

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016

issue 725

The Letter in PDF format

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— I support the Robert Schuman Foundation —

The Letter team wishes all of its readers a happy holiday and looks forward to seeing them all back on Tuesday 6th September.

## The Return of the Borders

Author: Michel Foucher



Geographer and diplomat Michel Foucher, member of the Robert Schuman Foundation's Scientific Committee, provides his thoughts on the return of the borders in a neighbourhood in crisis in this week's European Interview, he also comments the trend within the European Union itself whilst geopolitical dangers are on the rise.

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#### Foundation :

##### "Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2016"



The 10th issue of the "Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union 2016" is now out and available in bookshops, on the Foundation's site and in digital form. Order your copy now!.. [Read more](#)

#### Financial Crisis :

##### Long term recession forecast for Italy

On 12th July the IMF announced that Italy was starting to recover from a long term recession whilst remaining weak however. There was also a forecast of growth below 1% for 2016 and 2017... [Read more](#)



### The British Finance Minister is not planning for an emergency budget



Philip Hammond, the new British Finance Minister declared on 14th July that there would not be an emergency budget for the time being and that the government would wait for the autumn. He met the governor of the Bank of England who announced shortly afterwards that interest rates would remain at 0.5%... [Read more](#)

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### Migration :

#### Proposals to complete the reform of the European asylum system



On 13th July the Commission put forward proposals in view of completing the reform of the European asylum system. Amongst other things it is proposing the creation of a common Union wide relocation framework to strengthen legal paths of entry and to guarantee people international protection... [Read more](#)

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#### Most Europeans associate refugees with the risk of terrorism



Most Europeans believe that the influx of refugees onto the continent is increasing the risk of attacks and a high proportion are concerned about their jobs, said a survey published by Pew Research on 11th July... [Read more](#)

### Commission :

#### New step towards Capital Markets Union



On 14th July the Commission put forward a proposal in support of investments in capital-risk and social projects, under the launch of Capital Markets Union... [Read more](#)

#### New legal framework to protect personal data "Privacy Shield"



On 12th July the European Commission announced the official launch of a new legal framework to protect the personal data of European citizens that have been communicated to the American authorities - the Privacy Shield... [Read more](#)

#### Strengthening of measures taken by the Commission against Google



On 14th July the Commission adopted further measures as part of its investigation for the abuse of dominant position by Google. The two communications focus on the advantage granted by Google to its price comparison service and on the artificial limit placed on third party web sites to place advertising by Google's competitors... [Read more](#)

#### New documents published on the TTIP



On 14th July, on the occasion of the 14th round of discussions between the EU and the USA regarding their trade agreement, the Commission published a new set of documents on the ongoing negotiations.. [Read more](#)

#### European Ombudsman hopes to strengthen the rules governing former Commissioners



European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly demanded on 12th July a strengthening in the rules to manage the activity of former Commissioners. She believes that the case of José Manuel Barroso

shows that at present they do not protect "the citizens' interests"..

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#### Parliament :

##### European Parliament's Inquiry Committee on the Panama Papers



Werner Langen (EPP, DE) will chair the work of a European Parliament Inquiry Committee into tax evasion and optimisation as well as laundering. Four Vice-Chairs have also been appointed Ana Gomes (S&D, PT), Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner (ECR, FI), Fabio de Masi (GUE/NGL, DE), Eva Joly (Greens, FR)... [Read more](#)

#### Council :

##### Conclusions of the "Economic and Financial Affairs" Council



On 12th July the 28 Finance Ministers decided to trigger the sanctions mechanism against Spain and Portugal since they have not corrected their excessive deficits. They also adopted new rules regarding tax evasion by businesses and discussed the Slovakian Presidency's programme... [Read more](#)

##### Conclusions of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council



During the Agriculture Council on 18th July the 28 Ministers discussed the potential impact of on-going trade negotiations with third countries on European agriculture. In terms of the agricultural market the Commission is putting forward a third package of support measures totalling 500 million € mainly in support of the dairy sector. The Slovakian Presidency also presented its working programme and its priorities in the areas of agriculture and fisheries. .. [Read more](#)

##### Tax transparency: EU and Monaco signed a new agreement



The European Union and the Principality of Monaco signed an agreement on 12th July regarding tax transparency which will take effect as of 2018 and will lead to the automatic exchange of tax information... [Read more](#)

