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"Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a moment of truth for Europe"

Author: Elina Valtonen



The responses to the Russian aggression have shown that the European Union can definitely speak the language of power, and these events are a key moment to take further steps towards integration", says Finnish MP Elina Valtonen. She believes that Ukrainians are fighting to defend their freedom and their lives, but also to defend democracy and the shared values of the European Union.

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Front page! :

When autocrats fascinate democrats



In his latest editorial, Jean-Dominique Giuliani is astonished by the fascination that Vladimir Putin still arouses among some in Europe...

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Elections :

Viktor Orban still the favourite in the general elections in Hungary



On 3 April, 7.8 million Hungarians are being called to the polls to renew the 199 members of the National Assembly. According to the latest opinion poll conducted by the Taktikaiszavazas Institute at the end of February, the Alliance of Young Democrats-Civic Union (FIDESZ-MPSZ)

led by Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who has been in power for twelve years, is expected to win 115 seats. United for Hungary (UH), an alliance of 6 opposition parties led by Peter Marki-Zay, candidate for Prime Minister, is estimated to win 83 seats. However, about a quarter of the registered voters said they had not decided whether or for whom to vote... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

Unreservedly European



In his book, Jean-Dominique Giuliani, President of the Foundation, addresses his fellow citizens who must refuse to accept lies about the European Union while contributing relentlessly to its improvement. This book, published by Marie B, is available in paper format on the Foundation's website and in bookshops. Order your copy here... [Read more](#)

The Foundation's Publications on Ukraine



Since its inception the Robert Schuman Foundation has been very much involved in Ukraine, organising numerous events and training sessions, including in Crimea before 2014. The Foundation offers you a compilation of the studies that it has devoted over the last few years to this neighbouring country of the Union... [Read more](#)

Europe, the women's continent



On the occasion of the International Women's Rights Day, on 8 March, the Foundation offers you its updated tables and a map on the presence of women in the governments and parliaments of the Union. You can also watch the debate organised by the Foundation in March 2021... [Read more](#)

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Belarus: chronology of a revolution in progress



On 2 March, the EU adopted new trade sanctions and sanctions against 22 high-ranking officials because of Belarus' participation in the Russian aggression against Ukraine. It also suspended cross-border cooperation programmes. The exiled opponent Svetlana Tikhanovskaya launched an anti-war movement the same day and called on her fellow citizens to mobilise. To follow the latest developments in 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... [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 20 countries have received the planned pre-financing. In a report published on 1 March, the Commission notes that the total amount allocated to these plans is €445 billion and that implementation of the plans is on track. The Foundation offers you an interactive map of the plans country by country, to know the amounts, the timetables and the priorities... [Read more](#)

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Map of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



In Belgium, as of 7 March, the health pass is no longer required and masks must only be worn on public transport and in healthcare institutions. In France, the vaccination pass will be suspended from 14 March and the mask will only have to be worn on public transport. In Ireland, the mask has not been mandatory since 28 February. To follow developments in the situation and find out what measures are in place in the EU Member States, the Foundation offers you a complete map of the measures in place. An indispensable, regularly updated resource... [Read more](#)

The Permanent Atlas of the European Union is available



For a better understanding of Europe in 2022, the Permanent Atlas of the European Union, a unique work, offers a complete and easy-to-access view of the European Union, the euro zone and each of its 27 Member States, with numerous maps. It is available in digital format... [Read more](#)

Extension of European Sanctions against Russia and Belarus



The Council introduced new restrictive measures against Russia which were published in the EU's Official Journal. It extended its exclusion from the SWIFT system to seven new banks and banned the sale or transfer of euro-denominated banknotes in Russia. It banned investments or participation in projects co-financed by the Russian Direct Investment Fund. In addition, it suspended the broadcasting of the Russian state media Sputnik and RT in the EU... [Read more](#)

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Temporary protection for Ukrainians fleeing the war



