants, and indoor events are limited to half the capacity of the room. Denmark has brought forward the school holidays and bars, restaurants and discos close at midnight. In Poland, from 15 December, discos will be closed and restrictions will be put in place in bars and restaurants. In Romania, on the other hand, restrictions will be relaxed in bars and restaurants for the holidays. In Austria, the lockdown ended on 12 December, except for non-vaccinated people. To follow the developments in the situation and to learn about the measures 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](#)

Commission :

Revision of rules governing State Aid



On 6 December the Commission adopted revised guidelines on state aid to promote investment in risk financing. It also adopted a revised Communication on short-term export credit insurance which will enter into force on 1 January... [Read more](#)

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Proposal of a police cooperation code



On 8 December, the Commission proposed an EU police cooperation code to improve cross-border operations, establish short channels and deadlines for information exchange and give a stronger role to Europol. The Commission proposes, among other things, the establishment of common standards to strengthen cooperation between Member States' law enforcement authorities, equal access to information for all EU police officers, and revised rules on the automated exchange of information... [Read more](#)

Proposal for a new tool against economic coercion



On 8 December, the Commission presented a new tool to combat economic coercion by third countries against the EU. These coercive measures include the restriction of EU trade and investment through selective border controls or boycotts of EU goods. The proposed new legislative framework will allow the EU to restrict access to the internal market or apply customs duties to third countries that put pressure on the EU... [Read more](#)

Proposals on apprenticeship and employability



On 10 December, the Commission presented two proposals on individual learning accounts and micro-certifications. The first aims to ensure that everyone has access to training tailored to their needs at any time in their lives... [Read more](#)

Proposal on platform workers' rights



On 9 December, the Commission proposed new measures to improve working conditions for activities via digital platforms. The proposed directive aims to ensure that platform workers can benefit from a legal employment status corresponding to their actual working arrangements... [Read more](#)

Action plan for social economy and employment



On 9 December, the Commission presented an action plan to boost the social economy. There are 2.8 million social economy entities in Europe, employing 13.6 million people. The aim is to help Europe's social economy to flourish... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Citizens' Panel on Democracy, values and security



Conférence sur l'avenir de l'Europe

200 citizens from all Member States met in Florence from 10 to 12 December to finalise their recommendations on democracy, values, rights, the rule of law and security for the Conference on the Future of Europe. Their recommendations, and those of the other thematic panels, will be considered by the conference plenary in January. All Europeans can contribute to the debates on the conference platform. The third report on their contributions was published on 8 December... [Read more](#)

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Council :

Eurogroup Meeting



On 10 December, the President of the Eurogroup Paschal Donohue wrote to the President of the European Council Charles Michel providing an update on the progress made within the Eurogroup on key policy issues for the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic ahead of the Eurozone summit on 16 December... [Read more](#)

Extension of the European Roaming System



The Parliament and the Council agreed on 9 December to extend until 2032 the European roaming system, which expires on 30 June 2022. This will allow citizens to continue making calls, sending texts and surfing the internet on their mobile phones without additional charges when travelling in other EU countries. The regulation also allows for price adjustments to ensure that the provision of roaming services remains viable for operators... [Read more](#)

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Meeting of Agriculture and Fisheries Ministers



The Agriculture and Fisheries Ministers, meeting on 12 and 13 December, agreed on fishing quotas in the Atlantic, North Sea, Mediterranean and Black Seas. They adopted conclusions on how to ensure food supply and security in times of crisis. The Commission's proposal to limit the import of products that contribute to deforestation was discussed... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Home Affairs Ministers



On 9 December, the Home Affairs Ministers discussed the fight against hybrid attacks and migrant smuggling. They adopted the regulation establishing the EU Asylum Agency. They concluded that Croatia has fulfilled the necessary conditions for the full application of the Schengen acquis, which is a precondition for the lifting of internal border controls. On 10 December, the Justice Ministers discussed the lessons to be learned from the pandemic in terms of digitisation of justice, the fight against hate speech, the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office, and the Union's accession to the European Convention on Human Rights... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Economy and Finance Ministers



Meeting on 7 December, finance ministers agreed on a proposal for a directive on value added tax (VAT) rates, giving more scope for applying reduced rates. They also discussed the state of play regarding the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing, as well as digital finance. They took stock of progress in strengthening the

Banking Union and exchanged views on legislative proposals in the area of the Capital Markets Union (CMU)... [Read more](#)

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Meeting of Transport Ministers



Transport Ministers met in Brussels on 9 December to discuss the use of fuel in the maritime (FuelEU Maritime) and aviation (ReFuelEU Aviation) sectors, as well as alternative fuels to meet the objectives of the Fit for 55 climate change package. They stressed the need to increase the demand and deployment of low-emission energy while taking into account the specificities of each Member State... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Healthcare and Employment Ministers



On 7 December, the Healthcare Ministers supported the harmonisation of the validity of the EU Covid certificate and appealed to citizens for the 3rd booster dose. They agreed on the priority areas for strengthening the Health Union as part of the European Health Emergency Response and Preparedness Authority (HERA). The Ministers for Employment and Social Affairs agreed on 6 December to support an adequate minimum wage in the EU and transparency of pay to help close the gender pay gap...

