

The European Union, on the quest for meaning: what are Europe's final goals?

Thierry Chopin

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Foundation :

[A European in a hurry](#)

Jean-Dominique Giuliani, Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation has published "A European in a hurry" with Editions du Moment in which he analyses Nicolas Sarkozy's European policy since his election on 6th May 2007. This book is now available for purchase in bookshops.

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[Spring for Europe](#)

As part of "Spring for Europe" a conference on the future of the European Union will take place on 27th May in Sofia together with a number of personalities including Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Alain Lamassoure, Elmar Brok, Meglena Kuneva and Jean-Dominique Giuliani. This conference is being organised by the embassies of France and Germany in Bulgaria with the support of the Robert Schuman and Konrad Adenauer Foundations.

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[Views of Europe](#)

The Embassy for France in the Czech Republic, the Czech Senate and the Charles University are organising a seminar together with the Robert Schuman Foundation, Sciences Po, the CERI and the Cefres entitled "Views of Europe" that will bring together Vaclav Havel, former Czech President, Bernard Kouchner, Karel Schwarzenberg, the French and Czech Foreign Ministers, Jean-Pierre Jouyet and Alexandr Vondra, the French and Czech European Affairs Ministers on the four following themes: the final objectives of the Union, borders, the policies to undertake as a priority and the values of Europe.

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[Women](#)

As part of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union that will start on 1st July the Robert Schuman Foundation and the association "Femmes, Débat et Société" are organising an international conference on 2nd July between 9am and 6:30pm under the high patronage of the President of the French Republic, Nicolas Sarkozy with the support of the European Commission. The event will run under the banner of the French Presidency of the European Union and is entitled : "Women for Europe" rallying many European

personalities. It is obligatory to enrol for the event via the internet only.

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[Elections/Georgia](#)

The United National Movement for a Victorious Georgia led by President Saakashvili made a landslide victory in the general elections that took place on 21st May in Georgia. According to the initial results published on 22nd May he won 63.09% of the vote. The New Rights Bloc led by David Gamkrelidze and the National Council of United Opposition that rallies seven parties won 13.25%; the Christian Democratic Party led by former Imedi TV presenter, Giorgi Targamadze came third winning 8.4% and the Labour Party led by Shalva Natelashvili, 6.1%. Only four political parties succeeded in rising above the 5% threshold necessary to be represented in the Georgian parliament. Turn out rose to 55% ie 8.93 points less than that recorded during the general election of 28th March 2004.

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[Elections Macedonia](#)

1.77 million voters are being called to ballot on 1st June next to renew the 120 members of the Sobranija, the only Chamber in Parliament in early general elections which follow the dissolution of parliament on 12th April last. Nineteen political parties or coalitions are running in these elections. Many incidents have marked the electoral campaign. According to the most recent surveys the coalition "For a better Macedonia" (the Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party for National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) led by the present Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and the Democratic Party of Serbs (DPS) led by Ivan Stoilkovic) is due to win ahead of the opposition coalition "Sun, coalition for Europe". The Democratic Union for Integration is forecast to come third, the Social Democratic Union is due to come fourth and the Albanian Democratic Party, fifth. 21% of the voters say they still have not decided and 19.4% say they will not go and vote.

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Presidency :

[Agriculture](#)

Many themes were addressed during an informal meeting of agriculture ministers that started on 25th May and ended with a plenary session on 27th May. Climate change, biofuels, the protection of the environment, risk management in agriculture and food safety were on the agenda. Ministers also debated legislative proposals with regard to the "CAP Healthcheck". In view of this Mr Iztok Jarc, Chairman of the Agriculture Council and Slovenian Agriculture Minister stressed that the new challenges faced by the CAP covered other areas such as trade, the environment, energy and security.

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[Ukraine](#)

On 22nd May Dimitrij Rupel, the Slovenian Foreign Minister chaired the EU-Ukraine troika that focussed on the main regional and international issues, the country's domestic situation and the state of relations between the EU and the Ukraine. Co-operation with Russia and the situation in the Western Balkans were spoken of at length. He notably recalled the European prospects of this region. He also said he was pleased with the progress achieved with regard to negotiations in view of the new enhanced agreement with the Ukraine.

