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The Letter in PDF format

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## From the G20 in Osaka to the G7 in Biarritz: where is Europe going?

Author: Jean-Paul Betbèze



After the G20 summit in Osaka of 28th and 29th June, which avoided crisis, the G7 will take place from 24th to 26th August in Biarritz, and will face two major issues: inequality and climate change. According to Jean-Paul Betbèze this implies finding out how democracies can provide a response to illiberalism and issues of our time.

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**Front page!** :

**And yet it moves!**



In his editorial the appointment of the future leaders of the common institutions has taken place in a more than honourable manner deems the Foundation's Chairman Jean-Dominique Giuliani. When their posts are confirmed, Ursula von der Leyen as head of the Commission, Christine Lagarde to lead the European Central Bank, these women will embody the perfection of Europe in the international arena... [Read more](#)

**Elections** :

**The right wing opposition wins the elections in Greece**



The party New Democracy won the absolute majority in Parliament (Vouli) during the general election on 7th July. With 39.85% of the vote and 158 seats out of 300, it drew ahead of the radical left coalition SYRIZA led by outgoing Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras which won 31.53% of the vote and 86 seats. New Democracy leader Kyriakos Mitsitakis, will become Prime Minister. Turnout totalled 57.92%... [Read more](#)

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## Foundation :

### European Elections: a site to understand the new Parliament



The new European Parliament, elected on 23rd-26th May, met for the first time on 2nd July. Its new president was David Sassoli, and his bureau (14 Vice-Presidents and 5 Quaestors). Our dedicated website provides details of the names of the 7 political groups of the 751 MEPs who will sit until 2024, the name of all presidents and vice-presidents of the political groups, and all news on installation of the new parliamentary committees and the election of the presidency of the European Commission... [Read more](#)

### The Grand Turning Point - The European 21st Century



Contrary to tradition, in the "Grand Turning Point", published by the Ecole de Guerre, Jean-Dominique Giuliani shows that the EU has the means to rise to the new challenges of the 21st century. Europe has succeeded way beyond the hopes and expectations of the Founding Fathers. It can still succeed in guaranteeing its place to be amongst the three greatest world powers by the end of the century... [Read more](#)

### Permanent Atlas of the European Union



After the vote, and for a better understanding of the Union and what it does, the Foundation suggests you read the "Permanent Atlas of the European Union" a book that gives a complete overview of the Union, the euro zone and each of its Member States and their overseas territories. It is available in print version from the Foundation's website, in bookshops and in digital version. It is up-dated on a permanent basis... [Read more](#)

### Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2019



In this year of the renewal of the European Institutions, the "Schuman Report on the State of the Union 2019" is necessary more than ever before to understand the state of the Union and its chances of winning greater independence and weight on the international stage, thanks to the dependencies it will create amongst its Member States. The Report includes contributions from top experts and contains 33 original maps that summarise the main European challenges and a unique set of commented statistics. Order your copy now!.. [Read more](#)

### Debate Christine Lagarde and Wolfgang Schäuble



On 18th July 2014 Christine Lagarde, the IMF General Director who has just been put forward for the presidency of the European Central Bank, took part in a conference organised by the Robert Schuman Foundation in Paris together with Wolfgang Schäuble, the then German Finance Minister and at present the leader of the Bundestag and member of the Foundation's Board. The discussion is available in video form; and the transcript of Christine Lagarde's intervention on the IMF site... [Read more](#)

## European Council :

### Appointments that respect parity



On 2nd July Europe's leaders put forward the name of two women to lead two of the Union's main institutions: German Defence Minister, Ursula von der Leyen for the Commission and Frenchwoman Christine Lagarde to head the European Central Bank. The present Belgian Prime Minister, Charles Michel, was appointed to head the European Council. As for the post of High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security, this post will go to the Spanish Foreign Minister, Josep Borrell. The European Parliament will vote on the candidature of Ursula von der Leyen on 16th July. Regarding Christine Lagarde, the European Council is to consult with European Parliament and the ECB's Board of Councillors. Josep Borrell is to be confirmed after his audience with the Parliament... [Read more](#)