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##### Central African Republic: EU military training mission (EUTM RCA)



On 16th July the Council launched an EU military training mission in Central African Republic. This involves the reform of the country's security sector... [Read more](#)

#### Diplomacy :

##### Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council



On 18th July the 28 Foreign Affairs Ministers notably reasserted their determination in the fight to counter terrorism and condemned the attempted coup in Turkey; they adopted the EU's strategy regarding China for the next few years and held informal discussions with John Kerry, the USA's Secretary of State. .. [Read more](#)

##### EU-China Summit



On 12th and 13th July during the 18th EU-China Summit in Beijing European and Chinese partners addressed the importance of international cooperation and agreed to counter the worldwide migratory crisis, as well as deciding on a series of discussions on Human Rights in Brussels in 2016... [Read more](#)

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##### Asia/Europe Dialogue (ASEM)



During the 11th Asia-Europe Summit on 15th and 16th July heads of State and government as well as European and Asian institutional representatives reviewed their relations on the occasion of the 20th

anniversary of this summit and addressed the future challenges that they would have to rise to together... [Read more](#)

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**The Hague's Arbitral Tribunal declares the Beijing's claim in the South China Sea is invalid**



The Permanent Arbitral Tribunal of The Hague deemed that there was no legal base to China's claim to historic rights in the South China Sea or "regarding resources in the maritime zones within the Nine-Dash-Line..." [Read more](#)

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**Germany :**

**Publication of a White Paper on German Defence**



The German Council of Ministers adopted a new White Paper on defence whereby Germany confirms that it wants to play a role in international security once more... [Read more](#)

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**Spain :**

**Sanctions: Spanish government response to the Council and the Commission**



On 13th July the Spanish Economy Minister defended Spain's economic performance of the last few years in response to the Commission's decision, which deems that Spain and Portugal have not corrected their excessive deficit... [Read more](#)

**France :**

**French initiative in support of European Defence**



French President François Hollande announced on 13th July that a proposal to "strengthen European Defence" was going to be put forward on France's initiative... [Read more](#)

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**Europe supports France**



The terrorist attack of 14th July in Nice led to 84 deaths during Bastille Day celebrations. The French President reasserted his determination that France would counter the "terrorist plague" by stepping up its action in Syria and Iraq, as well as stepping up the number of military staff in his own country. At the same time the Presidents of the European institutions as well as many leaders in Europe and from around the world expressed their solidarity and compassion. A tribute was made to the victims on 18th July at midday... [Read more](#)

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**Ireland :**

**Meeting between Angela Merkel and Enda Kenny**



On 12th July German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her Irish counterpart Taoiseach Enda Kenny called on British Prime Minister Theresa May for a rapid clarification of her intentions regarding leaving the EU and the type of relations she foresees in the future... [Read more](#)

**UK :**

**A new British government**



Theresa May was officially appointed Prime Minister by Queen Elizabeth on 13th July. She unveiled her new cabinet and government which includes Boris Johnson as Foreign Secretary and David Davis who will be responsible for the matters pertaining to leaving the European Union... [Read more](#)

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**Status of European citizens living in the UK**

The British government published an official press release on 11th July



regarding the status of European citizens living in the UK and British citizens living abroad... [Read more](#)

#### Meeting between Theresa May and Nicola Sturgeon



British Prime Minister Theresa May travelled to Scotland on 15th July to meet Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon. Theresa May declared that she would not trigger article 50 as long as Scotland's position in the negotiations with the EU had not been settled. Nicola Sturgeon repeated that she wanted to remain in the EU and had not given up the idea of holding a Scottish referendum... [Read more](#)

#### Nicola Sturgeon meets the Chief Minister of Gibraltar



Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon travelled to London on 14th July to meet Fabian Picardo, her Gibraltar counterpart, to discuss maintaining their links with the European Union... [Read more](#)

#### Turkey :

##### Attempted coup d'Etat



Following the attempted coup d'Etat on 15th July by part of the Turkish army against Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan more than 6000 arrests were undertaken. There has been discussion of re-introducing the death penalty. The EU and the USA are calling on Turkey to respect the rule of law... [Read more](#)

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#### Ukraine :