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Parliament :

[Training](#)

The European Foundation for Training, a decentralised EU organisation whose aim it is to help towards the development of vocational training systems in partner countries may undergo some structural changes in the wake of the amendment adopted by MEPs on 22nd May. According to this amendment the Foundation's Management Council will have to include representatives from the Member States, the Commission as well as experts appointed by Parliament. As for the Foundation's director he will have to submit his work to the competent parliamentary committees. These modifications reflect the need to strengthen relations between the decentralised European agencies and the Parliament. Rapporteur, Bernard Lehideux (ALDE, FR) has also

asked for the Foundation's field of intervention to include the Union's partner countries and for it to go beyond the framework of the neighbourhood policy.

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Pollution/Sanctions

In order to force citizens and Member States to apply European legislation in terms of environmental protection, governments will now have to turn to criminal sanctions for any behaviour that causes damage to people or the environment. The report by Harmut Nassauer (EEP-ED, DE) adopted on 21st May establishes a list of infringements that are punishable by law such as the emission of radiation into the atmosphere, the ground or water, the depositing of waste and the production, storage and transport of illegal nuclear material. Such infringements are now qualified by the report as criminal acts. The protection of animal and vegetal species has also been taken into account.

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Prices/Food

In a resolution adopted on 22nd May (485 votes in favour, 52 against and 7 abstentions) MEPs stressed the fundamental nature of the right to food. Hence they called on the Council to keep its financial promises taken as part of the Millennium Goals for Development; the Commission and Member States are encouraged to adopt a sensible strategy. This should include better forecasting in terms of agricultural production, a rise in the production of second generation bioenergy (using manure and agricultural waste) and in-depth thought into the role of biotechnology. As for development policy MEPs insist on the importance of investments in agriculture, aquaculture, rural development and the agro-industry. In this domain the EIB is due to play a fundamental role with the promotion of national microloan models. Finally MEPs plead for the progressive, controlled deregulation of agricultural markets in developing countries.

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Discrimination

The Elyzabeth Lynne report (ALDE, UK) calling on the Commission to put forward an overall directive to fight all forms of discrimination associated with handicap, age, religion or beliefs and sexual preference was adopted on 20th May 362 votes in favour, 262 against and 56 abstentions. It highlights the failure by Member States to transpose the directives over into national legislation and calls on the Commission to put pressure them.

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Sea

On 20th May on the occasion of the first European Maritime Day, the European Parliament adopted an own-initiative report by Willi Piecyk (ESP, DE) - 587 votes in favour, 20 against and 58 abstentions. The report says that the Action Plan includes too few practical measures and urges the Commission to use the instruments at its disposal under the EU Treaty. MEPs say that climate change challenges are addressed in a non-binding way, and that it should be the task of European Maritime Policy to prepare, in particular, for rising sea levels, with the increased risk of flooding of ports and of coastal regions.

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Turkey

In a report by Ria Oomen-Ruijten (EPP-ED, NL) adopted 467 votes in favour, 62 against and 61 abstentions MEPs welcome the legislative initiatives taken by Turkey but call for an acceleration in the reforms in a great number of areas. The role played by judges and the armed forces in the country's political life comes under heavy criticism. They also asked Turkey to "find a sustainable settlement to the Kurdish issue" and to enable the use of the Kurdish language in public life. Moreover the Armenian genocide is still a recurrent issue and they hope that Turkey will take up economic and political relations with Armenia again. They have encouraged Turkey to adopt reforms in terms of equal opportunities and the respect of pluralism, notably that related to religion.

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Commission :

Jacques Barrot

In Paris on 23rd May on taking over the justice, freedom and security portfolio, previously managed by Franco Frattini - now Italian Foreign Minister - the Vice- President of the European Commission for Transport, Jacques Barrot presented the results he has achieved over a four year period (November 2004-May 2008). He recalled the six ongoing projects (green transport, Galileo, Single Sky, urban mobility, borderless maritime area, rail transport).

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Agriculture

On 20th May the European Commission proposed to further modernise, simplify and streamline the Common Agricultural Policy. The so-called CAP Health Check will further break the link between direct payments and production and thus allow farmers to follow market signals to the greatest possible extent. Among a range of measures, the proposals call for the abolition of arable set-aside and a gradual increase in milk quotas before they are abolished in 2015, and a reduction in market intervention. These changes will free farmers from unnecessary restrictions and let them maximise their production potential. The Commission also proposes an increase in modulation, whereby direct payments to farmers are reduced and the money is transferred to the Rural Development Fund. This will allow a better response to the new challenges and opportunities faced by European agriculture, including climate change, the need for better water management, and the protection of biodiversity.

