

Tuesday 7th June 2022

issue 983

The Letter in PDF format

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"Russia's war in Eastern Europe is a central threat to the international architecture"

Author: Luca Niculescu



Russia's invasion of Ukraine has consequences for the whole of the European Union, says Romanian ambassador to France Luca Niculescu. It could lead to changes in France's position in Central and Eastern Europe, or redefine Europe's Black Sea policy.

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Front page! :

Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2022



The 2022 edition of the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union" has just been published by Marie B. With contributions from leading personalities and experts, original maps and commented statistics, the Schuman Report analyses the challenges facing Europe and offers a complete view of the European Union. It is available in paper format from our website and in bookshops in French, as well as in digital version in

French and English. Order it here... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

What unites Europe?



The Foundation and the Providus Centre for Public Policy organised a debate in Riga on 2 June on the sense of belonging to Europe, the changing meaning of the term "European" and the geographical, historical and emotional borders of Europe. The conference, which was held in the framework of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, can be viewed online... [Read more](#)

Seminar on the data economy



The Foundation organised a seminar on the data economy in Brussels on 1 June, in partnership with Alphalex Consult and IDFRights. The event was inaugurated by the European Commissioner for the Internal Market, Thierry Breton, and the debates were chaired by the former journalist and MEP, Jean-Marie Cavada. The video of the seminar is available online... [Read more](#)

European recovery plans: figures and priorities



In response to the economic and social consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, the EU has set up a €672.5 billion recovery fund, called the Recovery and Resilience Facility, for Member States in the form of grants and loans. 25 plans have so far been adopted by the Council, and Poland's plan was conditionally approved by the Commission on 1 June. 21 countries have received the planned pre-financing and 5 countries have received a first instalment after meeting a series of targets. The Commission has not yet approved Hungary's plan because of the infringement of the rule of law. The Foundation provides you with an interactive map of the plans country by country, to see the amounts, timetables and priorities... [Read more](#)

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Map of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



Further restrictions were lifted on 1 June in several EU countries. Italy no longer requires a health pass to enter its territory. In Greece and Cyprus, masks are no longer required in enclosed spaces, except in public transport, hospitals and old people's homes. In Austria, it is no longer compulsory to wear a FFP2 mask in shops and when using public transport, except in Vienna where it is still compulsory in pharmacies and on public transport. To find out what the situation in the Member States is, the Foundation offers you a complete map of the measures in place. An indispensable, regularly updated resource... [Read more](#)

European Council :

Conclusion of the European Council



Meeting on 30-31 May, the 27 heads of state and government agreed on a sixth package of sanctions against Russia, which includes an embargo on Russian oil by the end of the year, with the temporary exception of oil transported by pipeline, and the exclusion of three Russian banks from the SWIFT system. They agreed in principle to provide €9 billion in financial assistance to Ukraine in 2022. They discussed food security and called for accelerated work on solidarity corridors to facilitate Ukrainian exports. They asked to consider emergency measures to coordinate short-term defence needs. They called for diversification of energy supplies in conjunction with the EU's international partners... [Read more](#)

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Ukraine/Russia :

Adoption of the sixth package of sanctions against Russia



On 3 June, the Council adopted new sanctions against Russia. These include an embargo on Russian oil until the end of the year, with the temporary exception of oil transported by pipeline, and the exclusion of three Russian banks from the SWIFT system, including Sberbank, Russia's largest bank. Three additional Russian television stations are banned. The list of Russian and Belarusian persons and entities affected by the sanctions is extended. Finally, the sanctions prohibit the provision of accounting, public relations and consultancy services to Russia, as well as cloud computing services... [Read more](#)

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Volodymyr Zelensky's Speeches



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky addressed the European Council, the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies and the GLOBSEC International Security Forum. He urged European leaders to increase sanctions against Russia, and asked Luxembourg MPs to support Ukraine's application to join the European Union... [Read more](#)

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Catherine Colonna and Zuzana Caputova visit Kyiv



The French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Catherine Colonna, visited Kyiv on 30 May to show France's support for Ukraine. She visited Bucha paying tribute to the memory of war victims, before handing

over civil security equipment to the Ukrainian authorities. The Minister then met with her Ukrainian counterpart, Dmytro Kuleba, and President Volodymyr Zelensky to discuss sanctions against Russia, humanitarian, financial and military assistance to Ukraine, the country's accession to the European Union, and the global food crisis. Slovak President Zuzana Caputova visited the Ukrainian President in Kyiv on 31 May. The two heads of state discussed, among other things, cooperation on infrastructure and border control... [Read more](#)

