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The Letter in PDF format

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"A European political and public space has emerged from the crises"

Author: Luuk Van Middelaar



The pandemic was an existential moment for the European Union, in which the system organised to negotiate at length successfully responded to calls for solidarity from the people, says Luuk van Middelaar. However, he warns that it will no longer be self-evident for Europeans to have security, prosperity and freedom all at the same time.

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Foundation :

Economic recovery and political cohesion for the future of the Union



As part of the preparations for the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the Conference on the future of Europe, the Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO) in Zagreb is organising a video conference on 12th November on the initiative of the Robert Schuman Foundation on how the European Union can act to regain its economic impetus and strengthen the European identity of its citizens. Register before the 5th November... [Read more](#)

European Recovery Plans: figures and priorities



In response to the economic and social consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, the EU has set up a €672.5 billion recovery fund, called the Recovery and Resilience Facility, for Member States in the form of grants and loans. 22 plans have so far been approved by the Commission and Council, and 19 countries have already received the planned pre-financing, including Estonia, Finland and Romania this week. The Commission has yet to approve the Hungarian and Polish plans due to infringements of the rule of law. The Foundation provides you with an interactive map of the plans country by country, to know the amounts, the timetables and the priorities... [Read more](#)

Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress

At a meeting at the UN on 25 October, the European Union and its member states condemned the escalation of human rights violations in Belarus and supported the work to bring those responsible for the regime to international justice. To follow the crisis triggered by the rigged presidential election of August 2020 and the repression of the democratic opposition, the Foundation offers you a chronology of events and links to European responses and initiatives.... [Read more](#)

Map of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



Since 1 November, the health pass is mandatory in bars and restaurants, cultural venues and sports halls in Belgium, in bars and restaurants in the Czech Republic, and in bars, restaurants and hotels in Luxembourg. In Slovakia, bars, hotels and restaurants are closed in areas with high infection rates. In view of the health situation, a lockdown is still in force in Latvia and a partial curfew in Romania. To follow the developments in the situation and to see what measures are in place in the different EU Member States, the Foundation offers you a complete map of the measures in place. An indispensable, regularly updated resource... [Read more](#)

The Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2021



You have not yet had the opportunity to read the 2021 edition of the "Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union", a reference work published by Marie B. ? You can still do so. It is available in hard copy in bookshops and on our website, and in digital format. You can order it here... [Read more](#)

The Permanent Atlas of the European Union is available



The fifth edition of the unique Permanent Atlas of the European Union provides a comprehensive and easily accessible overview of the European Union, the euro area and each of its 27 Member States. It is available in hard copy on our website and in bookshops, or in digital form... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Reform of banking regulations



On 27 October, the Commission tabled a reform of EU banking rules to make banks more resilient to future crises. It amends existing EU capital rules to make them more resilient to risk. The reform also aims to make banks more transparent in their management of ESG (environmental, social and governance) risks and to harmonise EU rules for supervising banks' activities... [Read more](#)

New limits for certain chemicals in waste



On 28 October, the Commission tabled proposals for stricter limits for 8 substances or groups of substances in waste, to prevent them from entering the economic cycle again... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

Legal action against the Commission regarding the rule of law mechanism



On 29 October, the European Parliament launched proceedings before the Court of Justice of the European Union against the Commission for its failure to apply the Regulation on budgetary conditionality with regard to the rule of law. The Commission, which is waiting for the Court of Justice to rule on the legality of the regulation, has responded by saying that it is "preparing to send letters to the Member States concerned where required"... [Read more](#)

Council :

Meeting of Economy and Finance Ministers



Economy and Finance Ministers exchanged views via video conference on 28 October on the Estonian, Finnish and Romanian recovery plans, which were formally adopted by written procedure after the meeting... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Energy Ministers



Energy ministers met on 26 October to discuss rising energy prices. They are now awaiting reports from the Commission on the gas and electricity markets before trying to agree on concrete measures in December... [Read more](#)

Interim agreement on the European Medicines Agency



The Council and Parliament reached a provisional agreement on 28 October on strengthening the role of the European Medicines Agency. In particular, they agreed on the need to increase its funding and to ensure better data protection... [Read more](#)

Approval of climate aid to developing countries



On 29 October, the Council approved the EU's €23.39 billion pledge to help developing countries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

Agreement with the USA on steel and aluminium



The European Union and the United States reached an agreement on 31 October on the suspension of US tariffs on European steel and aluminium, and of EU retaliatory measures on certain US imports. Both sides committed to working together to find a global agreement on decarbonising steel production and trade... [Read more](#)

Association Council with Moldova



At the sixth meeting of the EU-Moldova Association Council on 28 October, both sides renewed their commitment to strengthening their political and economic ties. The EU stressed the need for Moldova to introduce more measures to support the rule of law and fight corruption. The EU also pledged to help Moldova deal with the consequences of the energy crisis and the pandemic... [Read more](#)

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Meeting with the African Union



At a meeting in Kigali on 25-26 October, EU and AU foreign ministers agreed on greater cooperation between the two regions to ensure fair access to Covid-19 vaccines. They also discussed the importance of access to education, especially for girls, and investment in sustainable industries. The EU confirmed its commitment to maintaining a dialogue to improve democracy and governance in Africa... [Read more](#)

Meeting of the EU military



The Member States' Chiefs of Defence Staff, meeting at a Military Committee on 25 and 26 October, discussed the Union's defence initiatives. The strategic compass and cooperation between the European Union and NATO were at the centre of the discussions. They also recalled the need to provide Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions with more human and logistical resources... [Read more](#)

E3+US leaders' statement on Iran.