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Mediterranean

On 20th May the European Commission adopted its proposals for upgrading relations with its Mediterranean partners through the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean. Since its launch in 1995, the Barcelona Process has been the central instrument for Euro-Mediterranean relations, providing a framework for continued dialogue, engagement and development. The aim of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean which aim at giving renewed vitality and visibility to the EU's relations with Partners in the Mediterranean region. These structures include the setting up of a Secretariat and the creation of a permanent committee of Euro-Mediterranean representatives. The proposals contained in the Communication will be presented at the inaugural Summit of Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean in Paris on 13th July, 2008.

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Social Cohesion

According to a detailed report on social cohesion published on 22nd May by the European Commission revenue is distributed more uniformly across the Member States than in the USA. Taking the population of EU-25 as a whole, the measurement of inequality, the 'Gini coefficient', can be estimated for the EU-25 at around 32.7 compared to an estimate of 35.7 for the US. The results also show that only Portugal surpasses the US level (41), far ahead of other European countries, notably the three Baltic countries (between 33.4 and 35.9), Poland (35.2) and the UK (33.1). An intermediary group of countries, including Belgium, achieves coefficients of around 25-27. The most egalitarian countries are also those where the GDP per capita is the highest: Sweden (22.5) and Denmark (22.7). The European Commission concludes promoting equal opportunities makes it possible to boost growth by mobilising resources that were previously blocked by discrimination and social exclusion.

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Environment

On 23rd May the European Commission published a series of proposal that aim drastically to improve vehicle safety as well as their environmental performance. It wants all new cars to have Electronic Stability Control systems as from 2012 will. Furthermore lorries and other heavy vehicles should also be fitted with Advanced Emergency Braking Systems (AEBS) and Lane Departure Warning Systems as of 2013. These measures will reduce fatal casualties in traffic by an estimated 5000 a year. At the same time the Commission proposes the obligatory introduction in 2012 of low rolling resistance tyres, which considerably save on fuel consumption and CO2 emissions and might also reduce noise, while maintaining high level safety.

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Energy/France

On 22nd May the European Commission decided to open formal antitrust proceedings against the French gas company Gaz de France for a suspected breach of the European Commission Treaty's rules on abuse of dominant position (Article 82) and restrictive business practices (Article 81). The potential infringement consists of behaviour that might prevent or reduce competition on downstream supply markets for natural gas in France through, in particular, a combination of long-term reservation of transport capacity and a network of import agreements, as well as through underinvestment in import infrastructure capacity. The inquiry comes at a time when France is opposing the Commission's proposal which will oblige gas and electricity companies like GDF to separate their supply and transport activities as part of the deregulation of the energy sector. On 19th May MEPs rejected the Commission's separation plans but said they were interested in a compromise text. On 6th June the 27 Energy Ministers will debate to come to a common approach on the issue.

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Council :

Agriculture

On 19th May the 27 Agriculture Ministers debated the regulation with regard to the marketing of pesticides. The compromise proposal aims in the main to protect human and animal health as well as the environment whilst guaranteeing the competitiveness of the agro-food sector. The regulation aims to reduce redtape with regard to pesticides approval procedures, however some issues remain unresolved. The rise in prices of agricultural products and foodstuffs were also the focus of debate with the aim of finding solutions to decrease the negative effects of inflation. Finally ministers spoke of the contribution to research in agricultural development and for the need to adapt the sector to climate change.

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Education/Culture

During an Education, Youth and Culture Council on 22nd May the 27 Ministers adopted the proposal with regard to the work plan 2008-2010 that improves mobility for artists and art collections. They encourage innovation and have declared 2009 the European Year of Innovation and Creativity. They adopted the conclusions on adult education to foster continuous training. Finally they agreed on a resolution in favour of underprivileged youth stressing the importance of active participation on the part of the young in society for its overall cohesion.

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Germany :

Treaty Ratified

The upper chamber of the German parliament, the Bundesrat ratified the Lisbon Treaty on 23rd May. Fifteen Länder out of 16 voted in favour of the text; only the representatives of the City-State of Berlin abstained. The lower chamber (Bundestag) ratified the treaty on 24th April last and Germany has now completed the ratification procedure of the new treaty. The Robert Schuman Foundation keeps an updated table detailing the results of the ratifications country by country on its internet site.