The Council decided on 4 March to activate the "temporary protection" scheme for Ukrainians fleeing the war, allowing them to obtain a residence permit and giving them access to education, the labour market and medical assistance on EU territory for an initial period of one year. The aim of this protection is to coordinate cooperation between Member States, particularly with regard to reception capacities. Finally, the proposal aims to facilitate border management, strengthen controls and allow humanitarian aid to reach conflict zones more quickly... [Read more](#)

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Meeting of Agriculture Ministers



On 2 March, the Agriculture Ministers discussed the consequences of the Ukrainian crisis on agricultural markets. They confirmed their wish to activate the European crisis preparedness and response mechanism and all the necessary tools to guarantee production capacity and to deal with future crises that threaten food security. They also envisaged the implementation of exceptional measures of the common market organisation in order to protect the most affected sectors... [Read more](#)

European Parliament Resolution



In a resolution adopted on 1 March by 637 votes to 13 with 36 abstentions, MEPs call for the strengthening of sanctions against Russia, the introduction of restrictions on Russian gas and oil imports, and the extension of the SWIFT exclusion to Belarus. They also ask Member States to provide Ukraine with additional defence weapons and call on the institutions to quickly grant Ukraine candidate status. During the debate before the vote, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky had asked the EU to "prove" that the EU stands by Ukraine... [Read more](#)

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Support of European Leaders



In a televised address on 2 March, French President Emmanuel Macron announced the preparation of a resilience plan in France to deal with the economic consequences, and called for Europe to become "a power, more independent, more sovereign". German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said in an interview on 4 March that everything must be done to stop the war, through sanctions and diplomacy. Polish President Andrzej Duda said on 2 March that Russian attacks on civilians "bear the hallmarks of genocide" and would not go unpunished. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez announced before the Parliament on 2 March a national plan to deal with the economic and social consequences of the war... [Read more](#)

Economy and Finance



On 2 March, the Ministers of Economy and Finance discussed the implementation of sanctions against Russia and their consequences for the EU. They decided to introduce additional measures to prevent the circumvention of sanctions, including through the use of cryptocurrencies. The Ministers supported increased financial support to Ukraine and further coordination with multilateral development banks, including the IMF, EBRD and EIB... [Read more](#)

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Suspension of cooperation programmes with Russia and Belarus



On 4 March, the Commission suspended cross-border and transnational cooperation with Russia and Belarus under the European Neighbourhood Instrument and the Baltic Interreg programme. The Commission is also suspending cooperation with Russia in the field of research and innovation by stopping payments to Russian entities participating in the

Horizon Europe programme. In addition, the Commission is seeking to strengthen cooperation between Member States and Ukraine, notably through Ukraine's participation in the Interreg Danube programme... [Read more](#)

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Georgia and Moldova candidates for Union membership



On 3 March, Moldovan President Maia Sandu and Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili officially submitted their countries' applications to join the European Union, a consequence of the Russian invasion of Ukraine which is causing great concern in both states... [Read more](#)

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UN General Assembly Resolution



On 2 March, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution by 141 votes to 5 with 35 abstentions "deploring in the strongest terms" the Russian aggression against Ukraine and demanding that Russia withdraw "immediately, completely and unconditionally". On 4 March, the UN Human Rights Council decided to establish an independent international commission of enquiry to investigate allegations of human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law in Ukraine... [Read more](#)

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Launch of inquiry by the International Criminal Court



On 2 March, 39 states, including members of the European Union, referred the situation in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court. The ICC Prosecutor, Karim Khan, decided to immediately open active investigations to gather evidence of possible war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide... [Read more](#)

NATO Meeting



The foreign ministers of NATO member states, Finland and Sweden, and EU High Representative Josep Borrell reviewed the deployment of the NATO Response Force on 4 March. They reiterated the need to support partners at risk of the war in Ukraine spreading, including Georgia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. They stressed the long-term effects of Russian aggression on Euro-Atlantic security, and the need to maintain diplomatic channels to avoid further escalation... [Read more](#)

