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Public development aid must refocus on agriculture and education in Africa

Author: Louis Caudron



The European Union, the main provider of official development aid together with its Member States, has created a new Instrument for Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation, with a budget of €79.5 billion for the period 2021-2027. In Africa, it should focus more on agriculture and training, particularly for young people, which is a prerequisite for future development. It could also support industrialization, strengthen research or support local authorities engaged in international cooperation actions and, finally, include military spending.

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Front page! :

Europe: 2021, German Year



The regional and federal elections in Germany this year will have an impact on the development of the Union's common policies. Yet Germany is often more "national" than some of its partners and less European than in the past, Jean-Dominique Giuliani points out. Many questions arise, in particular about the link that Angela Merkel's successor will want to maintain with France... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

Migration and Asylum: what can Europe do?



On 25 February, in partnership with the Institut Catholique de Paris, the Foundation organized a videoconference on the theme of migration and asylum in Europe with Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President of the Commission, Fabienne Keller, Member of the European Parliament, Fabrice Leggeri, Executive Director of Frontex. You can watch the debate in full... [Read more](#)

Europe and Women: progress and next steps



On the occasion of International Women's Day, March 8, the Foundation invites you to a videoconference on the situation of women in Europe, the latest progress made and remaining challenges. The speakers will be Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, member of the High Council for Equality between Women and Men, Special Advisor to the Foundation, Member of the European Parliament (2007-2019), and Karen Vandekerckhove, Head of Unit for Gender Equality at the European Commission... [Read more](#)

Table of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



While France is reconfining Nice and Dunkirk over the weekends, Italy has announced new restrictions in Lombardy, Piedmont and Marche until Easter. Germany has imposed a negative test to enter its territory from the Moselle. The Foundation offers a summary of the health measures in place and travel conditions throughout Europe. An indispensable, regularly updated resource for you to understand the situation... [Read more](#)

Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress



On February 25, the Union extended its sanctions for one year against those responsible for the electoral fraud in Belarus during the presidential elections of August 9, 2020, and for the repression against demonstrators, the opposition, and journalists. To follow this crisis, the Foundation offers you a chronology of events and links to European responses and initiatives... [Read more](#)

European Council :

Meeting of heads of State and government



Meeting on February 25 and 26, the 27 heads of State and government maintained restrictions on non-essential travel and called for the acceleration of vaccine licensing, production, and distribution processes. They called for global multilateral cooperation to address future health emergencies. They also discussed security and defence issues, recalling their desire to increase the Union's capacity to act autonomously, and their desire to strengthen the Union's responsiveness in the area of cyber security. They discussed the political and strategic nature of the Union's partnership with its southern neighbourhood... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Extension of roaming rules



On 24 February, the Commission proposed to extend for 10 years the current roaming rules for cell phones in the Union, which are due to expire in 2022. This extension will allow citizens to benefit from roaming at no extra cost when travelling and to have the same speed outside the State of subscription. The Commission is even proposing a further gradual reduction in tariffs... [Read more](#)

New strategy to adapt to climate change



On February 24, the Commission presented a strategy to deal with the consequences of climate change. Its objective is to focus more on developing adaptation measures to mitigate the negative consequences on the economy, health and well-being... [Read more](#)

Launch of the Common Provisioning Fund



In a communication published on February 26, the Commission took stock of the implementation of the common provisioning fund (FCP). The fund will combine in a single portfolio the provisions ensuring the operation of all the Union's budget guarantees... [Read more](#)

Meeting of EU-UK mixed committee



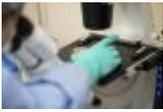
The European Union and the United Kingdom held the first meeting of the Joint Committee of the Withdrawal Agreement after the end of the transition period on February 24. Maros Sefcovic and Michael Gove welcomed the progress on the rights of British and European citizens. They reviewed the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland and

Northern Ireland and stressed the need to strengthen the dialogue with business and stakeholders. The Joint Committee approved the extension until April 30 of the provisional application of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement signed in December...
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Parliament :

Debate with Laboratory CEO's



On February 25, members of the Environment and Health (ENVI) and Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) committees organized a hearing of the CEOs and representatives of the laboratories (AstraZeneca, Moderna, CureVac, Novavax, Pfizer and Sanofi) with which the Union has signed contracts for the delivery of vaccines against Covid-19. They requested clarification on vaccine deliveries and insisted that pharmaceutical companies honour their contracts... [Read more](#)

