

Tuesday 9th March 2021

issue 926

The Letter in PDF format

The Foundation on



and



The foundation application available on [Appstore](#) and [Google Play](#)

— I support the Robert Schuman Foundation —

Almost 200 years ago, on May 5, 1821, Napoleon Bonaparte died on the island of Saint-Helena. The General, First Consul and then Emperor, left a deep mark on the history of France and Europe. On the occasion of this bicentenary, the Foundation is offering weekly a series of books, documentaries and various resources to help you discover and deepen your understanding of this personality and the influence he had on us.

Women's Europe

Author: Ramona Bloj



Even though Europe is the continent of women, political, economic and social inequalities remain significant and have been accentuated by the pandemic. While the Commission has presented in 2020 a strategy for equality between men and women, this equality should be a criterion in the evaluation of national recovery plans.

[Read more](#)

Contents

Foundation : Future/Europe - History/Europe - Health/Europe - Belarus
Commission : Women - Budget/Rules - Energy/Consumption - Handicap - Social rights - Dock/Dues
Parliament : EPP/FIDESZ - Catalonia/Immunity
Council : Trade - Cohesion - Taxation
Diplomacy : Sanctions/Russia - Ukraine/Sanctions - USA/Trade
Court of Justice : UK/Pollution
UK : Northern/Ireland
Vatican : Pope/Iraq
Albania : EU/Negotiation
Council of Europe : Violence/Women - Austria
ECHR : Hungary/Migration
Studies/Reports : Equality - Women
Culture : Awards/Berlinale - Exhibition/Luxembourg - Exhibition/Warsaw - Exhibition/Naples - Exhibition/Madrid - e-Photo/Paris - e-Poetry
Napoleon's Bicentenary : Napoleon/Europe - Napoleon/Europe

[Agenda](#) | [Other issues](#) | [Contact](#)

Foundation :

Europe of urgency, Europe of hope



On 18 and 19 March, the National Assembly's European Affairs Committee, in partnership with the Robert Schuman Foundation and the Jacques Delors Institute, is organizing a seminar that will provide an opportunity to debate central themes for the European Union and answer questions crucial to its future. The Foundation's Chairman, Jean-Dominique Giuliani, will moderate a round table entitled "Defending Europe? The limits of pacifism, the limits of Atlanticism"; the Director General, Pascale Joannin, will lead the round table on "Is Europe geopolitically marginalized?"; the Chairman of the Scientific Council, Alain Lamassoure, will speak on budgetary democracy and Sabine Thillaye, Chair of the European Affairs Committee of the National Assembly and member of the Board of Directors, will speak on the involvement of national parliaments... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

Alain Lamassoure, Chairman of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe

Alain Lamassoure, Chairman of the Foundation's Scientific Committee, was elected Chairman of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe, a working group set up



within the Council of Europe to facilitate the exchange of good practice and mutual learning on the ways in which history is taught in the participating countries... [Read more](#)

Table of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



While all European countries are trying to speed up the vaccination campaign, health measures remain in place: France, Italy and Poland have adopted regional restrictions to contain variants; Germany and Belgium have presented plans for gradual relaxation according to the health situation. The Foundation offers a summary of the health measures in place and travel conditions across Europe. An indispensable, regularly updated resource for a better understanding of the situation... [Read more](#)

Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress



On March 5, Lithuania rejected a request from the Belarusian regime to extradite the opposition leader Svetlana Tikhanovskaya. On March 3, the Union condemned the continued violations of fundamental rights after the conviction of a journalist and a doctor who had revealed information about the death of an opponent in November. To follow this crisis, the Foundation offers you a chronology of events and links to European responses and initiatives... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Strategy to strengthen gender equality



On 4 March, the Commission presented a proposal on pay transparency to ensure that women and men receive equal pay for equal work. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) set up a portal on March 5 to monitor the strategy for gender equality by 2025. On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Commission announced the forthcoming launch of an awareness-raising campaign on gender equality and the presentation by the end of the year of a proposal to combat violence against women. On 8 March, Eurostat recalled that women represent only one third of the members of parliaments and governments in the Union and that they earn on average 14.1% less than men... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#) | [Other link](#) | [Other link](#)