## Commission :

### No excessive deficit procedure against Italy

On 3rd July the Commission announced that it was no longer



recommending the launch of an excessive deficit procedure against Italy for the non-respect of the debt criteria. This decision follows the adoption of the Italian budget 2019, which plans for a public deficit which will not rise beyond 2.04% of the GDP. It is therefore due to fall in line overall with the Stability and Growth Pact. The government first announced in March that there would be a deficit of 2.4%, which encouraged the Commission to hint at the launch of a procedure... [Read more](#)

#### Transfer of portfolio of Commissioners Ansip and Cretu



On 3rd July the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker decided to transfer temporarily the portfolio of Andrus Ansip, Commissioner for the Digital Single Market and of Corina Cretu, Commissioner for regional policy over to the Vice-President of the Commission Maroš Šefčovič and to Commissioner Johannes Hahn. A. Ansip and C. Cretu have relinquished their mandate as Commissioner to that they take up their seats in the European Parliament. On 8th July the Council rejected the proposal made by J-C Juncker not to replace them before the end of the present Commission's mandate on 31st October. Estonia is proposing its former Minister for the Economy Kadri Simson to replace A. Ansip, and Romania former MEP Ioan Mircea Pașcu to replace C. Crețu... [Read more](#)

#### Parliament :

##### David Sassoli, elected President



On 3rd July MEPs elected David Sassoli (S&D, IT) President of the European Parliament for a two and a half year mandate until January 2022. He won 345 votes out of 667 cast in the second round. A member of the Italian Democratic Party and European Socialists and Democrats group, D. Sassoli has had a seat in Parliament since 2009. Parliament also elected 14 Vice-Presidents and 5 questors... [Read more](#)

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#### Council :

##### Informal meeting of competitiveness ministers



Meeting on 4th July European Competitiveness Ministers discussed research and innovation policies and the Horizon Europe Programme. They concluded that the European Research and Innovation Policy should be fully integrated into the European Growth Agenda. Ministers welcomed the appointment by the Commission on 4th July of the committees of the Horizon Europe missions. This programme will frame European research and will have a budget of 100 billion € over the period 2021-2027. Ministers also discussed the transition over to a carbon neutral economy ahead of the "Competitiveness Councils" of September and November 2019... [Read more](#)

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##### Conclusions on sustainable development goals



On 8th July the Council adopted its conclusions following the publication of the first joint report on the sustainable goals set by the United Nations. The Council stresses that the EU and the Member States have made specific efforts to achieve the goals set in terms of extreme poverty and the fight to counter inequality. They also reviewed the promotion of peace, security and stability and support the fight to counter climate change... [Read more](#)

##### Conclusions of the "Employment, Social Policy, Healthcare and Consumer" Council



Ministers responsible for employment and social affairs who met on 8th July debated the economy of well-being with the OECD's Secretary General Angel Gurría. They assessed and approved specific per-country recommendations addressed by the Commission regarding employment and social affairs. Finally they discussed the "A clean planet for all" strategy which aims to make Europe's economy a neutral one for the climate... [Read more](#)

##### 21st Summit with Ukraine

The 21st EU-Ukraine Summit took place in Kyiv on 8th July. It is the first since the election of the new President Volodymyr Zelensky. The European Union reasserted its attachment to the integrity of Ukrainian



sovereignty and the country's territory, and to the respect of the Minsk Agreements. Leaders discussed the Ukrainian reform programme, notably in the fight to counter corruption, but also in areas such as energy, administration and the rule of law. Finally, they discussed the implementation of the free-trade agreement, that entered into force in January 2016... [Read more](#)