Council :

Meeting of Research Ministers



On 25 February, the Ministers for Research discussed how the Recovery and Resilience Facility could be used to develop the European Research Area. They stressed that national plans should focus on research and innovation in the most promising areas such as green hydrogen, quantum computing and space systems. They reiterated the importance of supporting innovative SMEs... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Ministers of Industry



The ministers responsible for industry reached an agreement on 25 February on the proposal for a directive on the publication of country-by-country information on the accounting of multinational companies. They discussed national recovery plans and discussed with Commissioner Thierry Breton, the action of the working group to increase industrial production of vaccines against Covid-19... [Read more](#)

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Diplomacy :

EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership



The Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Armenia (CEPA), signed in 2017, entered into force on 1 March. It contributes to the Union's overall objective of deepening and strengthening its relations with the countries of its eastern neighbourhood... [Read more](#)

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The Council declares the Ambassador of Venezuela "persona non grata"



In response to the Venezuelan government's decision to declare the head of the Union's delegation to Venezuela "persona non grata", two days after foreign ministers decided to sanction 19 Venezuelan officials for "undermining democracy", the Council decided on February 25 to declare Venezuela's representative to the Union "persona non grata"... [Read more](#)

Court of Justice :

Spain ordered to pay 15 million € to the Commission



The European Court of Justice fined Spain €15 million and a daily penalty of €89,000 on February 25. Spain has still not transposed a directive on the protection of personal data, which it should have done by May 2018, and has not communicated any implementing measures... [Read more](#)

The Advocate General deems the Hungarian law regarding NGOs and migrants illegal



In conclusions delivered on February 25, the Advocate General of the Court of Justice of the Union considers that Hungary violated European law when in 2018 it adopted the so-called "Stop Soros" law, which criminalized the assistance of NGOs to applicants for international protection and introduced a new ground for inadmissibility of such applications. The Advocate General's opinion is not binding when the Court renders its judgment... [Read more](#)

ECB :

Priorities for recovery after the pandemic



The President of the European Central Bank, Christine Lagarde, presented her institution's priorities for climate, social and economic resilience in a speech at the European Parliamentary Week on 22 February. She stressed that the pandemic is not over and that this requires adapted policies. She also stressed the importance of making good use of the NextGenerationEU recovery plan... [Read more](#)

Court of Auditors :

Report on the Union's actions to improve digital skills



In a report on the Union's action to improve Europeans' basic e-skills, the European Court of Auditors identified a number of challenges to be met in order to achieve the objectives set, including allocating adequate funding to improve e-skills and ensuring effective monitoring of projects for the period 2021-2027 in order to assess the results of the actions...

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Germany :

Annual report for research and innovation



On February 24, the German Expert Committee for Research and Innovation presented its annual report recommending that the government align its future R&I policy with priorities such as sustainability goals, technology development, artificial intelligence, hydrogen and quantum technology. Chancellor Angela Merkel said that digital and climate action are the two major challenges for the future... [Read more](#)

France :

Launch of SNLE 3rd Generation submarine programme



On February 19, the French Minister of the Armed Forces, Florence Parly, announced the launch of the programme of four third generation nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SNLE 3G)... [Read more](#)

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Italy :

Meeting of G20 Finance Ministers



At the G20 Finance Ministers' meeting on February 26, it was decided that the economic support plans developed by the States will be maintained as long as the pandemic requires it. The United States also removed the main obstacle to the adoption of an international agreement on the taxation of digital giants... [Read more](#)

Armenia :

Crisis between the Prime Minister and the Army



On 25 February, the Armenian Chiefs of Staff demanded in a press release the resignation of Prime Minister Nikol Pachinian, denouncing his conduct of the foreign policy in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh. N.Pachinian called this declaration a "coup d'état" and ordered the dismissal of the Chief of Staff. He then led a procession declaring that "the army cannot participate in the political process". A counter-demonstration was organized by the opposition, calling for the resignation of N. Pachinian. On 27 February, Armenian President Armen Sarkissian declared the dismissal of the Chief of Staff unconstitutional... [Read more](#)

Georgia :