New budgetary policy guidelines



On 3 March, the Commission presented its general guidelines for the conduct of budgetary policy to help Member States prepare their stability and convergence programmes by April. It suggests continued strong budgetary support to national economies and stresses the need for flexible policies in the face of the health situation. It advocates the upkeep of the general opt-out clause from budgetary obligations in 2022, and in May will initiate dialogue with Member States on whether the clause should be deactivated or maintained in 2023... [Read more](#)

New energy labels



To help European consumers reduce their energy bills and carbon footprint, a new version of the widely recognized EU energy label has been applicable in all stores and online retailers since March 1. The new labels cover four product categories: refrigerators and freezers, dishwashers, washing machines and TVs (and other external monitors). New labels for light bulbs and lamps with fixed light sources will arrive on September 1, with more products to follow in the coming years... [Read more](#)

Strategy for the protection of handicapped people



On March 3, the Commission presented its strategy for the rights of people with disabilities for the period 2021-2030. Better European coordination should be provided by an online platform on disability that will link national authorities, disabled people's organisations and the Commission... [Read more](#)

Action plan for social rights



On March 4, the Commission presented an action plan for the European social rights pillar, which aims to actively and effectively support employment in the aftermath of the Covid-19 crisis, with three objectives: employment for 78% of people aged 20-64, participation in training activities for at least 60% of adults, and reducing the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by at least 15 million... [Read more](#)



Dock dues: special tax regime for the outermost regions



On March 3, the Commission adopted a proposal to renew the Community framework for dock dues, a tax on imported products specific to the French overseas regions. This proposal, eagerly awaited by local authorities, will have to be validated by the Member States. It aims to renew this tax regime specific to Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte and Reunion until 2027... [Read more](#)



Parliament :

FIDESZ leaves the EPP group



The European People's Party announced on March 3 that the party FIDESZ of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban is subject to an exclusion procedure, which will be examined as soon as the health situation allows the EPP' Political Assembly to meet. Earlier in the day, Viktor Orban had announced that the 12 elected FIDESZ members would leave the EPP group in the European Parliament "with immediate effect" after the latter voted new internal rules of procedure facilitating the suspension or expulsion of an entire delegation... [Read more](#)



Lifting of immunity of the three Catalan separatist MEPs



On March 8, Parliament voted to lift the immunity of three of its members, Catalan separatists Carles Puigdemont, Antoni Comin and Clara Ponsati, who are being prosecuted by the Spanish courts for their role in the referendum on Catalonia's independence in 2017. This decision paves the way for a new examination of extradition requests issued by Spain in Belgium, which is home to C. Puigdemont and A. Comin and in Scotland, where C. Ponsati lives... [Read more](#)



Council :

Meeting of Trade Ministers



On March 2, trade ministers discussed the trade policy communication presented by the Commission on February 18, reiterating its commitment to free trade and multilateralism. Ministers welcomed the update of European trade policy, which aims to be open, sustainable and assertive in the context of economic recovery. The pursuit of all these objectives will require a stronger engagement with the Union's global partners and a more assertive stance in defending the Union's interests and values... [Read more](#)



The Council approves the new cohesion rules



On 3 March, the Council approved the rules that will regulate the cohesion policy, with a budget of €330 billion for the period 2021-2027. The measures aim to cut red tape and ensure more efficient use of resources. The Cohesion Policy has 5 main objectives for the next 7 years: a more competitive and smarter Europe; a greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy and resilient Europe; a more connected Europe; a more social and inclusive Europe implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights; a Europe closer to citizens... [Read more](#)



Tax transparency: position on the exchange of information between countries



On March 3, the Council adopted its position on the proposal for a directive on the country-by-country publication of tax information by multinationals, in order to enhance tax transparency in the Union. The directive would apply to multinational or autonomous enterprises with a total consolidated turnover exceeding €750 million for the last two consecutive financial years. The Council and Parliament will now negotiate a final text... [Read more](#)



Diplomacy :

Sanctions against four Russian officials for the infringement of human rights



On March 2, for the first time under the new comprehensive sanctions regime, the Council imposed restrictive measures against four Russian officials for their role in the arrest and conviction of Alexei Navalny, as well as for human rights violations, accompanied by widespread repression of freedom of assembly and opinion in Russia. The restrictive measures consist of a travel ban and an assets freeze... [Read more](#)