### Eurogroup Conclusions



On 8th July the 19 euro zone Finance Ministers (Eurogroup) debated Croatia's desire to join the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM II) and discussed the third report on the enhanced monitoring of Greece. It announced the refusal by Greece's creditors to renegotiate the primary surplus goal of 3.5% as hoped for by the new Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. The Eurogroup addressed the budgetary situation of the euro zone and welcomed the European Council's decision to appoint Christine Lagarde as the President of the European Central Bank (ECB)... [Read more](#)

### Diplomacy :

#### Western Balkans Summit



Several leaders from countries of the EU and the Balkans, including the Polish President Andrzej Duda, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe and the High Representative Federica Mogherini, took part in a summit on the Western Balkans on 5th July in Poznan, Poland to discuss enlargement and the neighbourhood policy with the countries of the region. The meeting that is part of the Berlin Process launched in 2014 aimed to reconcile the Balkan States and support the reform process... [Read more](#)

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### Court of Justice :

#### Decision on the distribution or broadcast of incitement to hate



On 4th July the European Court of Justice delivered a decision enabling the ban by a Member State of the broadcast of content inciting hate. The case opposed the Baltic Media Alliance (BMA), a British company and the Lithuanian Radio and TV Commission, regarding the broadcast by the channel NTV Mir Lithuania. The LRTK deemed that this channel was broadcasting information inciting hostility and hate and asked the BMA to stop the broadcast. The ECJ deemed that a Member State could oblige the temporary ban on a TV channel from another Member State, on the grounds of public order such as the fight to counter incitement to hate... [Read more](#)

### Croatia :

#### Launch of procedure to join the euro



On 4th July Croatia announced that it was starting the procedure to join the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM II), then finally the euro zone. A letter of intent, signed by Finance Minister Zdravko Maric and the governor of the Croatian National Bank, was sent to the euro zone countries as well as to the European institutions, in which the plan of reform in particular is set out which is to be undertaken by Croatia to strengthen its economy and to reduce its macro-economic imbalances. The progress made by Croatia will be assessed by the ECB and the Commission in the year following its formal bid to join the euro area. Croatia hopes to integrate the ERM II in 2020 and to join the euro zone in 2023... [Read more](#)

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### Finland :

#### Start of the Presidency of the Council



The college of European commissioners travelled to Helsinki on 5th July for the launch of the Finnish Presidency of the Council which started on 1st July and end on 31st December. The President of the Commission Jean-Claude Juncker met the President of the Republic, Sauli Niinistö, Prime Minister Antti Rinne and the leader of Parliament Matti Vanhanen. He insisted on the importance of cooperation between European players, notably to achieve an agreement over the multi-annual financial framework 2021-2027... [Read more](#)

## Italy :

**Meeting between Putin and Conte**

The President of the Italian Council Giuseppe Conte hosted Russian President Vladimir Putin in Rome on 5th July. Relations between Russia and the EU, the situation in Syria, Ukraine and Libya were the focus of discussions. Mr Putin thanked Italy for its support toward the appeasement of relations between Russia and the USA... [Read more](#)

## Moldova :

**Prime Minister visits Brussels**

Moldovan Prime Minister Maia Sandu was hosted by the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk and the European Commissioner for the Neighbourhood, Johannes Hahn in Brussels on 3rd July. Since 8th June she has headed a coalition between the pro-European alliance ACUM, of which she is the leader and the Socialist Party deemed to be pro-Russian. At first contested by the Democratic Party led by Vlad Plahotniuc and the Constitutional Court, the coalition was acknowledged by the USA, Russia and the EU. Ms Sandu was asked to step up reform particularly regarding the independence of the judicial system and the fight to counter corruption... [Read more](#)

## OECD :

**Report on aid for trade**

In a joint report published on 3rd July the OECD and the WTO indicated that development aid to strengthen poor countries' trading capacities fosters the diversification of the economy and strengthens the trade capacities of developing States. Of the 88 developing States that took part in the study 47 declared that they had progressed in this direction... [Read more](#)