IAEA concern about the security of nuclear power stations



The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is regularly updating its monitoring of the situation in Ukraine regarding nuclear safety, security and safeguards. On 6 March it expressed its "deep concern" after the fire at the Zaporizhia plant and the takeover of the site by Russian troops... [Read more](#)

Declaration by the G7 Foreign Affairs Ministers



On 4 March, the G7 Foreign Ministers condemned the Russian aggression and attacks on civilians. They called on Russia to withdraw its troops and open humanitarian corridors. They assured that they would continue to impose "tough new sanctions" against Russia and its Belarusian ally... [Read more](#)

Visa and Mastercard suspend all of their activities in Russia



On 5 March, the card companies Visa and Mastercard announced the total suspension of their activities in Russia. Transactions made with Visa or Mastercard cards, as well as transactions issued on Russian territory with foreign cards, will be gradually blocked. In 2020, these two companies processed 74% of financial transactions in Russia... [Read more](#)

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Commission :

Guidelines for the budgetary conditionality mechanism



On 2 March, the Commission proposed guidelines to clarify the budgetary conditionality regime linked to the rule of law. The suspension of EU funds will have to be justified and proportionate and the link between the violation of the rule of law and the budget will

have to be clear. The Commission stresses that payments due to final beneficiaries will have to be ensured by the Member States... [Read more](#)

Guidelines regarding the budgetary policy and growth



In its budgetary guidelines presented on 2 March, the Commission recommends that Member States undertake gradual fiscal consolidation, starting in 2023 for the most indebted, but stresses the risk of too abrupt a consolidation. Ahead of the meeting of heads of state and government on 10-11 March, the Commission made proposals to achieve sustainable growth through fiscal and budgetary reforms and private and public investment. It calls for more investment in digital and defence technologies to tackle future crises... [Read more](#)

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Council :

Meeting of Justice and Interior Ministers



On 3 March, the interior ministers held the first meeting of the "Schengen Council" and adopted its general orientation on the reform of the Schengen evaluation and control mechanism. They gave the green light to the opening of negotiations on an international treaty on pandemics and took stock of the state of play on migration and asylum. On 4 March, the justice ministers discussed the progress of negotiations to ensure better access to electronic evidence in the fight against crime. They exchanged views on the fight against racism and anti-Semitism and the possible establishment of a European statute for lawyers. It was agreed that Russia's violation of international law justifies the choice of some Member States not to process requests for cooperation in criminal matters from Russia and Belarus... [Read more](#)

Meeting of Ministers responsible for cohesion



At a meeting on 2 March, the ministers in charge of cohesion reiterated their wish to take into account the demographic, climate and digital transitions in the development of future cohesion policy, notably through innovation. The ministers also committed to providing more local solutions to ensure that the diversity of problems specific to each territory is better taken into account... [Read more](#)

Informal meeting of European Affairs Ministers



On 3 and 4 March, the European Affairs Ministers discussed the conflict in Ukraine and the mobilisation of the Union. They stressed the need to adopt strategic energy and defence policies to reduce the Union's dependence and ensure its resilience. They also discussed the preservation of the rule of law through the financial conditionality mechanism and the introduction of new measures to protect media freedom and pluralism. Furthermore, the Ministers recalled the need for each institution to follow up on the citizens' proposals formulated by the Conference on the Future of Europe... [Read more](#)

Adoption of the directive for the protection of workers against chemical substances



On 3 March, the Council definitively adopted the revision of the directive designed to protect workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogenic or mutagenic substances. The directive redefines the exposure limit values for dangerous chemicals and takes into account new substances. The aim is also to provide better training for health professionals likely to handle such substances to ensure their safety... [Read more](#)

European Agencies :