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Journalism

The results of the 25th Franco-German journalism prize was announced on 15th and 16th May in Paris. The prize to a total value of 28,000 euro were attributed to the categories of TV, radio, written press and the internet. The Saarland Radio-TV company has granted the Franco-German journalism prize on behalf of the leading German channel ARD since 1983 rewarding French and German reports that contribute towards a better understanding of their neighbours. The Franco-German prize for Journalism is one of the most renowned prize in Europe.

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Austria :

Turkey

Austrian President Heinz Fischer went on an official visit to Turkey between 20th and 22nd May. In Ankara he notably met with his Turkish counterpart Abdullah Gül and the President of Parliament Köksal Toptan. He visited the mausoleum of the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal. In Istanbul he spoke with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and with the Ecumenical Patriarch before going on to an Economic Forum. During these talks the main themes mentioned were membership negotiations to the EU by Turkey, the gas pipeline Nabucco and the Ilisu dam in the north-east of the country, economic co-operation between Turkey and Austria, notably in the area of energy, the situation in the Middle East where Turkey plays an important role as mediator and finally dialogue between civilisations.

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Spain :

Eufor/Finul

On 23rd May the Spanish government approved the dispatch of a maximum of 100 soldiers as part of the European Forces in Chad (EUFOR) and a patrol boat transporting 90 soldiers as part of the UN Interim Force (UNIFIL) in the Lebanon. This dispatches were approved by the Council of Ministers and still have to receive the go-ahead from the Congress of Deputies. The soldiers sent to Chad will be the first Spaniards to integrate EUFOR that started a year's mandate mid-March on the part of the UN.

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France :

Denmark/Latvia

On 19th May French Prime Minister, François Fillon travelled to Denmark and Latvia as part of the preparatory work for the French presidency of the EU. He met his Danish counterpart Anders Fogh Rasmussen and then the head of the Latvian government, Ivars Godmannis. He gave a speech during a conference organised in Copenhagen on "50 years of European Democracy." He then signed "A Political Declaration on the Franco-Latvian Strategic Partnership" in Riga.

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Wolfgang Schäuble

German Interior Minister, Wolfgang Schäuble was on an official visit in Paris on 21st May. He met with President Nicolas Sarkozy as well as the French Interior Minister, Michèle Alliot-Marie and Brice Hortefeux, Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-Development Minister. The European Immigration Pact was the focus of discussion - immigration is one of the priorities of the French Presidency of the European Union that will start on 1st July for a period of six months.

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Referendum?

The French National Assembly started to look into the draft law on the reform of the institutions on 20th May. The aim is to balance out legislative and executive powers. The text includes 35 paragraphs. The initial project planned for the abolition of any referendum on new members joining the European Union (paragraph 88-5 of the Constitution). However an amendment made it obligatory to hold a referendum to ratify the entry of countries representing more than 5% of the Union's population!

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Hungary :

France/Strategic Partnership

French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany signed a Strategic Partnership on 22nd May in Paris; this plans for co-operation in the area of the civilian nuclear industry and

Franco-Hungarian collaboration in the areas of science, agriculture, politics and the military. In terms of civilian nuclear issues the Hungarian Prime Minister said that his country was looking for partners to build power stations. In Ferenc Gyurcsany's opinion the signature of the Strategic Partnership reveals the emergence of a "new axis" in Europe.

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Ireland :

[Forum/Europe](#)

On 21st May Irish Prime Minister Brian Cowen spoke for the first time on Europe and notably on the Lisbon Treaty during a speech delivered to the National Forum on Europe in Dublin. He believes that Ireland's entry into the European area in 1973 had ensured its independence and formidable economic growth - which has gained it the nickname of the "Celtic Tiger". "This means that we need a European Union with structures, policies and procedures that can be effective on the living standards of our populations today. (...) This is why I believe that "YES" on 12th June is in our vital national interest."

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Lithuania :

[Russia](#)

On 21st May after 18 months of stalemate Lithuania lifted its veto with regard to negotiations on the strategic, trade and political partnership between the EU and Russia, which will be launched on 26th and 27th June. Lithuania said it was pleased with the compromise that had been found. "All of Lithuania's concerns have been taken into account," said the spokesperson from the Lithuanian Foreign Office, Violeta Gaizauskaite, who chaired the "long and difficult" negotiations with Russia. Lithuania demanded that the negotiation mandate contained guarantees with regard to its energy supplies, legal co-operation with Russia and the settlement of "frozen conflicts" with Georgia and Moldova.

