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The Letter in PDF format

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## The end of combustion engines: the cart before the horse!

Author: Natalie Colin-Oesterlé



On 28 March, the ban on the sale of new combustion engine vehicles on our continent by 2035 was finally adopted. This is a decision that is more dogmatic than reasoned, which challenges the leadership of the European automotive sector and will make its Chinese competitors happy, argues MEP Nathalie Colin-Oesterlé.

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### Elections :

#### Who will succeed Egils Levits as President of the Republic of Latvia?



On 31 May, the 100 members of the Saeima, the single chamber of Parliament, are being called upon to elect Egils Levits' successor as President of the Republic of Latvia. 3 people are running for office: Edgars Rinkevics, Minister of Foreign Affairs since 2011, Uldis Pilens, leader of the United List (AS), and Elina Pinto (Progressives, PRO). For the time being, none of the three candidates has a majority in Parliament (51 votes)... [Read more](#)

#### New Democracy comes out ahead in Greek parliamentary elections



The New Democracy party of outgoing Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis came out ahead in the Greek parliamentary elections on 21 May with 40.79% of the vote, ahead of Alexis Tsipras' radical left SYRIZA (20.07%), the Panhellenic Socialist Movement-Movement for Change (PASOK-KINAL, 11.46%) and 41 seats, and the Communist Party (7.23%). With 146 seats out of 300 in parliament, New Democracy does not have a majority, and a new election could be held by early July at the latest... [Read more](#)

### Foundation :

Publication of the Schuman Report, the State of the Union 2023



Europe has changed... This is what the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union 2023" shows, as it analyses the profound changes that have occurred in Europe, accelerated by the shock of the war in Ukraine. This 17th edition published by Marie B. includes 19 contributions from eminent personalities, 30 original maps and a complete set of commented statistics. The book is available in French in print and digital format, and in English in digital format. Order your copy now!.. [Read more](#)

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#### Commission :

##### First results of joint gas procurement



On 16 May, Commission Vice-President Maros Sefcovic announced that international suppliers had responded to the first joint request for 11.6 billion cubic metres of gas and were ready to supply a total volume of over 13.4 billion cubic metres. A second tender is expected to be launched in June and three more will follow before the end of the year... [Read more](#)

##### Proposal for the reform of the Customs Union



On 16 May, the Commission presented a proposal for the reform of the customs union. The reform aims, among other things, to establish a new customs authority, a single online environment for all customs data and real-time data accessible to all Member States... [Read more](#)

#### Parliament :

##### The European election will take place from 6 to 9 June 2024



The Council confirmed on 22 May that the next European Parliament elections will take place from 6 to 9 June 2024. Parliament President Roberta Metsola called on European citizens to participate in "Europe's biggest democratic exercise"... [Read more](#)

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#### Council :

##### Meeting of Ministers of Economy and Finance



On 16 May, the Ministers of Economy and Finance adopted the MiCA Regulation establishing a legal framework for the crypto-asset sector. The regulation on deforestation and forest degradation and the regulation on information accompanying transfers of funds and certain crypto-assets were also adopted. They set out their approach to the amendments to the Directive on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation. They also discussed the framework for banking crisis management and deposit insurance, the economic and financial impact of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the economic recovery in Europe... [Read more](#)

##### Meeting of Ministers for Youth, Sport, Culture and Education



On 15 May, the Ministers for Youth and Sport discussed the social inclusion of young people and the respect of human rights in international sports events. They adopted a resolution on the revision of the work plan of the EU Youth Strategy 2022-2024. On 16 May, the Ministers of Culture adopted conclusions on displaced artists and artists at risk, and discussed legislation on media freedom. The Education Ministers approved a resolution on the European Education Area and discussed access to reading... [Read more](#)

##### Eurogroup Meeting



Eurozone finance ministers met on 15 May in Brussels. They discussed the challenges facing businesses and how to move forward with the capital markets union. They also discussed the recent G7 meeting, the banking union and the state of play of the digital euro project... [Read more](#)

#### Court of Justice :

##### Judgment on the right of withdrawal

On 17 May, the Court of Justice ruled that where a trader fails to inform the consumer of his right of withdrawal and the latter exercises it after the performance of an off-



premises service contract, the consumer is exempt from any obligation to pay for the services provided in performance of that contract. A German court had referred a dispute to the Court concerning payment for the renovation of a private individual's electrical installation... [Read](#)

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## Diplomacy :

### EU-Korea Summit



The President of the European Council Charles Michel, the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen and the President of the Republic of Korea Yoon Suk Yeol met in Seoul on 22 May for the 10th EU-Republic of Korea Summit. They confirmed their wish to strengthen the 2010 bilateral framework agreement through new partnerships. Both sides also reiterated their joint support for Ukraine and their condemnation of Russian aggression... [Read more](#)

### First EU-India Trade and Technology Council



The EU and India held the first meeting of the Trade and Technology Council launched in February in Brussels on 16 May. The two partners committed to seeking cooperation on artificial intelligence and coordinating their policies on semiconductors. Enhanced EU-India cooperation is also expected around green or clean energy technologies and resilience of value chains... [Read more](#)