Embezzlement of funds in Ukraine: the EU extends its sanctions



The Council decided on March 4 to extend by one year the assets freeze in force since March 2014 against the 7 persons responsible for misappropriation of public funds and abuse of power in Ukraine... [Read more](#)

Agreement with the USA on Customs Duties and Agriculture



Commission Chair Ursula von der Leyen and U.S. President Joe Biden agreed on March 5 to suspend additional reciprocal tariffs imposed as a result of trade disputes over government support for Boeing and Airbus. The suspension is scheduled for four months, initially to try to resolve the dispute. On March 8, the Union and the United States concluded negotiations to adjust the Union's agricultural quotas within the WTO after the withdrawal of the United Kingdom. After two years of negotiations, the agreements cover tens of quotas and billions of euros in trade, particularly for beef, poultry, dairy products, fruit and vegetables and wine... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#) | [Other link](#)

Court of Justice :

The UK condemned for its level of pollution



In a March 4 ruling, the European Court of Justice ruled that the United Kingdom had failed to meet its obligations under a 2008 directive by "systematically and persistently" exceeding limit levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in the air in 16 urban areas. The UK government failed to implement the necessary measures while the country was still part of the Union... [Read more](#)

UK :

Protocol on Northern Ireland under challenge



On March 3, the British government announced the extension until October 1, instead of the end of March, of exemptions from border controls at the Northern Irish borders on goods coming from Great Britain. Maros Sefcovic, Vice President of the European Commission and Co-Chairman of the EU-UK Joint Committee, considered this "unilateral decision" to be a violation of the Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland included in the UK withdrawal agreement... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

Vatican :

The Pope visits Iraq



Pope Francis paid an official visit to Iraq from March 5-7. He met Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the first meeting in history between a pontiff and the highest authority in the Shiite Arab world. Throughout his visit, the Pope insisted on the fate of the Christians of Iraq, for whom he asked that they be able to "live in peace and security" and enjoy "all constitutional rights". At a Mass celebrated in Erbil, he called on them "not to be discouraged"... [Read more](#)

Albania :

EU-Albania Stabilisation and Association Council



At the 11th meeting of the Stabilization and Association Council with Albania, held on March 1, the European Union underlined Albania's progress while recalling the rules to be followed. The Council discussed the health situation, after the Union mobilized €3.3 billion to help Albania cope with the consequences of the pandemic... [Read more](#)

Council of Europe :

10th anniversary of the Istanbul Convention



The Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was signed 10 years ago. Progress has been made but the Covid-19-related lockdowns have led to an increase in domestic violence. Council of Europe Secretary General Marija Pejcinovic Buric and German Minister for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth Franziska Giffey, whose country is currently chairing the Committee of Ministers, are calling for ratification of the Convention by the Council of Europe's 47 member states. Only 34 have so far done so... [Read more](#)

"Lack" of action by Austria to counter corruption



In a report published on March 1, the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) noted that Austria has only responded satisfactorily to two of the 19 anti-corruption recommendations made in 2017. It "regrets the continued lack of progress" and requested Austria to submit a report on the status of implementation of the recommendations by September 30... [Read more](#)

ECHR :

Hungary condemned for abuse of a migrant family



On March 2, the European Court of Human Rights condemned Hungary for inhuman or degrading treatment for depriving the father of an asylum-seeking family of food, and for violating the family's right to liberty and security by keeping them in a transit zone... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

2021 report on gender equality in the Union



On March 5, the Commission published its annual report on equality between women and men in the Union, which shows that the pandemic has had a negative impact on women. In particular, inequalities in the labour market have increased and Member States have recorded an increase in domestic violence... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

2021 report on gender equality in the businesses



On March 4, Equileap published the 2021 edition of the Gender Equality Barometer in the largest companies. This report focuses on 3,702 companies, in 23 countries and according to 19 different criteria. The report also takes stock of the consequences of the health crisis on gender inequalities. France ranks first in the classification, distinguished by a greater feminization in the boards of directors of its companies...

