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European Momentum

Author: Jean-Dominique Giuliani



According to Jean-Dominique Giuliani, Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation in 2018 "Europe gather momentum" - enjoying an exceptional opportunity for the European Union to recover. After a crisis of doubt and economic difficulties which led to the disaffection of its citizens, Europe has now made its return to the international arena. Its economy is now producing promising results, it is resisting populism and remains an area of unique stability and prosperity. Now able to assert its assets, it has to rise to the challenges of immigration, security and governance. In these three areas some Member States, even in a limited number, must set the example of cooperating decisively together, remaining open to those who want to join them.

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Elections :

Viktor Orban wins the general election in Hungary



Outgoing Prime Minister Viktor Orban easily won the general election in Hungary on 8th April. His party, the Alliance of Young Democrats-Civic Union (FIDESZ-MPP), won 48.53% of the vote and is due to take 133 of the 199 seats in the Országgyűlés, the only house in Parliament, i.e. a 2/3 majority. The Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik) won 19.63% of the vote and 26 seats. The Socialist Party (MSZP), allied with Dialogue for Hungary (PM), won 12.44% of the vote and 20 seats. Doing Politics Differently (LMP), won 6.98% of the vote and 9 seats and the Democratic Coalition (DK) won 5.62% of the vote and 8 seats. Turnout was clearly higher than in 2014 (69.14%), i.e. 7.68 points more... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

Smuggling, Counterfeiting and the Financing of Terrorism

On 11th April the Robert Schuman Foundation is organising a



conference in Brussels entitled "Smuggling, Counterfeiting and the Financing of Terrorism - Mobilising Economic Stakeholders..." [Read more](#)

Commission :

Protection of workers against carcinogenic chemical agents



The European Commission adopted further measures on 5th April for the greater protection of workers against carcinogenic chemicals. It notably suggests limiting exposure of workers to five carcinogenic chemical agents in more than 21 substances which have already been limited or whose restriction has been suggested... [Read more](#)

Council :

Fight to counter radicalisation



Political leaders and observers of the European Union and the Western Balkans met on 4th April in Sofia, Bulgaria, to discuss joint issues linked with the prevention of and the fight to counter terrorism... [Read more](#)

Sanctions against North Korea



The Council announced on 6th April that it had "added one person and 21 entities" to its list of subjects that were the focus of restrictive measures against the People's Democratic Republic of North Korea. By doing this it is implementing sanctions established on 28th March 2018 by the UN Security Council... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

150 million € in aid to Lebanon



On 6th April the Commission announced that the EU was to grant aid to a total of 150 million € to Lebanon in support of its economy. This might represent aid of 1.5 billion € by 2020 for the country if its financial institutions invest in the right projects... [Read more](#)

107.5 million € in humanitarian aid to Yemen



Whilst the situation in Yemen is worsening daily the European Union announced on 3rd April that it would donate 107.5 million € to help civilians in need in the country at war. This announcement was made during the summit on the humanitarian crisis in Yemen organised on 3rd April in Geneva. In all Yemen has received nearly 438.2 million € from the Union... [Read more](#)

ECB :

Court of Justice referred to regarding Latvia



On 6th April the ECB announced that it had asked the European Court of Justice to assess the case of the governor of the Latvian Central Bank, who was dismissed by Riga after a politico-financial scandal. Ilmars Rimsevics, suspected of corruption was suspended at the beginning of March, but refused to leave his post, claiming that he was innocent and arguing his independence vis-à-vis politics. The ECB has asked for clarification about the legal conformity of the European Treaties with this suspension... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Towards a Franco-German fighter plane



On 5th April German and French Defence Ministers, Ursula von der Leyen and Florence Parly met in Paris and exchanged constructive views on future fighter planes, innovation and European cooperation... [Read more](#)

Croatia :

Visit by the Croatian President in Bulgaria



On 4th April Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov hosted Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic. The meeting focused on economic cooperation and joint work on the Western Balkans joining the European Union. Croatia congratulated Bulgaria on the rotating presidency of the EU regarding its projects in terms of digital connectivity and infrastructures in the region... [Read more](#)

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Spain :

Draft Budget 2018



Spain must continue its work to reduce its debt which is still close to 100% of the GDP declared an official of the IMF on 3rd April, whilst the government has just presented a budget in which spending is up... [Read more](#)

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Puigdemont released on bail



The German authorities have released former Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont on condition that he present himself once a week to the police in Neumünster, the town in which he was imprisoned on 25th March. The court did not retain the accusation of "rebellion" featuring in the European Arrest Warrant. Only "the embezzlement of public goods" was retained by the German court... [Read more](#)

France :

Schengen: extension of border controls



France has indicated to the European Commission that the controls on the borders established since November 2015 would be extended until October 2018, due to the continued terrorist threat in France... [Read more](#)

Meeting with the Spanish Minister of the Economy



On 5th April in Madrid the French Minister for the Economy, Bruno Le Maire met his Spanish counterpart Roman Escolano. During this meeting the two ministers spoke of digital taxation and the reform of the euro zone... [Read more](#)

Greece :