In a joint statement issued on 30 October, the leaders of France, Germany, the UK and the US reiterated their determination to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and called on the new Iranian

President, Ebrahim Raissi, to make "a good faith effort" to find a negotiated solution...
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Court of Justice :

Poland sentenced to a daily penalty payment



On 27 October, the European Court of Justice ordered Poland to pay a penalty payment of €1 million per day until it suspends the powers of the disciplinary chamber of the Supreme Court. The Court of Justice ordered the suspension after ruling that the disciplinary chamber was neither an independent nor an impartial tribunal... [Read more](#)

ECB :

Monetary policy statement



The European Central Bank confirmed on 28 October its intention to reduce the pace of net asset purchases under the Covid-19 programme, which is due to end in March 2022. It also kept interest rates unchanged. ECB President Christine Lagarde reiterated that the economic situation remains stable despite the current rise in inflation... [Read more](#)

European Agencies :

Global operation against the Dark Web



Europol and Eurojust announced on 26 October that they had coordinated an operation to seize illicit goods from the dark web, resulting in the arrest of 150 suspects in 9 countries around the world. Police forces seized cash, virtual currency as well as drugs and firearms, amounting to €26.7 million... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Bärbel Bas elected as President of the Bundestage



The constituent sitting of the 20th legislature of the Bundestag took place on 26 October. Bärbel Bas, (SPD), was elected to the presidency of the lower house by 576 votes to 90. She succeeds Wolfgang Schäuble (CDU) and is the third woman to hold this position. She is assisted by 5 vice-presidents, 4 of whom are women... [Read more](#)

France :

Meeting between Joe Biden and Emmanuel Macron



The French and American presidents, Emmanuel Macron and Joe Biden, met in Rome on 29 October. Joe Biden acknowledged that the establishment of the AUKUS alliance at the expense of France in September was "clumsy". In a joint statement, the two presidents pledged to cooperate on issues such as the fight against the pandemic, economic recovery, climate, new technologies and arms control. They stressed the complementarity between "a stronger and more operational European defence" and NATO... [Read more](#)

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Retaliation threats against British fishermen



The French government has announced retaliatory measures against the UK if it continues to refuse to grant French fishermen all the licences provided for in the agreement signed in 2020 by the Europeans and the British. These measures consist in the systematic security checks of British fishing vessels, reinforced health and customs controls, as well as a ban on landings. Discussions between the two countries are scheduled for 4 November. On 28 October, two British fishing vessels were fined in French waters... [Read more](#)

Italy :

G20 Summit



Meeting in Rome on 30-31 October, G20 leaders endorsed the agreement reached in early October at the OECD on global corporate taxation. In the Rome Declaration, they also committed to working collectively to find a climate agreement. They discussed international cooperation to fight the pandemic and revive the global economy, as well as trade, new technologies and migration... [Read more](#)

Poland :

Meeting between Emmanuel Macron and Andrzej Duda



French President Emmanuel Macron hosted his Polish counterpart Andrzej Duda at the Élysée Palace on 27 October. He expressed his concerns about the independence of the judiciary in Poland and wished for "the continuation of in-depth dialogue" to resolve the problem. The two presidents reiterated the importance of using nuclear energy to meet climate objectives. Paris also welcomed the Polish decision to join Task Force Takuba, the European military cooperation in the Sahel... [Read more](#)

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Portugal :

Rejection of the Budget



On 27 October, the Portuguese parliament rejected the 2022 budget bill championed by the minority government of Prime Minister António Costa. His former far-left allies added their votes to those of the opposition. The President of the Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, may announce early parliamentary elections following the consultations he is currently conducting with the parties... [Read more](#)

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UK :

Budget and the cost of Brexit



Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak presented the draft budget for 2022 on 27 October, which includes an increase in spending of 3.8% per year until 2024-2025. According to the forecasts of the public budgetary body OBR, the impact of the pandemic on gross domestic product, estimated at 2% in the long term, will be less than that of Brexit, estimated at 4%... [Read more](#)

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North Macedonia :

Resignation of the Prime Minister



Following an electoral defeat of his party (SDSM) in the second round of municipal elections on 31 October, Prime Minister Zoran Zaev announced his resignation... [Read more](#)

UN :

Climate Conference in Glasgow



COP 26, the UN climate change conference, opened on 1 November in Glasgow. In his speech, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres called on participants to "save humanity". The UK government announced a first agreement to end deforestation by 2030... [Read more](#)