[Read more](#)

Culture :

Awards of the 71st Berlinale



The Golden Bear of the 71st Berlin International Film Festival, held online, was awarded on March 5 to "Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn" by Romanian director Radu Jude. Hungarian director Dénes Nagy won the jury prize for the film "Natural Light". German actress Maren Eggert was awarded the Silver Bear for Best Leading Role in the film "I'm Your Man"... [Read more](#)

William Kentridge at the Mudam

MUDAM The Mudam Museum in Luxembourg is showing an exhibition dedicated to the South African artist William Kentridge until August 30. The exhibition presents his drawings, sculptures, sound and video works for stage and opera. The artist addresses themes related to history, time, language and sound through the prism of his native South Africa... [Read more](#)

Henryk Streng Exhibition



The Museum of Modern Art "on the Vistula" in Warsaw is presenting an exhibition until May 9 about the artist Marek Wlodarski, born Henryk Streng. This figure of Polish Jewish modernism developed an original vision influenced by his life under two totalitarian systems, Nazism and Stalinism, and the experience of the Shoah... [Read more](#)

Giulio Paolini in Naples

alfonsoartiacco

The Alfonso Artiaco Gallery in Naples is hosting an exhibition by Giulio Paolini until April 24. The exhibition includes paintings and several unpublished collages inspired by art history, antiquity and mythology... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#)

Photographs by Lluís Casals in Madrid

MUSEO SOROLLA

The Sorolla Museum in Madrid is hosting the temporary exhibition "Poetics of a House. Photographs by Lluís Casals", an opportunity to discover 46 photographs by the Catalan architect and photographer Lluís Casals reflecting the intimate dimension of the artist and his family... [Read more](#)

On-line European Photography Festival



For its 11th edition, Circulation(s), a festival of European youth photography, is being hosted by the Centquatre cultural centre in Paris, but will be held online from March 13 to May 2. The site features a guided video tour of the photographs displayed in the cultural centre, as well as interviews with artists, live performances, and e-readings of portfolios... [Read more](#)

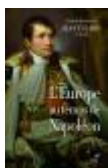
StAnza Poetry Festival in Scotland



The StAnza poetry festival, held in the Scottish university town of St Andrews, is running until March 14th mainly online. The event aims to promote poetry by bringing it to the public through readings of poems or writing workshops... [Read more](#)

Napoleon's Bicentenary :

Europe in the time of Napoleon



L'Europe au temps de Napoléon (Europe in the time of Napoleon), a collective work directed by Jean Tulard, paints a picture of the political, economic and cultural mutation engendered by the Emperor's dream of unifying Europe. Eight specialists offer a look at the Napoleonic conquest as seen from London, Warsaw, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Rome, Geneva, Vienna and Moscow... [Read more](#)

Napoleon and Europe



The theme of Napoleon and Europe has been the focus of many historical works in several countries. In France, the book "Napoleon and Europe" coordinated by the Chairman of the 'Fondation Napoléon', Thierry Lentz, compiles the contributions of 29 specialists from a symposium organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the 'Fondation Napoléon' in November 2004. In the United Kingdom, Philip G. Dwyer's Napoleon and Europe looks at Napoleonic power in France and the Empire. In Germany, Thomas Schuler proposes a journey in the footsteps of Napoleon across Europe in "Auf Napoleons Spuren". In Spain, Rafael Zurita Aldeguer gives a review of Europe at the time of Napoleon. In Poland, the Morska Academy in Szczecin evokes Europe in the time of Napoleon... [Read more](#)

[Other link](#) | [Other link](#)

Agenda :



8-11 March 2021

Brussels
Plenary Session European Parliament



11 March 2021

Videoconference
Meeting of Justice Ministers
Frankfurt
Meeting of Council of Governors of the European Central Bank

12
Mar
12 March 2021
Videoconference
Meeting of Home Affairs Ministers

14
Mar
14 March 2021
Election in the Länder of Baden-Württemberg and Rhine-Palatinate

15
Mar
15 March 2021
Videoconference
Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Council
Videoconference
Eurogroup Meeting
Videoconference
Immigration Ministers' Meeting

The Letter is also available in:



I love the Robert Schuman Foundation's Letter

The Letter's Editorial Team :

Stefanie Buzmaniuk, Helen Levy ;
Thomas Hinzelin, Mathieu Moiroud, Anne-Célia Cordier,
Arthur Allier, Eléonore de Saint Sernin
Editor-in-chief: Eric Maurice
Publishing Director: Pascale Joannin
N° ISSN : 2729-6482

Contact/Suggestions
info@robert-schuman.eu

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.

You no longer wish to receive our letters. {LINK}