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5.2 million children need humanitarian aid



On the 100th day of the war in Ukraine, the UN said on 3 June that the war has meant "100 days of suffering, devastation and destruction on a massive scale". UNICEF announced on 1 June that after 100 days of war in Ukraine, 5.2 million children are in need of humanitarian assistance. It warns that there is a risk of a child protection crisis caused by the conflict, and continues to call for a ceasefire while trying to ensure food, health and psychological support for children affected by the conflict... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

Results of fisheries' management in the Union



On 1 June, the Commission published an annual review of fisheries management showing that EU fisheries policy has been successful in reducing overfishing. Nevertheless, in the Mediterranean Sea, fishing intensity exceeds sustainable levels. The Commission recommends maintaining high standards with Norway, the UK and coastal states. It also set out its priorities for 2023 to improve fisheries management in the Mediterranean and to take action to protect marine ecosystems... [Read more](#)

Third Schengen Forum: priorities for 2022-2023



The third Schengen Forum organised by the Commission on 2 June provided an opportunity for Members of the European Parliament, Interior Ministers of the current and future Council Presidencies, representatives of Member States, European agencies and NGOs to discuss the challenges and priorities of the Schengen area. In particular, they discussed the management and control of the Schengen area's borders, the strengthening of cooperation between the police forces of the Member States and the importance of enlarging the Schengen area to include Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania and Cyprus... [Read more](#)

Council :

Transport Ministers' Meeting



On 2 June, Transport Ministers adopted three proposals from the "Fit for 55" package aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector by 90%. They adopted the Maritime FuelEU initiative, to encourage the use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport; and the ReFuelEU Aviation initiative, which aims to increase the demand and supply of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF)... [Read more](#)

Cohesion Ministers' Meeting



Meeting on 2 June, the ministers responsible for cohesion policy discussed the next challenges and adopted their position on the conclusions of the Commission's 8th report on economic, social and territorial cohesion in the European Union. They highlighted the main weaknesses that Member States will have to overcome, including the loss of competitiveness of certain territories and the difficulties encountered by certain regions... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Telecommunications Ministers



On 3 June, the ministers responsible for telecommunications took stock of the discussions concerning the draft laws on artificial intelligence, data and the European framework for a European digital identity. They held a policy debate on the digital and green transition, in particular on methodologies for measuring the environmental footprint of digital technology... [Read more](#)

Agreement on minimal wages



Negotiators from the Council and the Parliament reached agreement on 7 June on the draft directive on adequate minimum wages in the European Union. Minimum wages will be defined according to clear common criteria and will have to be updated at least every two years, involving the social partners. Action plans to promote collective bargaining will have to be implemented where collective bargaining coverage is below 80%. The agreement must now be formally approved by the Council and the Parliament... [Read more](#)

Trade Ministers' Meeting



Meeting on 3 June, the trade ministers discussed the organisation of the next World Trade Organisation ministerial conference, which is being held in Geneva from 12 to 15 June, and supported the reform of the WTO proposed by the Commission. They expressed their wish to develop a transatlantic agenda in line with the "current positive momentum" in EU-US relations. Finally, they took stock of the relationship with China since the 1 April summit... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Meeting with Jordan



At the Association Council with Jordan on 2 June, the European Union announced that the 2021-2027 multi-annual programme is almost finalised and is expected to be adopted during the summer. A first tranche of €364 million will support ecological transition, economy, development and governance. The EU will support investments in water and energy management. The EU and Jordan discussed the situation in Israel and Palestine... [Read more](#)

Court of Auditors :

Report on the regional funds and SMEs



The European Court of Auditors notes in a report published on 1 June that the European Regional Development Fund (FEDER) contributed to improving the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the period 2014-2020. The auditors recommend improving the design of tenders addressed to SMEs, reviewing the selection procedures for awarding grants under the FEDER, as well as prioritising the use of repayable grants... [Read more](#)

Report on the Union's climate spending



A special report by the European Court of Auditors published on 30 May shows that the European Union has failed to meet its climate spending targets, despite having committed to spending at least 20% of the 2014-2020 budget on climate action. The report notes that the Commission has overestimated its spending by €72 billion and recommends improving its reporting system for the period 2021-2027... [Read more](#)

European Agencies :