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OECD :

Report on International Migration 2021



In its International Migration Outlook 2021, published on 28 October, the OECD highlights the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on migration: a reduction of one-third in migration flows, changes in migration policies, and the end of the decade-long improvement in the labour market situation of immigrants. The report also includes an analysis of the fiscal impact of immigration in OECD countries since the mid-2000s and an analysis of the causes and consequences of the residential concentration of immigrants.. [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Report on the State of the Energy Union



In its annual report on the state of the energy union, published on 26 October, the Commission notes that greenhouse gas emissions will be almost 10% lower in 2020 than in 2019, and 31% lower than in 1990, the base year for the EU's long-term climate targets. It also points out that for the first time more energy was produced in the EU from renewable sources than from fossil fuels... [Read more](#)

Gender Equality Index 2021



The European Union scored 68 out of 100 points in the gender equality index published on 28 October by the European Institute for Gender Equality. Sweden is the best performing country with a score of 83.9, followed by Denmark and Finland. The index focuses on the link between gender inequality and public health. In particular, it highlights that the over-representation of women in the medical sector has led to increased stress and psychological distress among women during the Covid-19 pandemic... [Read more](#)

Report on the Union's trade policy



In its annual report on the implementation and enforcement of trade agreements, published on 27 October, the Commission shows the effectiveness of the various trade measures introduced since 2020. It stresses that the elimination of trade barriers, the fight against unfair trade practices and measures to promote sustainable development have helped increase EU exports by €5.4 billion in 2020. Agreements to remove trade barriers in 22 countries have helped EU companies export an extra €4bn... [Read more](#)

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Culture :

The Age of Dürer in the Belvedere



Until 30 January 2022, the Belvedere Museum in Vienna is presenting the exhibition "The Age of Dürer, Austria at the Gate of the Renaissance" with works by Lucas Cranach the Elder, Albrecht Altdorfer, Jörg Breu - some of the great names found among the contemporaries of Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528).. [Read more](#)

Belgian Modernism at the Kunsthalle Munich



Until 6 March 2022, the Kunsthalle in Munich is presenting an exhibition on Belgian modernism from Ensor to Magritte from 1860 to 1960. Around 130 paintings, graphics and sculptures illustrate how the art of this period constantly pushes the boundaries of imagination and reality. It focuses on simple everyday reality as well as on the mysteries and enigmas beyond the visible world... [Read more](#)

Lodz Avant-Garde



Until February 27 2022, the Sztuki Museum in Lodz is presenting an exhibition on the avant-garde, a space for experimenting with art and its reception, creation, the exchange of ideas, critical reflection and the exploration of different ways of seeing the world... [Read more](#)

Signac at the Orsay Museum



A self-taught artist, Paul Signac (1863-1935) was also a collector and learned to paint by observing the works of the Impressionists. He was particularly fond of paintings by Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, Gustave Caillebotte and Paul Cézanne, all of whom feature in his collection. The Musée d'Orsay will be showing this incredible collection until 13 February 2022... [Read more](#)

European Culture of the 18th Century



Until 20 March 2022, the Tate Britain is hosting an exhibition dedicated to the depiction of changes in European society and culture during the 18th century. For the first time, this exhibition brings together works by the British painter William Hogarth with those of his peers, including Francesco Guardi in Venice, Chardin in Paris and Cornelis Troost in Amsterdam, to suggest parallels between these works by European artists... [Read more](#)

Festival of Light in Brussels



The Brussels Light Festival will run until 6 November. Art installations and light shows are on display throughout the city, including around the Royal Park and in the European Quarter... [Read more](#)

Valencia and religious art of the 17th century



Until 6 February 2022, the Valencia Museum of Fine Arts is hosting the exhibition "Believing through the eyes", which highlights Valencian religious painting of the 17th century. 44 works illustrate the particular way of painting and sculpting specific to the Catholic territories of the Mediterranean basin... [Read more](#)

The Lady and the Unicorn in Toulouse



The Lady and the Unicorn, a famous medieval tapestry and masterpiece of the Musée de Cluny, will be in Toulouse until 16 January 2022. During the renovation of its Parisian setting, the work, which consists of 6 tapestries, will join Les Abattoirs - Frac Occitanie in Toulouse for an exceptional exhibition that will bring it together with works by contemporary artists for a renewed perspective... [Read more](#)

Napoleon's Bicentenary :

The Night in Fontainebleau



Philippe Bulinge's play "Napoléon, La nuit de Fontainebleau", which recounts the moment in April 1814 when the Emperor tried to commit suicide, is on show at the Théâtre de l'Archipel, in Paris, from 4 November to 15 January. It will also be performed on 7 November at the Centre Cormier in Marseille, and on 13 November at the Théâtre municipal de La-Roche-sur-Yon... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



8 November 2021

Brussels
Eurogroup Meeting



9 November

Brussels
"Economic and Financial Affairs" Council

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