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Luxembourg :

[Solemn Declaration](#)

On 22nd May Luxembourg Prime Minister, Jean-Claude Juncker presented the Chamber of Deputies with a government declaration on the country's economic, social and financial situation in 2008. He recalls the importance of agriculture and announced the fight against "biological piracy" and the disappearance of vegetal diversity because of the promotion of biofuels. He maintained that he wanted to keep promises made in the Kyoto Protocol. With regard to the European currency the Chairman of Eurogroup believes that the "euro is the most important measure in the arsenal of European globalisation. It is the greatest European political achievement in the last 25 years."

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Romania :

[Commission](#)

On 22nd May Romanian Prime Minister, Calin Popescu Tariceanu met with the European Commissioner for Multilingualism, Leonard Orban. They spoke of the establishment of the future Lisbon strategy 2008-2010. The Prime Minister and the European Commissioner also discussed recent measures taken by the Italian government against illegal immigration that may target the Rom community of Italy. The head of the Romanian government said that these measures will be analysed carefully by the Romanian authorities whilst the Commission representative insisted on recalling that the "38/2004 directive had been adopted in view of the consolidation of the free movement of people" and that if "the Italian measures did not respect community legislation the Commission will react."

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UK :

[Defence](#)

British Defence Minister announced on 20th May that he had given manufacturers the go ahead to launch the

construction of two new aircraft carriers for the Royal Navy. According to the press release the ministry is prepared to sign contracts with the manufacturers involved, mainly the British VT Group and BAE Systems and permission has been given to form a joint venture that will manage the ships' construction. Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales will be the most powerful aircraft carriers ever built in the UK; they are to enter service in 2014 and 2016.

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Italy

British Minister for European Affairs Jim Murphy travelled to Rome on 20th May to speak with his Italian counterpart Andrea Ronchi, Foreign Minister, Franco Frattini and Secretary of State for the Presidency Gianni Letta. He indicated that "Italy and the UK were both in favour of promoting economic reforms in Europe and that they faced issues linked to energy security and climate change." He mentioned immigration and security issues saying that "both countries had to find the best adapted solution to their domestic situations" and that "since illegal immigration had negative effects on citizens' lives and social cohesion in Europe and on the immigrants' home countries, it is necessary to co-operate with these countries so that real change can be made in the field."

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Bosnia-Herzegovina :

Membership?

In a speech delivered on 21st May to the Johns Hopkins University of Washington DC, Miroslav Lajčák, the UN High Representative and the EU's Special Representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina announced that if the country wanted to join the EU Bosnia-Herzegovina had to make its constitutional framework compatible with the Union's administrative and political requirements. The fact that more than 70 percent of Bosnia's population is in favour of Bosnia's EU membership, will force local politicians – despite their differences and squabbling – to "find common agreement on a bare minimum of constitutional arrangements that are consistent with the demands of European Union membership". Miroslav Lajčák criticised local political leaders saying that 13 years after the end of the war they still viewed issues from a nationalist point of view which delayed post-war reconstruction and the establishment of closer relations with the European Union. He believes that accession to the Union must now be a priority on the political agenda and comprise the main element of cohesion.

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Georgia :

General Elections

The ruling party led by Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili easily won the general elections in Georgia on 21st May, according to initial results published on 22nd May but which were challenged by the opposition. According to figures from 3,600 polling stations, the United National Movement led by the President won 59.64% of the vote. The opposition coalition, the National Council for the United Opposition, came second with 17.7%. The Christian Democratic Party won 8.63% and the Labour Party, 7.43%. Of the 150 seats in Parliament 75 are attributed proportionally on a national level and 75 are won via a single name list vote. The OSCE observed a certain number of problems during the elections.

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Serbia :

South East Europe

Serb President Boris Tadic left the South-East Europe Cooperation Pact summit which took place on 21st May in Bulgaria protesting against the fact that the floor was given to Kosovo representative Skender Hyseni. The Serb delegation believed that the political director of the UN mission in Kosovo, Jolij Nagele had infringed the UN rules which stipulate that UNMIK representatives did not have the right to allow "representatives of the provisional institutions of Pristina" to speak. The Serb delegation has often left meetings in sign of protest against the presence of Kosovo representatives. The Kosovar institutions will take over government and administrative responsibilities in Kosovo from the UN on 15th June when the new Kosovar constitution comes into force.