Operation against of the ill treatment of children on-line



An international investigation conducted by Europol since 2019 to combat online child abuse has identified more than 100 suspects in the European Union and protected 146 children worldwide. This investigation has identified 90,000 accounts possessing and sharing child pornography online internationally. Europol facilitated the exchange of information with the relevant national authorities... [Read more](#)

Denmark :

Referendum June 1 to join the Union's Defence Policy



On 6 March, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen proposed that Denmark should participate in the EU's defence policy, for which it has had an opt-out clause since 1992. The decision will be put to a referendum on 1 June... [Read more](#)

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France :

Official list of the 12 candidates in the Presidential election



On 7 March, the Constitutional Council published the official list of the 12 candidates for the presidential elections of 10 and 24 April. In the order determined by the drawing of lots, they are Nathalie Arthaud , Fabien Roussel, Emmanuel Macron, Jean Lassalle , Marine Le Pen, Eric Zemmour, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, Anne Hidalgo, Yannick Jadot, Valérie Pécresse, Philippe Poutou and Nicolas Dupont-Aignan... [Read more](#)

Meeting of COSAC



The Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of the Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) met in Paris on 4 and 5 March as part of the French Presidency of the European Council. The delegates discussed, among other things, economic recovery and policies, the climate transition and the Conference on the Future of Europe. In a joint declaration, they condemned the invasion of Ukraine and gave their support to the country... [Read more](#)

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Council of Europe :

Reports by the Commission against racism and intolerance (ECRI)



On 3 March, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance published its conclusions on the implementation of its 2019 priority recommendations. Finland has neither increased the resources of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal nor expanded its mandate. Despite efforts, Ireland has not addressed the problem of underspending on Traveller accommodation. The Netherlands has not changed its policy on the integration of asylum seekers, which is considered too punitive. In addition, Romania, Ireland and Slovenia still have work to do on hate crime... [Read more](#)

New strategy of children's rights



The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has adopted its new strategy on the rights of the child for the period 2022-2027. It aims to put an end to violence against children and to promote equal opportunities and social inclusion. It aims to guarantee children's rights in situations of crisis or emergency and to ensure child-friendly justice and protected access to technology... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Increase in inflation



Euro area annual inflation was 5.8% in February, up from 5.1% in January, according to Eurostat's flash estimate published on 2 March. Energy is expected to have increased the most (31.7%, compared to 28.8% in January)... [Read more](#)

Decline in unemployment



The unemployment rate is decreasing; in the Union it stood at 6.2% in January compared to 6.3% in December 2021 and in the euro area at 6.8% in January compared to 7% in December 2021 according to data published by Eurostat on 3 March... [Read more](#)

Eurobarometer :

Survey into the effects of the pandemic on women



The pandemic has had a negative impact on women's professional and personal lives according to a Eurobarometer survey published on 4 March. For 77% of the women interviewed, it has led to an increase in violence against them. The pandemic has also had a negative impact on

the income of 38% of respondents, and 41% consider that health restrictions have affected their health. In addition, women are calling for measures to address the pay gap and for stronger measures to combat sexual exploitation and physical and mental violence against women... [Read more](#)

Culture :

European Solidarity for Ukraine



Numerous cultural events are being organised across Europe in support of the Ukrainians. Most of them are concerts organised during special evenings to raise funds and to declare a symbolic opposition to the war through culture... [Read more](#)

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European Night of Ideas



As part of the European Night of Ideas, an event that has been taking place in various countries since 27 January, the Collège de France is hosting 54 young people from all EU countries on 12 March. From 8pm onwards, on site and on social networks, they will debate their proposals on the future of Europe. This year's theme is "(Re)building together"... [Read more](#)

Poetry in Scotland



StAnza, an international poetry festival hosted by the town of St Andrews, takes place from 7-13 March. Scottish poetry or poetry from elsewhere, different styles mix and mingle in iconic venues around the town, and online... [Read more](#)