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Diplomacy :

Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers



Meeting on 13 December, Foreign Affairs Ministers decided to sanction the Russian mercenary group Wagner and eight individuals and three companies linked to it for their "destabilising actions" in Ukraine and Africa. They modified the criteria of the sanctions regime in Mali, so that restrictive measures can be imposed on persons and entities responsible for threatening peace, security or stability, or for obstructing the implementation of its political transition. The Ministers recalled the Union's support for Ukraine in the face of Russia's military build-up on its border. They recalled the Union's solidarity with Belarus and Cyprus. They discussed relations with Africa... [Read more](#)

Meeting of G7 Foreign Affairs Ministers



The G7 Foreign Ministers, meeting on 12 December, issued a joint statement condemning Russia's military build-up and aggressive rhetoric against Ukraine. The Ministers reiterated their unwavering commitment to the sovereignty of Ukraine and their support for the efforts of France and Germany in the Normandy format to fully implement the Minsk agreements... [Read more](#)

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6th round of strategic EU-Pakistan dialogue



EU High Representative Josep Borrell and Pakistan's Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, meeting on 7 December, agreed to strengthen mutual engagement between the EU and Pakistan, including on security and regional cooperation. They agreed to hold the first meeting of the security dialogue in 2022, focusing on non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as the fight against terrorism. Both sides also agreed on the importance of continued engagement with Afghanistan to promote stability and combat the terrorist threat... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Olaf Scholz, new Chancellor



Olaf Scholz (SPD) was elected Federal Chancellor of Germany by the Members of the Bundestag on 6 December, with 395 votes out of 707 cast. The new Chancellor received his certificate of appointment from President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and was sworn in with his new government in the Bundestag on the same day. The coalition

government between the SPD, the Greens and the FDP has 17 members, including 8 women... [Read more](#)

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First visit by Chancellor Olaf Scholz to France



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz was hosted in Paris on 10 December by French President Emmanuel Macron, on the occasion of his first visit as Chancellor. The two European leaders discussed issues relating to Franco-German cooperation, European sovereignty in the run-up to the French Presidency of the EU Council, and major international issues including the situation in Ukraine. The day before, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock had also come to Paris... [Read more](#)

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Bulgaria :

Kiril Petkov leads a new government



The new Bulgarian government was sworn in by the Parliament on 13 December, by 134 votes to 101. Kiril Petkov, from the "We continue the change" party, was appointed Prime Minister and leads a coalition resulting from the 14 November elections, which includes 3 other parties, the Socialist Party (BSP) "Such a people exists" and "Democratic Bulgaria". The government has 21 ministers, including 5 women... [Read more](#)

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France :

Presentation of the French Presidency of the Council of the Union



On 9 December, President Emmanuel Macron presented the priorities of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union (FPEU), from 1 January to 30 June 2022. The programme will be based on the themes of strength, recovery and belonging, on the basis of which France intends to focus on a number of issues such as the reform of Schengen, the carbon adjustment mechanism at the borders and a new EU-Africa pact... [Read more](#)

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3rd referendum on self-rule in New Caledonia



New Caledonian voters voted on 12 December against "independence and full sovereignty for the territory", by 97.02% of the votes cast. The turnout was 43.87%. This was the third and final referendum under the 1998 Nouméa Accords... [Read more](#)

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Fishing permits granted by the UK



On 11 December, the UK authorities granted 23 licences to French vessels, allowing them to fish in their territorial waters, including 8 to fish in Jersey waters. The Commission has given assurances that it will continue to negotiate with France on the granting of new licences with the UK... [Read more](#)

Kosovo :

Stabilisation and Association Council



Representatives of the European Union and Kosovo met in Brussels on 7 December to review Kosovo's progress under their Stabilisation and Association Agreement, which aims to help the country achieve the reforms necessary to reach European standards. In particular, Kosovo has committed itself to preserving the rule of law and fighting corruption and organised crime... [Read more](#)

Council of Europe :

Request for explanation from Poland



On 7 December, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejcinovic Buric, called on Poland to explain its "effective implementation of its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights". On 24 November, the Polish Constitutional Court ruled that Article 6(1) of the European Convention on Human Rights, which guarantees the right to a fair trial, was not in conformity with the Polish Constitution in certain circumstances. The Polish government has until 7 March 2022 to respond... [Read more](#)

Moneyval reports on the Czech Republic



In a report published on 8 December, the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (Moneyval), considers that the Czech Republic has made substantial progress in the area of anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT), but nonetheless considers that further efforts are needed to fully implement international standards... [Read more](#)

OECD :