Immigration: the Commission comes to the aid of refugees in Greece



On 2nd April the European Commission announced the grant of further financing totalling 180 million euro for emergency aid projects in support of refugees in Greece. This financing notably aims to extend the "emergency support to integration and accommodation" (ESTIA) designed to help refugees find housing in an urban area outside of the camps... [Read more](#)

Portugal :

Record production of renewable energy



On 3rd April the Portuguese Association for Renewable Energy quoted data produced by Redes Energeticas Nacionais (REN), the national Portuguese electricity provider. This data shows that in March electricity production by renewable sources rose for the first time beyond consumption, rising by 103.6% of the latter... [Read more](#)

Czech Republic :

The Social Democratic Party withdraws from coalition negotiations

The Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) decided to end discussions



in view of forming a government coalition with ANO, the party led by Andrej Babis, who came out ahead in the legislative elections in October last. Czech President Milos Zeman has given the Prime Minister until June to form a government... [Read more](#)

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Montenegro :

Presidential election on 15th April



The Presidential election in Montenegro will take place on 15th April with 7 candidates in the running: Marko Milačić (journalist, The Real Montenegro Party), Mladen Bojanić (independent) ; Hazbija Kalač (Justice and Reconciliation Party) ; Vasilije Miličković (independent) ; Dobrilo Dedeić (Serb List) ; Draginja Vuksanović (Social-Democratic Party) ; Milo Đukanović (Socialist Democratic Party, DPS). The latter is by far the favourite... [Read more](#)

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Moldova :

Moldova must continue its reforms



According to the report about the implementation of the commitments taken by Moldova published on 4th April the latter has succeeded in stabilising its economic situation but must continue work to counter high-level corruption, recover embezzled funds through bank fraud and bring the authors of these crimes to justice... [Read more](#)

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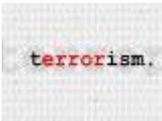
Council of Europe :

Report on the execution of decisions by the European Court of Human Rights



The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe published its annual report on 6th April on the monitoring of the execution of the decisions by the European Court of Human Rights. The latter was marked in 2017 by continued work to strengthen dialogue and the exchange of experiences between States... [Read more](#)

A new recommendation regarding terrorism



On 4th April the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a recommendation on lone terrorists. It notably encourages the States to step up international and national cooperation to increase the exchange of information... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Unemployment down in February 2018



According to a publication by Eurostat on 4th April unemployment lay at 7.1% in the EU in February 2018, down in comparison with January 2018 and 8% in February 2017. This is the lowest rate recorded since September 2008. In the euro zone it lay at 8.5% in February 2018, down in comparison with January 2018 and 9.5% in February 2017. It was the lowest rate recorded since December 2008... [Read more](#)

Inflation up in Europe



The euro zone's annual rate was estimated at 1.4% in March 2018, against 1.1% in February according to a report published by Eurostat on 4th April... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

International Roma Day



"Today is the opportunity to support the positive work achieved to date to counter discrimination against the Roma and to make real their integration into European societies and countries," declared Frans Timmermans on the occasion of International Roma Day on 8th April. The Roma, who have for a long time been the victim of social exclusion, comprise the biggest minority group in Europe - in the Union there are 6 million and 4 million in the enlargement countries... [Read more](#)

Culture :**Van Gogh and Japan Exhibition**

Until 24th June the Van Gogh Museum of Amsterdam is organising an exhibition "Van Gogh and Japan" which aims to present the artist's fascination for Japanese prints... [Read more](#)

Monet at the National Gallery

Until 29th July the National Gallery London is running a unique exhibition on Monet's work, the first of its kind in 20 years in the UK... [Read more](#)

Rubens Exhibition at the Prado

From 10th April to 5th August the Prado Museum in Madrid is running an exhibition on Rubens together with the Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum of Rotterdam. It comprises more than 70 oil sketches by the painter... [Read more](#)

Chagall, Lissitzky and Malevich at the Pompidou Centre

Until 16th July the Pompidou Centre in Paris is running an exhibition entitled "Chagall, Lissitzky, Malevich - the Russian Avant-Gard in Vitebsk (1918-1922)". Visitors will be able to admire new fewer than 150 pieces of work and documents... [Read more](#)

Museum Weeks in the Netherlands

Until 15th April 450 museums can be visited in the Netherlands on the occasion "Museumweek". These museums are offering various activities, guided tours but also unique exhibitions... [Read more](#)

Cambridge Literary Festival

From 13th to 15th April the town of Cambridge is celebrating a literary festival, with a mix of poetry, politics, fiction, finance, history, comedy and many other themes. The line up will include many modern authors, thinkers and orators... [Read more](#)

Agenda :

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"Agriculture and Fisheries" Council

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Plenary session of the European Parliament

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The Robert Schuman Foundation, created in 1991 and acknowledged by State decree in 1992, is the main French research centre on Europe. It develops research on the European Union and its policies and promotes the content of these in France, Europe and abroad. It encourages, enriches and stimulates European debate thanks to its research, publications and the organisation of conferences. The Foundation is presided over by Mr. Jean-Dominique Giuliani.

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