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European unilateralism as a tool for regulating international trade: a necessary evil in a collapsing multilateral system

Author: Alan Hervé



The defence of EU interests through trade policy or trade regulation instruments, such as the carbon adjustment mechanism at borders or the fight against illegal foreign subsidies, is an increasingly common practice and is proving to be a vehicle for the EU's strategic autonomy in a collapsing multilateral system and a crisis-ridden international order.

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Elections :

Victory for Labour in the Maltese general elections



The Labour Party (PL) of the outgoing head of government, Robert Abela, which has been in power for nine years, won the parliamentary elections on 26 March in Malta, with 55.11% of the vote and 38 seats. The Nationalist Party (PN), led by Bernard Grech, obtained 41.74% of the vote and 27 seats. The turnout was 85.68%, which is 6.38 points lower than in the parliamentary elections of 3 June 2017. This is the first time since 1996 that the turnout was below 90%... [Read more](#)

Foundation :

Unreservedly European



In his book, Jean-Dominique Giuliani, President of the Foundation, addresses his fellow citizens who must refuse to accept the 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 it here..... [Read more](#)

The Black Sea Greeks, a significant but highly threatened diaspora



Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, despite its historical ties with Russia, the Greek Foreign Ministry has condemned the Russian invasion. Ukraine is the only country in Europe with such a large Greek community, between 100,000 and 150,000 Greeks live in Ukraine. Who are they? Where do they live? Alexia Kefalas tells their story... [Read more](#)

What new European economic rules to ensure growth?



The Foundation is organising an event on 31 March on economic rules in a geopolitical context that is weighing on the post-pandemic recovery. This videoconference is being held as part of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Register now... [Read more](#)

Map of Health Measures and Travel Conditions in Europe



In Italy, the end of the state of health emergency and the mandatory vaccination pass is scheduled for 1 April. In response to the increase in the number of coronavirus cases in Austria, the wearing of FFP2 masks has been made compulsory again since 23 March in indoor public areas. To follow the evolution of the situation and to know the measures in place in the 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, published by Marie B Editions, is a unique work that 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 French in both paper and digital versions... [Read more](#)

Ukraine/Russia :

Conclusions of the European Council regarding the Russian military aggression against Ukraine



Meeting on 24 March, the European Council called on Russia to stop its attacks on civilians and to allow humanitarian aid into besieged towns. It called for a halt to the circumvention of sanctions and said it was ready to adopt new measures against Belarus and Russia. The 27 Heads of State and Government called on the Commission to take all necessary initiatives to facilitate the reception of refugees. They agreed to set up a solidarity trust fund in conjunction with international partners to contribute to the reconstruction of a democratic Ukraine. They also reaffirmed their support for Moldova... [Read more](#)

Volodymyr Zelensky speaks to the Parliaments



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky addressed the Japanese, Italian, French and Swedish parliaments. He called on Japan to impose a trade embargo on Russian products. In Italy, he stressed the need for stronger EU sanctions. In front of French deputies and senators he expressed his wish that French companies leave Russia. Finally, he called in the Swedish Parliament for new sanctions to be adopted, for a ban on the purchase of Russian oil and for Sweden to close its ports to Russian ships... [Read more](#)

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Emergency aid for refugees adopted by the European Parliament



On 24 March, MEPs adopted by 562 votes to 2 with 3 abstentions the Cohesion Action for Refugees in Europe (CARE) measures to redirect them to EU countries hosting those fleeing the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This could include unspent 2014-2020 cohesion policy funds and €10 billion from REACT-EU resources. By 575 votes to 4, with 3 abstentions, they extended the use of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund by one year, until mid-2024, to give Member States access to unused resources: €420 million could thus be released... [Read more](#)

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Mobilisation of Eurojust for the collation of evidence of possible war crimes

Mobilised on 24 March at the request of EU Justice Ministers, Eurojust announced the establishment of a team of investigators to gather evidence of possible war crimes and crimes against humanity in Ukraine. Eurojust will act as a relay and coordinator



between Member States' investigations and the International Criminal Court... [Read more](#)

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Resolution calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities; displaced and refugee children



The UN General Assembly adopted on 24 March by 140 votes a resolution entitled "Humanitarian consequences of the aggression against Ukraine" which "demands" from Russia an "immediate" end to the war in Ukraine. 38 countries abstained and 5 voted against. On the same day, UNICEF denounced the devastating consequences of the war in Ukraine on the child population, which has resulted in the displacement of 4.3 million children out of a total of 10 million displaced persons... [Read more](#)

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NATO Summit



At the end of an extraordinary summit of NATO leaders in Brussels on 24 March, Allies agreed on the "need to provide more support to Ukraine", to provide "equipment to help Ukraine protect itself against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats" and to establish "four new battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia", "in addition to those already present in the three Baltic countries and Poland". The leaders also decided to extend the mandate of Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg by one year, until 30 September 2023... [Read more](#)

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The ECHR re-examines the cases against Russia



On 23 March, the European Court of Human Rights announced that it would resume consideration of applications against the Russian Federation. Following Russia's exclusion from the Council of Europe on 16 March, the ECHR had suspended the examination of all applications against Moscow. The Court will continue to deliver judgments concerning Russia until 16 September 2022 and is calling on Moscow to settle its financial obligations to the Council in full.