**Agricultural Outlook 2019-2028**

On 8th July in Rome the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation published their Agricultural Outlook 2019-2028. The report estimates the 10 year projections for agricultural and maritime production and focuses on issues linked to animal feed, bio-fuel and greenhouse gas emissions caused by agriculture... [Read more](#)

## Eurostat :

**Balance of Payments**

According to figures published by Eurostat on 5th July the EU's balance of payments recorded a surplus of 40.5 billion € in the first quarter of 2019. It lay at 40.2 billion € in the first quarter of 2018... [Read more](#)

## Studies/Reports :

**2019 report on the development of employment and the social situation in Europe**

On 4th July the Commission published its 2019 annual report on the development of employment and the social situation in Europe (ESDE). Devoted to sustainability, the report presents several means to support European growth and competitiveness whilst targeting a neutral economy for the climate. The transition to an economy like this could generate 1.2 million additional jobs by 2030, in addition to the 12 million new jobs already planned for this period. The report encourages European businesses to invest in the training of workers and to achieve quality working conditions to stimulate economic growth... [Read more](#)

## Culture :

**Modernism and Abstraction in Košice**

Until 20th October the Gallery of East Slovakia in Košice is showing the works of Czech artists Frantisek Foltyn, exploring the phenomenon of modernism and abstract art between the town and Paris... [Read more](#)



### Olafur Eliasson at the Tate Modern



From 11th July to 5th January 2020 the Tate Modern, London is running an exhibition "Olafur Eliasson. In real life". The Icelandic-Danish contemporary artist tries to raise visitors' awareness of the world surrounding them and the experiences it holds... [Read more](#)

### Earagail Art Festival



From 10th to 28th July the Earagail Art Festival is taking place in Donegal. Many concerts, cultural events and exhibitions are being organised across the Irish county... [Read more](#)

### Aix-en-Provence Festival



Until 22nd July, Aix-en-Provence lives according to the pace of its lyrical arts festival. On the programme no fewer than six operas (from Puccini to Maor, and Rihm), symphonic concerts and recitals. At the same time the festival supports young talent via seminars, workshops and laboratories, to perfect, reflect and create... [Read more](#)

### Ultra Europe Festival



From 12th to 14th July the open-air electronic music festival "Ultra Europe" in Split is taking place. Around 100 European and international artists will be performing... [Read more](#)

### Tribute paid to Italian Baroque in Potsdam



From 13th July to 6th October the Barberini Museum of Potsdam is showing 54 works of art from the Barberini and Corsini Palaces in Rome, include Caravaggio's Narcissus. The exhibition 'Baroque Pathways' is the first project by the Barberini Museum focusing on the ancient Master of Italian Baroque... [Read more](#)

### Jazz in Finland



From 12th to 20th July the 54th International Jazz Festival of Pori is taking place - it is one of the oldest music festivals in Finland hosting many renowned artists... [Read more](#)

### Van Eyck in Vienna



From 10th July to 20th October the Museum of the History of Art Vienna is running an exhibition "Als Ich Can" devoted to the work of Flemish Master Jan van Eyck. The museum is showing three of the twenty paintings van Eyck to provide greater understanding of the time of Duke Philippe III of Burgundy... [Read more](#)

### Theatre of the Spanish Golden Age



The classical theatre festival of Almagro in Spain will be taking place until 28th July and offers around one hundred shows celebrating the historical legacy of the theatre of the Spanish Golden Age. The event is also a place for cultural venues and exhibitions... [Read more](#)

## Agenda :



8th July 2019  
Brussels  
Eurogroup Meeting  
Kyiv  
EU-Ukraine Summit



9th July 2019  
Brussels  
"Economic and Financial Affairs" Council



11th-12th July 2019  
Helsinki  
Informal meeting of environment ministers



15th July 2019  
Brussels  
"Agriculture and Fisheries" Council  
Brussels  
"Foreign Affairs" Council

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