##### Ukraine and Canada sign a free trade agreement



Ukraine and Canada signed a historic free-trade agreement on 11th July that is designed to strengthen trade relations between the two countries... [Read more](#)

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#### ECHR :

##### France criticised by the ECHR regarding the detention of children



On 12th July France was sanctioned by the ECHR for its non-respect of the conditions surrounding the detention of children... [Read more](#)

#### NATO :

##### NATO-Russia Council



On 13th July a NATO-Russia Council meeting took place during which several issues were addressed: the Minsk Agreements, transparency and reduction of risks and the situation in Afghanistan... [Read more](#)

#### Eurostat :

##### EU annual inflation rate up to 0% and euro zone 0.1%



The EU's annual inflation rate lay at 0% in June 2016 against -0.1% in May. That of the euro zone lay at 0.1% in June 2016 against -0.1% in May. One year ago it lay at 0.2%... [Read more](#)

##### Trade surpluses up for the euro zone and the EU

According to a Eurostat press release on 15th July the EU recorded a trade surplus of 6.4 billion € in May as well as extra-EU exports of



142.7 billion €. The euro zone recorded a goods trade surplus of 24.6 billion € and extra-zone exports of 167.4 billion €... [Read more](#)

### EU-China: goods trade deficit but surplus in services



As part of the EU/China Summit on 12th and 13th July Eurostat published EU-China trade data on 12th July. In 2015 the EU recorded a goods trade deficit of 180.1 billion € but a services trade surplus of 10.3 billion €... [Read more](#)

### Studies/Reports :

#### Innovation: the Union is moving forward, with Sweden still in the lead in the EU



The 2016 results regarding innovation published on 14th July by the Commission indicate that the EU has improved its results on a world scale... [Read more](#)

#### The European Union - the world's leading agro-food exporter



On 14th July the Commission published the 2015 report on agro-food trade. The latter confirms the EU's position as the world's leader in this sector with exports to a total of 129 billion € and a trade surplus of 16 billion € in 2015... [Read more](#)

#### ECB studies on the competitiveness of the euro zone



On 15th July the ECB published two studies on the role of price-competitiveness and cost-competitiveness in intra and extra euro zone trade, and on the way competitiveness shocks affect the macro-economic performances of countries in the zone... [Read more](#)

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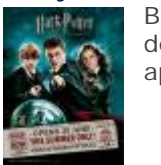
### Culture :

#### Exhibition "Modern Japan" at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam



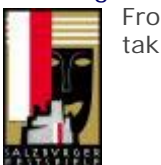
Until 11th September the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam is hosting a collection of objects on Modern Japan (kimonos, pictures and engravings) that are from the Elise Wessels Collection... [Read more](#)

#### Harry Potter in Brussels



Brussels is hosting the "Harry Potter" exhibition until 11th September. It is designed for fans who want to explore the magic universe of the sorcerer's apprentice... [Read more](#)

#### Salzburg Festival



From 22nd July to 31st August the lyrical art festival of Salzburg will be taking place featuring concerts, theatre plays, as well as operas... [Read more](#)

#### Jazz Festival of Marciac



The town of Marciac will be hosting the 38th Jazz Festival from 29th July to 15th August... [Read more](#)

### Bayreuth Festival



On 25th July the lyrical art festival of Bayreuth was inaugurated and will go on to 28th August... [Read more](#)

### FNAC Live Festival



From 20th to 23rd July the FNAC Live Festival is putting on 31 free concerts in Paris... [Read more](#)

### Summer Festival Brussels



From 5th to 14th August Brussels will be hosting the Brussels Summer Festival which will host dozens of artists... [Read more](#)

### Arenal Sound Festival



From 2nd to 7th August the rock, pop and electronic music festival, Arenal Sound is taking place in Burriana in Spain... [Read more](#)

### Sziget Festival - Budapest



From 10th to 17th August the Sziget Festival will be taking place bringing together numerous artists of all genres... [Read more](#)

### 50th the holy music festival of Chaise-Dieu



The holy music festival of Chaise-Dieu will be taking place from 16th to 28th August... [Read more](#)

### Agenda :



18th July  
Brussels  
"Foreign Affairs" Council  
Brussels  
"Agriculture Fisheries" Council



21st July  
Frankfurt  
ECB Council of Governors

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