Documentary Festival in Thessaloniki



The 24th Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival takes place from 10 to 20 March with a wide selection of Greek and international documentaries. The festival aims to encourage the audience to discuss current social issues... [Read more](#)

Riga Book Fair



The Latvian capital is hosting the International Book and Publishing Fair from 11 to 13 March. A real literary event in the Baltic region, the Latvian Book Fair is an opportunity to discover Latvian literature as well as the latest Baltic releases... [Read more](#)

Divine seduction in Budapest



Until 18 April, the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest presents the exhibition "Divine Seduction. Eroticism and passion in five centuries of mythological representations". Visitors can explore the great love stories of Greek mythology through 32 works by famous artists from all over Europe... [Read more](#)

Annibale Carrache's Frescoes at the Prado



From 8 March to 12 June, the Prado Museum is showing fragments of the impressive frescoes painted by Annibale Carracci for the decoration of the Herrera Chapel in the church of Santiago de los Españoles in Rome. The exhibition is complemented by a selection of the artist's drawings, engravings and books, as well as the altarpiece of the church of Santa Maria de Monserrato in Rome, also painted by Carracci... [Read more](#)

"Scribbling" at the Medici Villa



Until 22 May, the Villa Medici in Rome is presenting the exhibition "Scribbling/Scarabocchio", which explores the practice of scribbling and sketching as transgressive and experimental graphic gestures that have constantly punctuated the history of artistic creation. From the Renaissance to the contemporary period, the exhibition presents works and doodles from Leonardo da Vinci to Cy Twombly... [Read more](#)

"The Path" by Pawel Lubkowski

U-jazdowski

The Centre for Contemporary Art at Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw is presenting an exhibition by Pawel Lubkowski entitled "The Path" until 10 April. The visitor is invited to walk through a space created by the artist based on his personal experience. The exhibition explores the concept of the passage of time and the universality of individual perceptions and stories, with which everyone can identify... [Read more](#)

Exhibitions on Venice and Yves Klein at the "Carrières des Lumières"



Carrières de Lumières

The Carrières des Lumières museum in Les Baux-en-Provence has two new exhibitions open until 2 January 2023. Immersive art installations by Gianfranco Iannuzzi give the public the opportunity to walk through Venice, while an exhibition on Yves Klein immerses visitors in the artist's work and his spiritual relationship with colours... [Read more](#)

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Impressionist decor at the Orangerie



The Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris is holding an exhibition on "Impressionist Decor" until 11 July. Although Impressionism is not usually associated with the idea of decoration, many artists produced paintings, objects and ceramics with a decorative purpose. This little-known facet of the Impressionist movement is highlighted in this exhibition... [Read more](#)

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Festival of Photography in Vienna

FOTO WIEN 9 - 27 MÄRZ 2022 The Foto Wien photography festival organised by the Kunst Haus in Vienna is taking place from 9 to 27 March. 140 exhibitions and 300 art events are held throughout the Austrian capital, focusing on two themes: the place of women in photography and the role of photography in the perception of nature... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



6-7 March 2022

Montpellier

Informal Meeting of Development Ministers



7 and 8 March

Angers

Informal Meeting of Culture Ministers



7-10 March 2022

Strasbourg

Plenary Session of the European Parliament



8-9 March 2022

Nevers

Informal Meeting of Telecommunications Ministers



10-11 March 2022

Versailles

Informal Meeting of Heads of State and Government

Frankfurt

Meeting of the Council of Governors of the European Central Bank



14 March 2022

Brussels

Eurogroup Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council

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The Letter's Editorial Team :

Stefanie Buzmaniuk, Helen Levy ;
Ana Pasturel, Méline Giraud, Luna Ricci,
Justine Ducretet-Pajot, Monica Amaouche-Recchia

Editor-in-chief: Eric Maurice
Publishing Director: Pascale Joannin
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Contact/Suggestions
info@robert-schuman.eu

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