Pensions at a Glance 2021



The OECD released on 8 December a report entitled "OECD Pensions at a Glance 2021" which analyses the resilience of pensions in the light of the crisis in Covid19 and the challenges of ageing. The OECD prioritises the introduction of automatic adjustment mechanisms (AAMs) to ensure a viable and sustainable pension for older people... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Rise in GDP and employment in the third quarter



GDP rose by 2.1% in the European Union and by 2.2% in the euro area in the third quarter of 2021, compared with the previous quarter, according to data published by Eurostat on 7 December. Employment rose by 0.9% in both the EU and the euro area in the same period... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Report on defence spending in the European Union



On 6 December, the European Defence Agency published its annual report on Member States' spending in the defence sector. In 2020, total spending totalled €198 billion, 5% more than in 2019. But Member States made only 11% of their equipment purchases in cooperation with other EU Member States. The report notes, however, that a record €2.5 billion was spent on defence research and technology, led by France and Germany... [Read more](#)

The sale of arms and military services continues to grow



According to the annual report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri), published on 6 December, arms sales by the 100 largest defence groups reached a new record of \$531 billion in 2020. This represents a 1.3% year-on-year increase in arms sales and military services, while at the same time the global economy fell by more than 3%. Behind US companies, French, British, Russian and Chinese companies are among the largest arms sellers... [Read more](#)

Report on the implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the digital age



In a report on the implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the Union published on 10 December, the Commission stressed the importance of safeguarding the protection of fundamental rights in the digital age. The report highlights the issue of transparency of artificial intelligence systems, the preservation of social rights for platform workers and the protection of data and privacy in the context of digital surveillance... [Read more](#)

Culture :

European Film



The Bosnian film *The Voice of Aida* (*Quo Vadis, Aida*) won the Best European Film Award at the European Films Awards ceremony in Berlin on 11 December, as well as the Best Director Award for Jasmila Zbanic and the Best Actress Award for Jasna Duricic. Anthony Hopkins received the Best Actor award for *The Father*... [Read more](#)

East Germany in photos



Until 21 April 2022, the C/O Berlin gallery in the Amerika Haus is showing 250 photographs by Harald Hauswald of social life in East Berlin during the communist period from 1970 to 1989... [Read more](#)

Venice Treasures



The Hôtel de Caumont in Aix-en-Provence is devoting an exhibition to the treasures of Venice until 27 March 2022 to mark the 70th anniversary of the creation of the Giorgio Cini Foundation. Through 70 paintings, sculptures, drawings and objects from the 14th to the 18th century, the exhibition presents contemporary creations in connection with the works of the Italian ancient art collection... [Read more](#)

"I open my eyes, there's no one"



The Polish Association of Aberdeen is holding an exhibition at the Cruickshank Botanic Garden until 28 February 2022, dedicated to the Jewish artists who worked in the Bialystok ghetto during the Second World War. The exhibition is based on the works and memories of Jewish painter Izaak Celniker, a survivor of the ghetto... [Read more](#)

Year Zero

Galeria Marlborough

Until 5 February, the Marlborough Gallery in Madrid is celebrating the 30th anniversary of its opening with the group exhibition "Year Zero", which brings together a number of artists around the idea of a new beginning, a rebirth after a long period of lethargy caused by the pandemic... [Read more](#)

La Bayadère and Macbeth at La Scala of Milan



La Scala in Milan is presenting Verdi's opera Macbeth until 29 December and Ludwig Minkus' ballet La Bayadère until 13 January 2022. Pupils from the Ballet School of the La Scala Academy will take part in the performance of La Bayadère, which until now has only been performed by the Paris Opera Ballet... [Read more](#)

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Contemporary Art Fair in Antwerpen



The first edition of Art Antwerp will take place from 16 to 19 December at Antwerp Expo. This international contemporary art fair will bring together almost 300 emerging and internationally established artists, represented by 59 galleries from Belgium and other European countries... [Read more](#)

Marcel Proust



On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Marcel Proust's birth, the Carnavalet Museum in Paris is unveiling an exhibition entitled "Marcel Proust, a Parisian novel" from 16 December to 10 April 2022 to evoke the place of the capital in the French novelist's writings... [Read more](#)

Napoleon's Bicentenary :

Playmobil at the Invalides: en avant Napoléon!



The Musée de l'armée des Invalides is hosting the exhibition "Playmobil aux Invalides: en avant Napoléon!" from December 18 to January 9, 2022 for a fun way to discover the key moments in the life of Napoleon Bonaparte... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



13-16 December 2021
Strasbourg
European Parliament Plenary Session

14
Dec

14 December 2021
Brussels
General Affairs Council

15
Dec

15 December 2021
Brussels
Eastern Partnership Summit

16
Dec

16 December 2021
Brussels
European Council Eurozone Summit Frankfurt Governing Council of the European Central Bank

20
Dec

20 December 2021
Brussels
Environment Council

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