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Meeting of Home Affairs Ministers



On 28 March, Home Affairs Ministers reiterated the need to provide financial and material support to Member States hosting Ukrainian refugees, including by mapping reception and accommodation capacities and helping them to organise transfers. They mentioned the creation of a registration platform to exchange information on beneficiaries of temporary protection and national protection statuses. All these measures are based on the 10-point action plan presented by the Commission... [Read more](#)

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Declaration by the G7



On 24 March, at the extraordinary G7 summit in Brussels, the seven leaders of the member countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States) declared their readiness to sanction Russia more severely and to take "further sanctions if necessary" against Russia for invading Ukraine... [Read more](#)

European Council :

Conclusions of the European Council



On 24 March, the 27 Heads of State and Government discussed the Russian military aggression against Ukraine in the presence of US President Joe Biden and, via video conference, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. On 25 March, they asked the Commission for proposals on new initiatives to strengthen Europe's defence industrial and technological base and thus make strategic autonomy a reality. On energy, they gave the Commission a mandate to carry out grouped gas purchases and to consider a possible cap on wholesale gas prices. They reappointed Charles Michel as President of the European Council for a new and final term of two and a half years... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Maintaining food security and strengthening food systems

On 23 March, the Commission presented actions to strengthen global food security, particularly in Ukraine and in countries dependent on cereal imports, and to support European farmers and consumers in the face of rising prices. A comprehensive mapping of risks and vulnerabilities in the EU food supply chain will be carried out and €500 million will be made available to help the producers most affected by the crisis. Finally, the Commission has proposed a new temporary autonomous framework to help farmers, fertiliser producers and the fisheries sector... [Read more](#)



Proposals to secure energy supply



On 23 March, the Commission presented a proposal setting the minimum level of gas storage for the coming winter at 80% in order to guarantee energy supply. To limit the risks of external influence, it proposes a new mandatory certification of gas storage operators. The Commission also presented options for market intervention at EU and national level on energy prices and gas storage. It is ready to create a task force for joint gas procurement at EU level and to encourage future partnerships with major global energy suppliers... [Read more](#)

State Aid: temporary framework to support the economy



On 23 March, the Commission adopted a temporary crisis framework allowing Member States to use the flexibility provided for in the state aid rules. The framework will allow Member States to grant aid of up to €400,000 to companies affected by the war in Ukraine, to support companies' cash flow through state guarantees and loans, and to compensate them for extra costs due to higher energy prices up to €2 million... [Read more](#)

New rules on information security and cyber security



On 22 March, the Commission proposed a cybersecurity regulation aimed at reducing the risk exposure of EU institutions, bodies and agencies. It is based on the creation of an inter-institutional cybersecurity council and the extension of the mandate of the Computer Emergency Response Team for EU institutions, bodies and agencies (CERT-EU). The Commission also proposed a Regulation on information security to protect exchanges between the Union institutions and bodies by setting up an inter-institutional Information Security Coordination Group... [Read more](#)

Strengthening the partnership with WHO for Africa



On 24 March, the Commission announced a strengthened partnership with the WHO to ensure access to medicines and health technologies in sub-Saharan Africa. A financial contribution of €24.5 million will support technology transfer to help local production of vaccines, strengthen demand and reinforce drug regulation. The Commission has also announced an increase in its cooperation with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights through a €14.4 million grant... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

The Canadian Prime Minister speaks to MEPs



In an address to MEPs on 23 March, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called for the unity of Member States to send more weapons and military equipment to Ukraine. He denounced "Putin's criminal invasion"... [Read more](#)

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Roaming: 10 more years without additional telephone fees



On 24 March, MEPs adopted a 10-year extension of the EU's mobile phone roaming regime by 581 votes to 2 with 5 abstentions. The scheme allows consumers to use their mobile phones when travelling in the EU at no extra cost than they already pay at home. The text must now be formally approved by the Council in order to enter into force... [Read more](#)

Greenlight for the deployment of Frontex in Moldova and macro financial aid

On 24 March, MEPs gave the green light by 543 to 34 to an agreement between the EU and Moldova on operational activities carried out by Frontex. The decision follows



the provisional application of the agreement on 17 March. The activities, including registration or border checks, will be monitored by the Frontex fundamental rights officer. On the same day, they approved macro financial assistance of €150 million to Moldova to cover part of its external financing needs... [Read more](#)