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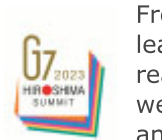
### Central Asia Economic Forum



The second EU-Central Asia Economic Forum was held in Kazakhstan on 18-19 May. The parties restated their commitment to further develop their partnership, particularly the improvement of the business environment, green and digital transitions, and trade and economic relations between the EU and Central Asia... [Read more](#)

## G7 :

### Summit of Heads of State and Government



From 19 to 21 May, the G7 heads of state met in Hiroshima, with the leaders of India, Brazil, Indonesia and Ukraine also in attendance. The G7 reaffirmed the need to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation processes, as well as a global strategy to fight for global energy and food security. It announced up to \$600 billion for quality infrastructure through the Global Infrastructure Investment Partnership (GIIP). The leaders warned China against certain practices of economic coercion and interference in the affairs of other countries... [Read more](#)

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## European Agencies :

### Immigration in Central Mediterranean



In the first 4 months of 2023, the number of illegal border crossings through the central Mediterranean into the European Union quadrupled compared to the first 4 months of 2022, according to estimates published on 15 May by Frontex. In total, across all borders, around 80,000 illegal border crossings were counted, almost 30% more than the previous year... [Read more](#)

## Ukraine :

### New G7 sanctions against Russia



Meeting in Hiroshima, Japan, G7 leaders announced on 19 May new sanctions against Russia to further restrict its access to the technology, industrial equipment and services that are enabling it to wage its war against Ukraine... [Read more](#)

### Extension of the agreement on Ukrainian grain exports via the Black Sea



On 17 May, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that Russia had announced that it would continue its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative for another 60 days. He added that some issues remained unresolved and that representatives of Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and the

UN would continue discussions. He also called for a comprehensive agreement between the three countries to improve, develop and expand the Initiative... [Read more](#)

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## Germany :

### IMF and OECD reports on the economy



On 8 and 16 May, the IMF and OECD published their economic outlook for Germany. The two institutions note the resilience of the economy in 2022 despite rising energy prices. They forecast zero growth in 2023 and then 1% to 2% between 2024 and 2026. The OECD believes that a return to strong and sustainable growth will require targeted investments and reforms to accelerate the green and digital transformation of the economy. According to the IMF, the short-term priority is to support disinflation with a tightening of fiscal policy in 2023... [Read more](#)

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## Bulgaria :

### Agreement for a new government



On 22 May, former EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel reached an agreement between her party, GERB (centre-right), and the pro-European coalition uniting the parties "Let's continue the change" and "Democratic Bulgaria", to form a government in Bulgaria. According to the agreement, which is expected to last 18 months, the government will be led for the first 9 months by Nikolai Denkov, representative of the coalition, and then by Mariya Gabriel for the following 9 months. Gabriel resigned on 15 May from her position as European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth. Her responsibilities are divided between Margrethe Vestager for innovation and research, and Margaritis Schinas for education, culture and youth.. [Read more](#)

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## France :

### Meeting of the Nuclear Alliance countries



On 16 May, 16 Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Italy) met in Paris and signed a joint declaration in favour of a European action plan to develop nuclear cooperation. It estimates that by 2050 nuclear energy could provide up to 150 GW of electricity through the continued operation of existing facilities and the construction of 30 to 45 new reactors... [Read more](#)

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## Ireland :

### Meta fined €1.2 million for GDPR violation



On 22 May, the Irish Data Protection Commission (DPC) fined the Meta Group €1.2 billion for violating the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The US group had transferred personal data of millions of European Facebook users to the US without sufficiently protecting them from US data surveillance practices. Meta must transfer Facebook's European user data stored since 2020 back to the EU, until a new agreement on data flows between the EU and the US has been reached... [Read more](#)

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## UK :

### Draft EU-UK agreement on financial services



On 17 May, the Commission presented a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishing a framework for regulatory cooperation in the field of financial services with the UK. This MoU now needs to be formally approved by the Council, to be signed by the Commission on behalf of the Union. It must also be signed by the UK... [Read more](#)

## Slovakia :

### New government



On 15 May, Slovak President Zuzana Caputova appointed a caretaker government of 14 ministers headed by Ludovit Odor, former deputy governor of the Central Bank. The previous government led by Eduard Heger resigned on 7 May. Ludovit Odor said he will ensure that the state functions properly until the parliamentary elections on 30 September... [Read more](#)

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## Montenegro :

### Agreement on cooperation between Frontex and Montenegro adopted



On 15 May, the Council approved the signing of an agreement with Montenegro to carry out joint border management operations with the European Border Guard and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex). The Parliament must now approve the agreement before the Council can finalise it... [Read more](#)

## Council of Europe :

### Register of Damage Caused by Russian aggression



The Council of Europe announced on 17 May at the summit of its member heads of state and government in Reykjavik the establishment of a register of damage caused by the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Forty-four Member States have announced that they will participate in the register, which will be established for an initial period of 3 years... [Read more](#)

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## Eurostat :