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Eurostat :

Industry

According to figures published by Eurostat on 22nd May in March 2008 compared with February 2008, the euro area industrial new orders index fell by 1.0%. In February the index grew by 0.2%. In the European Union new orders fell by 0.7% in March 2008 after declining by 0.3% in February. Excluding ships, railway & aerospace equipment⁴ industrial new orders decreased by 0.3% in the euro area and increased by 0.9% in the European Union. In March 2008 compared with March 2007, industrial new orders decreased by 2.5% in the euro area and by 1.3% in the European Union.

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Investments

According to Eurostat figures published on 19th May in 2007, in the European Union foreign direct investment (FDI) in extra-European Union countries (outflows) rose by 53%, from 275 billion euro in 2006 to 420 bn in 2007, while FDI into the European Union from the rest of the world (inflows) increased by 89%, from 169 bn to 319 bn. In 2007, intra-EU²⁷ FDI flows rose by 13% compared with 2006.

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Construction

According to figures published by Eurostat on 19th May, seasonally adjusted production in the construction sector fell by 2.2% in the euro area and by 2.5% in the European Union in March 2008, compared with the previous month. In February, production increased by 1.6% in the euro area and by 2.5% in the European Union. Compared with March 2007, output in March 2008 decreased by 1.4% in the euro area and by 0.1% in the European Union. In March 2008, among the Member States for which data are available, construction output rose in Sweden (+5.1%) and Poland (+1.4%) and remained stable in France, while decreases were recorded in nine Member States. The most significant falls were observed in Germany (-12.3%), Slovenia (-12.2%) and the United Kingdom (-9.0%).

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Studies/Reports :

Monetary Union

The Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies (SIEPS) has just published a study on the measures included in the Lisbon Treaty with regard to Economic and Monetary Union. The aim of this analysis is to show how the rules have been changed and their scope widened by the Lisbon Treaty. Author, Sideek Mohamed Seyad also shows the implications these measures will have on the Swedish position.

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Climate

Chatham House has published a report entitled : "The International Climate Change Agenda". Antony Frogatt indicates that the G8 countries must play a fundamental role in terms of reducing CO2 emissions. Sectoral initiatives will play an important role just as technological innovations. There is a need for international cooperation that should lead to increased efficiency standards for products and structures, focused finances and greater human resources and knowledge. Energy efficiency is the key to energy and climate security.

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Migration

The Centre for European Policies looks into migratory issues with the publication of a study by Elizabeth Collett and Karolina Sitek. The authors present one of the EU's present debates ie migrant integration policies. They notably condemn the fact that employers of migrant workers are too often ignored and excluded from political debates. But they may play a decisive role in fostering integration into society. The authors identify five tools that may help towards an integration strategy.

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Publications :

[French Presidency](#)

La Documentation Française has published an issue on what is at stake in the French Presidency of the Union in "Collection Regards sur l'Actualité". An article looks into four key priorities in this presidency: energy, environment, immigration, security and defence. An analysis of the State's budget 2008 as well as investment choices in hospitals also feature in the index.

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Culture :

[Festival/Cannes](#)

The 61st international film festival in Cannes awarded prizes to two European films on 25th May. The jury chaired by American actor, Sean Penn granted the Palme d'Or to French film "Entre les murs" by Laurent Cantet and the Grand Prize to the Italian film "Gomorra" by Matteo Garronea.

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[Exhibition/Madrid](#)

A retrospective in Madrid is presenting 123 drawings and sculptures of naked women by French artist August Rodin until 6th July. The 33 sculptures and 90 drawings shown at the Mapfre Foundation all come from the Rodin Museum in Paris which is the co-organiser of this major exhibition that has been entitled "Rodin. The naked body."

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[EuropaVox Festival](#)

The upcoming EuropaVox Festival (festival of modern music that focus on the diversity of European creation) is taking place from 29th May to 7th June. The EuropaVox festival offers more than 50 concerts in seven towns of Auvergne and the Massif Central. The evenings will cover all modern musical genres (rock, popular songs, hip-hop) and rally artists from all over Europe.

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Agenda

26th May

General Affairs and External Relations Council

26th -27th May

Franco-Czech Seminar in Prague

27th May

A Spring for Europe in Sofia

27th May

EU-EEA Troika (European Economic Area)

27th May

Association Council EU-Turkey

29th May

Competitiveness Council

30th May

EU-India Troika

June 1st

General Elections - Macedonia

2nd June

Eurogroup Meeting

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