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Plenary session of the Conference on the Future of Europe



The plenary of the Conference on the Future of Europe met on 25 and 26 March in Strasbourg to discuss the proposals made by the 9 working groups in the presence of Commission Vice-President Dubravka Šuica and former Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt... [Read more](#)

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Council :

Agreement between the Council and Parliament regarding legislation governing the digital markets



The Council and the European Parliament reached an agreement on 24 March on legislation to end the abuse of dominant positions by digital giants. After several months of negotiations, a compromise was reached between the European institutions on the Digital Markets Act (DMA), which should impose a series of obligations and bans on the Gafams - Google, Apple, Meta (Facebook), Amazon and Microsoft - to curb anti-competitive practices... [Read more](#)

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Approval of the strategic compass



On 21 March, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence adopted the Strategic Compass to strengthen the European Union's security and defence capabilities. It is based on four pillars: act, invest, collaborate and secure. The aim is to improve troop mobility, strengthen civilian and military missions and establish common space and cyber defence policies. The ministers approved the formation of a force of 5,000 soldiers. In addition, the Ministers reached a political agreement on an additional €500 million under the European Peace Facility... [Read more](#)

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Meeting of Agriculture Ministers



The Ministers for Agriculture and Fisheries met on 21 March with an intervention by their Ukrainian counterpart via video conference. In the context of the war in Ukraine, they discussed the measures to be taken to guarantee food supplies in the short term and agreed on the need to strengthen the European Union's food sovereignty in the medium and long term. They also called for a transparent and rapid approval of the plans for the future CAP with more flexibility " to ensure food security in the wake of the war in Ukraine"... [Read more](#)

Diplomacy :

New framework for the transfer of personal data



The European Union and the United States announced on 25 March that they had reached an agreement in principle on a new framework for the transfer of personal data, which is crucial for the digital economy, following the invalidation of previous arrangements by the European courts, notably the "Privacy Shield" in July 2020... [Read more](#)

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Strengthening Europe's energy security



The European Union and the United States established a Joint Energy Security Working Group on 25 March to strengthen cooperation and secure energy supplies through increased volumes of liquefied natural gas (LNG) available to the EU starting this year. The agreement aims to reduce dependence on Russian fossil fuels by encouraging long-term LNG export and import contracts with the US... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Economic forecasts revised in Germany following the war in Ukraine



The war in Ukraine has put the brakes on the recovery of the German economy. According to the forecasts published by the IFO institute on 23 March, GDP growth is now between 2.2% and 3.1% for the year 2022, compared to 3.7% initially. Inflation has been revised upwards,

with prices expected to rise by 5.1% to 6.1%, instead of the 3.3% previously envisaged... [Read more](#)

Elections in Saarland



In Saarland, the SPD (Social Democratic Party) won the regional elections on 27 March with 43.5% of the vote ahead of the CDU (Christian Democratic Union), which obtained 28.5% and had governed the region since 1999... [Read more](#)

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Bulgaria :

Abolition of the "golden passport"



The Bulgarian Parliament voted on 24 March two amendments to end the practice of "golden passports", which allow citizenship of a country in exchange for large investments. However, it is still possible to acquire permanent resident status in exchange for investments. Since the invasion of Ukraine, the European Parliament has been putting pressure on Bulgaria, Cyprus and Malta over this scheme, which is highly prized by Russian oligarchs... [Read more](#)

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Greece :

Greece purchases new fighter planes and frigates from France



As part of the defence agreement ratified last October between Greece and France, Athens signed on 24 March several contracts for the acquisition of French armaments worth a total of €4 billion in the presence of Florence Parly, French Minister of the Armed Forces, and Nikos Panagiotopoulos, Greek Minister of Defence. The Greek Navy has purchased three defence and intervention frigates (FDI) from Naval Group. Dassault Aviation signed a contract for the sale of six additional Rafales. Finally, MBDA has signed two contracts to arm the frigates and Rafales.

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Hungary :

General elections in Hungary: latest polls



In the context of the Hungarian parliamentary elections on 3 April, Fidesz, the party of Prime Minister Viktor Orban, is said to be supported by 41% of the electorate, ahead of the united opposition by two points, which has 39% of voting intentions, according to a survey by the Republikon institute carried out between 16 and 18 March. 16% of citizens are still undecided... [Read more](#)

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Portugal :

Composition of the new government



On 27 March, the President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, accepted the proposal for the appointment of Secretaries of State presented by the Prime Minister, António Costa. The new government, which includes more women than men, will take office on 30 March... [Read more](#)

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Czech Republic :

Former Prime Minister Andrej Babiš charged with EU subsidy fraud



On 21 March, the Czech prosecutor's office indicted former Prime Minister Andrej Babiš in a case of EU subsidy fraud concerning his agricultural property. In 2007, he allegedly detached his farm from his holding company Agrofert so as to receive EU subsidies then reserved for SMEs. At the beginning of March, his parliamentary immunity was withdrawn to facilitate the investigation, which is still ongoing. Andrej Babiš is now facing up to 10 years in prison, although it is very likely that his sentence will be lower, as the facts date back more than 15 years... [Read more](#)

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Culture :

Standing by Ukrainians in the world of culture



Cultural events in support of Ukraine continue across Europe. In France, the Cronenberg Music School will perform a concert in solidarity with Ukraine on 2 April. In Germany, the Günter Henle Foundation and the G. Henle Publishing House are offering a benefit concert for Ukraine.