Results of the first year of the European Prosecutor's Office



The European Public Prosecutor's Office published its first report on 1 June, after one year of operation. In one year, 4,006 infringement reports were registered by the Prosecutor's Office, 929 investigations were opened and €259 million of assets were frozen. This first year has revealed some shortcomings, the most important of which is the low level of detection of European fraud. The Prosecutor's Office is therefore calling on Member States to set up specialised units to support its investigations. The European Prosecutor, Laura Codruța Kövesi, has also proposed the creation of an "elite corps" of investigators specialised in financial fraud... [Read more](#)

Croatia :

Conditions fulfilled to join the euro



In their 2022 convergence reports published simultaneously on 1 June, the Commission and the European Central Bank found that Croatia fulfils the four convergence criteria necessary for entry into the euro area, and concluded that the country is ready to adopt the single currency on 1 January 2023. They also consider that Croatian legislation is compatible

with the requirements of the European System of Central Banks and the European Central Bank. The Council will have to decide on the accession in early July... [Read more](#)

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Denmark :

Vote to join the Common Security and Defence Policy



In a referendum held on 1 June, the Danes approved their country's participation in the Common Security and Defence Policy by 66.9%. Denmark had had an opt-out since the Maastricht Treaty in 1993. For the decision to enter into force, the Danish Parliament must still ratify the bill. The country should be able to participate in EU military operations and cooperate in the development of military capability from 1 July 2022... [Read more](#)

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Estonia :

New government coalition?



Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas asked on 3 June for the departure of seven of her ministers from the Centre Party. She proposed to the conservative Isamaa Party and the Social Democratic Party to form a minority government. On 2 June, the Centre Party joined forces with the far-right EKRE party to reject an education bill... [Read more](#)

France :

Agreement with the Commission on the cohesion programme



On 2 June, the Commission adopted an agreement with France to govern the use of €18.4 billion in European Cohesion Policy for the period 2021-2027. The partnership has 23 programmes and part of the funds will be dedicated to the competitiveness of the regions; €3.5 billion under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the implementation of the European Green Deal (€2.8 billion) and the energy transition of carbon-intensive industries (€1 billion). 6.7 billion from the European Social Fund (ESF) will improve access to the labour market and support the fight against poverty and social exclusion... [Read more](#)

Results of the 1st round of general elections for French ex-pats



The first round of the French legislative elections was held on 5 June in French Polynesia and in the 11 constituencies of French citizens abroad. The turnout of French citizens abroad was 22.51%. In 10 constituencies, the second round will pit a candidate from Ensemble!, the coalition supporting President Emmanuel Macron, against a candidate from the New Popular Ecological and Social Union, which groups left-wing parties. The first round will be held on 12 June in metropolitan and overseas France, and the second round on 19 June... [Read more](#)

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Greece :

The President visits Latvia



Greek President Katerina Sakellariopoulou visited her Latvian counterpart Egils Levits on 1 June to celebrate the centenary of diplomatic relations between their countries. The two heads of state discussed bilateral relations as well as EU and NATO policies... [Read more](#)

Slovenia :

New government



Slovenian Prime Minister Robert Golob took office on 1 June, leading a coalition government between his Movement for Freedom, the Social Democrats and the Left, which includes 7 women out of 18 ministers... [Read more](#)

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Policy :

Membership of Volodymyr Zelensky's party to the ALDE



The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) held its congress in Dublin from 2 to 4 June. Several European parties were admitted, including the People's Servant Party of Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelenskyy. The ALDE is represented in the European Parliament by the Renew Europe group... [Read more](#)

Manfred Weber elected President of the European People's Party



At its Congress held in Rotterdam on 31 May and 1 June, the European People's Party (EPP) elected Manfred Weber of Germany as its new President by 447 votes out of 502. President of the EPP group in the European Parliament, he succeeds Donald Tusk of Poland. The new Secretary General of the party is the Greek Thanasis Bakolas... [Read more](#)

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Council of Europe :

Call for better control of lobbying



In its annual report published on 2 June, the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) called on European governments to increase transparency in lobbying. It is essential that anti-corruption standards are met through the creation of registers of lobbyists. GRECO President Marin Marcela believes that improvements in the fight against corruption are not enough, especially when it comes to parliamentarians and "senior executive positions"... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Rise in annual inflation rate



Annual inflation in the euro area rose to 8.1% in May from 7.4% the previous month, according to an estimate published by Eurostat on 31 May. The sectors most affected by this rise were energy (39.2%) and food (7.5%)... [Read more](#)