New Prime Minister and Demonstrations



Irakli Garibashvili of the Georgian Dream Party was sworn in as Prime Minister by the Parliament on February 22. He succeeds Guiorgui Gakharia, who resigned on February 18 in protest against a court decision to place political opponent Nika Melia in pre-trial detention, and announced on February 23 the arrest of N. Melia. Melia's supporters demonstrated in Tbilisi to protest the arrest and call for early elections. Visiting the country on March 1, European Council President Charles Michel took part in a meeting

between the Prime Minister and the opposition and gave them until March 16, the date of a meeting of the EU-Georgia Association Council, to move towards a political solution... [Read more](#)

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UN :

Debate on climate change



On February 23, the UN Security Council held a debate on the link between climate change and threats to international peace and security. UN Climate released its first synthesis report of national action plans on 26 February. To limit the global temperature increase to 1.5°C, global emissions must be reduced by 45% by 2030 compared to 2010 levels. The report encourages the States to step up their efforts and achieve strong transformations, notably through post-COVID-19 recovery plans, in order to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement... [Read more](#)

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Eurostat :

Inflation rising



Euro-zone annual inflation was 0.9%, compared with -0.3% in December, and 1.2%, compared with 0.3% in December for the Union, according to figures released by Eurostat on February 23rd. The countries with the lowest rates were Greece (-2.4%), Slovenia (-0.9%) and Cyprus (-0.8%), and the countries with the highest rates were Poland (3.6%), Hungary (2.9%) and the Czech Republic (2.2%)... [Read more](#)

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Studies/Reports :

Military balance in 2021



On February 25, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) published its report on the military balance in 2021, devoted to defence spending and tensions between countries. The report points out that international tensions remained high in 2020, particularly in Libya, Yemen and Nagorno-Karabakh, and that these tensions resulted in an increase in defence spending of 3.9% in 2020... [Read more](#)

Report on abusive financial arrangements



In a report published on February 25, the OECD presented measures to tackle specialized intermediaries who engage in tax evasion. The report states that these financial transactions have a significant impact on economic growth and public confidence. It stresses the need for concerted national and international action to combat them and describes recommended counter-strategies to deter these professionals from assisting in tax and business crime... [Read more](#)

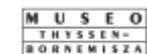
Culture :

The Ladies of Art in Milan



The Palazzo Reale in Milan presents "The Ladies of Art. Stories of women in the 16th and 17th centuries" from March 3 to July 27. This exhibition offers an insight into the history and art of 34 women artists through more than 130 works... [Read more](#)

Landscapes in Madrid



The Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid is hosting an exhibition by the artist Alberto Reguera until May 9, in tribute to the 17th century Dutch landscape painter Aert van der Neer. The paintings explore the effects of light at dusk and play with the dimensions of the painting, which the viewer can observe from different points of view... [Read more](#)

Ingeborg Strobl in Vienna



On March 6 the exhibition "Having Lived", a retrospective devoted to the contemporary artist Ingeborg Strobl, opens at the Mumok in Vienna. The exhibition presents the first drawings and works on ceramics that marked the beginning of the artist's career... [Read more](#)

3D exhibition for the colour blue



Until March 31, the Victoria Miro Gallery in London is offering the online exhibition "The Sky was Blue the Sea was Blue and the Boy was Blue", presented as part of the London Collective, an initiative of more than 20 galleries to present virtual 3D exhibitions to the public during the lockdown. The exhibition focuses on the work of 19 artists who use blue not only as a colour, but also as an essential part of the meaning and interpretation of the work, or to suggest a particular mood or atmosphere... [Read more](#)

Winter Journeys to Le Havre



The site of the André Malraux Museum of Modern Art (MuMa) in Le Havre is offering visitors " Winter Voyages " until April 18, a 360-degree stroll through its collections on the theme of winter landscapes, with works by Marquet, Dufy, Monet or Pissarro... [Read more](#)

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The art and life of Edvard Munch



The Munch Museum in Oslo is presenting a digital exhibition dedicated to the Norwegian Expressionist artist Edvard Munch. Through this virtual tour and other fun activities for children, the museum allows visitors to explore the history of his life and art. Also, the museum offers the exhibition "The experimental self" in which it offers the opportunity to discover the artist through another art form, photography... [Read more](#)

World Press Photo in Poland



Until March 21, the Opole Contemporary Art Gallery offers visitors the opportunity to discover the World Press Photo Exhibition 2020 as it passes through Poland. This event presents press photos selected from the 63rd annual World Press Photo competition, as well as the winning productions from the 10th annual digital storytelling competition... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



2nd March 2021

Videoconference

Meeting of Trade Ministers

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