Henle publishers are offering a benefit concert on 2 April at the Tonhalle in Düsseldorf with Evgeny Kissin and Gidon Kremer. In Spain, ten artists will sing in a concert organised on 31 March by the Círculo de Bellas Artes and the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. In Switzerland, the Lucerne Festival is offering a concert on 9 April with the soloists of the Lucerne Festival Orchestra... [Read more](#)

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Thinking Pictures in Tallinn



Until 14 August, the Kumu Museum in Tallinn is hosting an exhibition of conceptual art with the aim of bringing together works from the Baltic States and Russia. However, following the recent military attack on Ukraine by the Russian Federation, the curators of the Kumu Museum have decided to leave the space reserved for Russian works empty... [Read more](#)

Domitian in Leiden



The National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden is presenting an exhibition on the Roman emperor Domitian until 22 May. Tracing his reign from 81 to 96, the exhibition highlights a forgotten golden age of the Roman Empire. Statues and reconstructions of rooms from the period remind visitors of the prosperity of Rome at that time... [Read more](#)

Karel Vaňura in Prague



The Museum of Modern Art in Prague is hosting an exhibition of works by painter and glass artist Karel Vaňura until 29 May... This 1960s artist created paintings and glass objects in an intricate and elaborate style while teaching art and design, having a significant influence on generations of artists... [Read more](#)

Monet and Rothko in Giverny



Until 3 July, the Musée des Impressionismes in Giverny is presenting a dialogue between the late works of Claude Monet and the exceptional colours of Mark Rothko's paintings. The visitor is invited to contemplate, between the intensity sought by Mark Rothko and the immediate and fleeting aspect of the paintings of the master of Impressionism... [Read more](#)

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Patrick Reel in Dublin



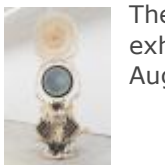
Until 1 August, Dublin Castle is hosting a retrospective exhibition entitled "A Life in Painting" featuring the works of artist Patrick Reel. This exhibition retraces the painter's creative journey over more than 60 years: portraits, landscape studies, semi-abstract compositions, sketches/.. [Read more](#)

Gauguin in Berlin



Until 10 July, the Alte Nationalgalerie in Berlin is presenting an exhibition of works by the painter Paul Gauguin that were influenced by the colonialist view of the time. The exhibition entitled "Why are you angry" contextualises these works from a historical point of view and confronts them with the positions of contemporary artists... [Read more](#)

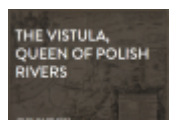
Artist, Guadalupe Maravilla in Sandvika



The Henie-Onstad art centre in Sandvika (Norway) is presenting an exhibition of Guadalupe Maravilla's work for the first time in Europe until 7 August... [Read more](#)

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The Vistula " the Queen of Polish Rivers"



From 29 March to 9 September, the Emeryk Hutten-Czapski Museum in Krakow is presenting an exhibition devoted to the Vistula River and its representation in books, maps, plans and atlases between the 16th and 19th centuries. For centuries, this river was the country's main transport route, linking the various Polish regions... [Read more](#)

Abundant Future in Cordoba

Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Córdoba

The Andalusian Centre for Contemporary Creation in Córdoba is presenting the exhibition "Abundant Future" from 1 April to 5 March 2023. The works of artists such as Olafur Eliasson, Teresa Solar and Regina de Miguel reflect on abundance and the multiplicity of worlds and invite the public to invent a society that is more respectful of its surroundings... [Read more](#)

Film Festival in Porto



From 1 to 10 April, the city of Porto is hosting the 42nd edition of the Fantasporto festival, which presents all film genres. Several film sections are offered: "Fiction Films", "Orient Express" or "Portuguese Films", as well as conferences, book presentations and exhibitions on cinema... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



28 March 2022

Brussels

"Justice and Internal Affairs" Council



29 March 2022

Brussels

Health Council



1 April 2022

EU-China Summit



3 April 2022

Hungary

General Elections



4 April 2022

Luxembourg

Eurogroup



4-5 April 2022

Luxembourg

Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council



4-7 April 2022

Strasbourg

Plenary Session of the European Parliament

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