### Inflation increasing in the euro zone and down in the Union



According to a Eurostat estimate published on 17 May, inflation in the euro area was 7% in April 2023, compared with 6.9% in March, an increase of 0.1 percentage points. In the European Union, it was 8.1% in April compared to 8.3% in March, a decrease of 0.2 points... [Read more](#)

### GDP and employment up



GDP grew by 0.2% in the European Union and by 0.1% in the euro area in the first quarter of 2023 compared with the previous quarter, according to a Eurostat flash estimate published on 16 May. The same estimate shows that employment also increased in the first half of 2023, by 0.6%, in both the European Union and the euro area... [Read more](#)

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## Studies/Reports :

### Report on the situation in the Schengen Area



On 16 May, the Commission presented the second annual report on the situation in the Schengen area. The report recalls several important changes in 2022 and 2023. Since March 2022, a new Schengen Council convenes the ministers of the Schengen area. The entry of Croatia on 1 January 2023 is the first enlargement in 10 years. Finally, in March 2023, the Commission introduced the first European border management strategy... [Read more](#)

## Culture :

### Cultural Solidarity with Ukraine



On 18 May, International Museum Day, several Belgian museums joined forces to document the looting of museum collections in Ukraine, particularly in the city of Kherson. They are presenting "Explosions near the museum", a video work by Ukrainian artists Yarema Malashchuk and Roman Khimei, which shows the reality of this looting. In Denmark, the Ukrainian embassy is organising an evening at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen on 23 and 24 May with 125 Ukrainian artists in exile. In Germany, a solidarity concert with the Ukrainian cause is organised near Lübeck, in the adventure village of Warnsdorf on 26 May... [Read more](#)

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### Capital of Culture - Eleusis Programme



The city of Eleusis, Greece, European Capital of Culture, has started the programme of cultural events that will be held until the end of the year. Entitled "Mysteries of Transition", this programme is organised around ancient legends specific to the city. It is divided into three themes: society, environment and work... [Read more](#)

## Wroclaw Fair



Until 27 May the 20th art biennial "Fungible Content" will be held in Wrocław. In a series of exhibitions, performances, meetings and events taking place in 13 venues in Wrocław, the WRO Biennial presents the role of media art in contemporary culture... [Read more](#)

## Giacometti-Dali in Zurich



Until 2 July, the Kunsthaus Zurich is hosting the first exhibition devoted to the cooperation between the Spanish painter Salvador Dalí and the Swiss modernist artist Alberto Giacometti. The exhibition is organised around the construction of a large-scale garden project that has never been done before and is populated with works by both artists. The exhibition offers a unique insight into the creative world of Parisian surrealism in the early 1930s and bears witness to the spirit of collective creation and sharing that animated Dali and Giacometti... [Read more](#)

## Yoshitomo Nara exhibition in Vienna



Until 1 November, the Albertina modern, Vienna's museum of contemporary art, is presenting the exhibition "All My Little Words". The exhibition about Yoshitomo Nara, curated by the artist himself, focuses on the many facets of his drawing work, which has developed over a period of about forty years... [Read more](#)

## Judit Reigl in Budapest



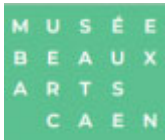
Until 3 September, the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts is devoting an exhibition to Judit Reigl on the occasion of the centenary of her birth. In accordance with the artist's wishes, her drawings are exhibited together with some of her favourite paintings from the museum's collection. A film, featuring Reigl working in her studio on "Dance of Death", is on view... [Read more](#)

## The Art of Change 1900-1980



Since its reopening on 28 April, the Modern 2 gallery at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh is hosting a new exhibition until 7 January 2024. Entitled 'The Art of Change: 1900-1980', it explores how artists represented the changes in society during this period... [Read more](#)

## "Sous le regard de Méduse" in Caen



Until 17 September, the Musée des Beaux-arts de Caen is devoting an exhibition to the Greek mythological figure of Medusa. The exhibition traces the development of representations of the figure of Medusa in art, from Antiquity to the present day. 65 works are on display, including some by Antoine Bourdelle, Auguste Rodin and Alberto Giacometti... [Read more](#)

## Contemporary Art Fair of Lisbon



From 25 to 28 May, the 6th annual Lisbon Contemporary Art Fair will be held. For the occasion, 86 galleries and nearly 470 artists from 23 countries will exhibit their creations in various fields... [Read more](#)

## Nasan Tur in Berlin



Until 1 April 2024, the Berlinische Galerie in Berlin is devoting an exhibition to the contemporary artist Nasan Tur. Among other things, the viewer will be able to see works on the theme of legitimisation and the exercise of power that the artist has produced especially for the exhibition... [Read more](#)

## Agenda :

22  
May

22 May 2023  
Strasbourg  
Plenary session of the Franco-German Parliamentary Assembly  
Seoul  
EU-Korea Summit

23  
May

23 May 2023  
Brussels  
Foreign Affairs Council (Defence) Competitiveness Council

25  
May

25 May 2023  
Brussels  
Foreign Affairs Council (Trade)

30  
May

30 May 2023  
Brussels  
Agriculture and Fisheries Council General Affairs Council

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