Unemployment rate remains stable



The unemployment rate in the European Union remained stable in April compared to March, at 6.2%, according to data published by Eurostat on 1 June. In the euro area, it stood at 6.8% in April, the same level as in March... [Read more](#)

Culture :

European Solidarity for Ukraine in the cultural domain



Across Europe, the world of culture continues to show solidarity with Ukraine. Until August, the city of Hamburg is organising meetings to introduce young Ukrainian artists through film screenings and concerts. On 4 and 5 June in Poland, the Szczecin Philharmonic is hosting a twelve-hour concert on the repertoire of Bach. On 11 June in Dublin, the National Children's Creativity Day will include a music workshop for Ukrainian families in Dublin. On 12 June, a concert in support of Ukraine will take place at the Théâtre de Verdure in Nice, featuring Ukrainian groups. The Spanish artistic residency network TEJA, created in May to welcome Ukrainian artists fleeing the armed conflict, launched a digital art auction on 29 May to finance their actions... [Read more](#)

Model clothes in Riga



The Museum of Decorative Arts and Design in Riga is presenting until 25 September the exhibition "Model Clothes. Modes arhetipi", in partnership with the MUCEM in Marseille, as part of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The exhibition looks at fashion as a social anthropological phenomenon and traces the history of five garments through the centuries, namely the tank top, canvas shoes, overalls, jogging suits and the Scottish kilt... [Read more](#)

Vivian Maier in Brussels



From 8 June to 21 July, the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels is presenting a selection of 80 self-portraits by the American photographer Vivian Maier, a mid-twentieth century artist whose work was largely discovered only in 2007... [Read more](#)

Beaubourg's new objectivity



The Centre Pompidou in Paris is presenting an exhibition on the German art movement of the inter-war period, the "New Objectivity", until 5 September. Combining architecture, painting, design, cinema, theatre, literature and music, the exhibition is built around the main figure of this movement, the photographer August Sander... [Read more](#)



Die Brücke and Der Blauer Reiter in Chemnitz



Until 26 June, the Chemnitz Art Collections are presenting masterpieces by the most important names of the German Expressionist avant-garde. Kandinsky, Kirchner, Klee, Marc, Nolde and Schmidt-Rottluff are exhibited side by side to create a dialogue between the two famous groups of artists "Die Brücke" (1905) and "Blauer Reiter" (1912)... [Read more](#)

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Kudsk Steensens in Aarhus



Until 23 October, the Aarhus Museum of Art (ARoS) is showing the artist Kudsk Steensens and his work Berl-Berl, a poetic representation of a marshy area in Berlin that the artist photographed for a year. His art seeks to open up new perspectives on nature, interweaving scientific considerations, environmental issues and artistic imagination... [Read more](#)



Opera Festival Riga



From 8 June to 1 July, Riga will be hosting its annual opera festival, which includes ballet performances for the first time. Verdi, Tchaikovsky and Mozart are on the programme... [Read more](#)



Poetry Festival in Rotterdam



From 10 to 12 June, Rotterdam will be hosting the 52nd edition of its international poetry festival. Writers from all over the world come together to share their work and perform historical poems in a variety of events. The festival will also present its archive of 10,000 works in over 90 languages... [Read more](#)



Photographic Festival in Madrid



The 25th edition of the international photography and visual arts festival "PhotoEspana" is being held in Madrid until 28 August. With 120 exhibitions in the city's main museums, exhibition halls and art galleries, the festival explores documentary photography, the visibility of women photographers and classic and contemporary Spanish creators... [Read more](#)



Photo Festival in Lodz



The Łódź International Photography Festival is being held from 9 to 26 June with the idea of "community" as its theme. Among the 40 exhibitions and numerous events planned, the exhibition "The Thin Line" presents the works of Ukrainian artists, who intend to show, through juxtapositions of photographs of pre-war Ukraine with images of the conflict, how quickly everything can change in a life... [Read more](#)



Agenda :



7-9 June 2022
Strasbourg
Plenary Session of the European Parliament



9 June 2022
Frankfurt
Meeting of the ECB Council of Governors



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Jun

9-10 June 2022

Luxembourg
Competitiveness Council
Luxembourg
Justice and Home Affairs Council

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Jun

12 June 2022

France
General Elections (First Round)

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Jun

13 June 2022

Luxembourg
Agriculture and Fisheries Council

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N° ISSN : 2729-6482

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