

# EPFMA

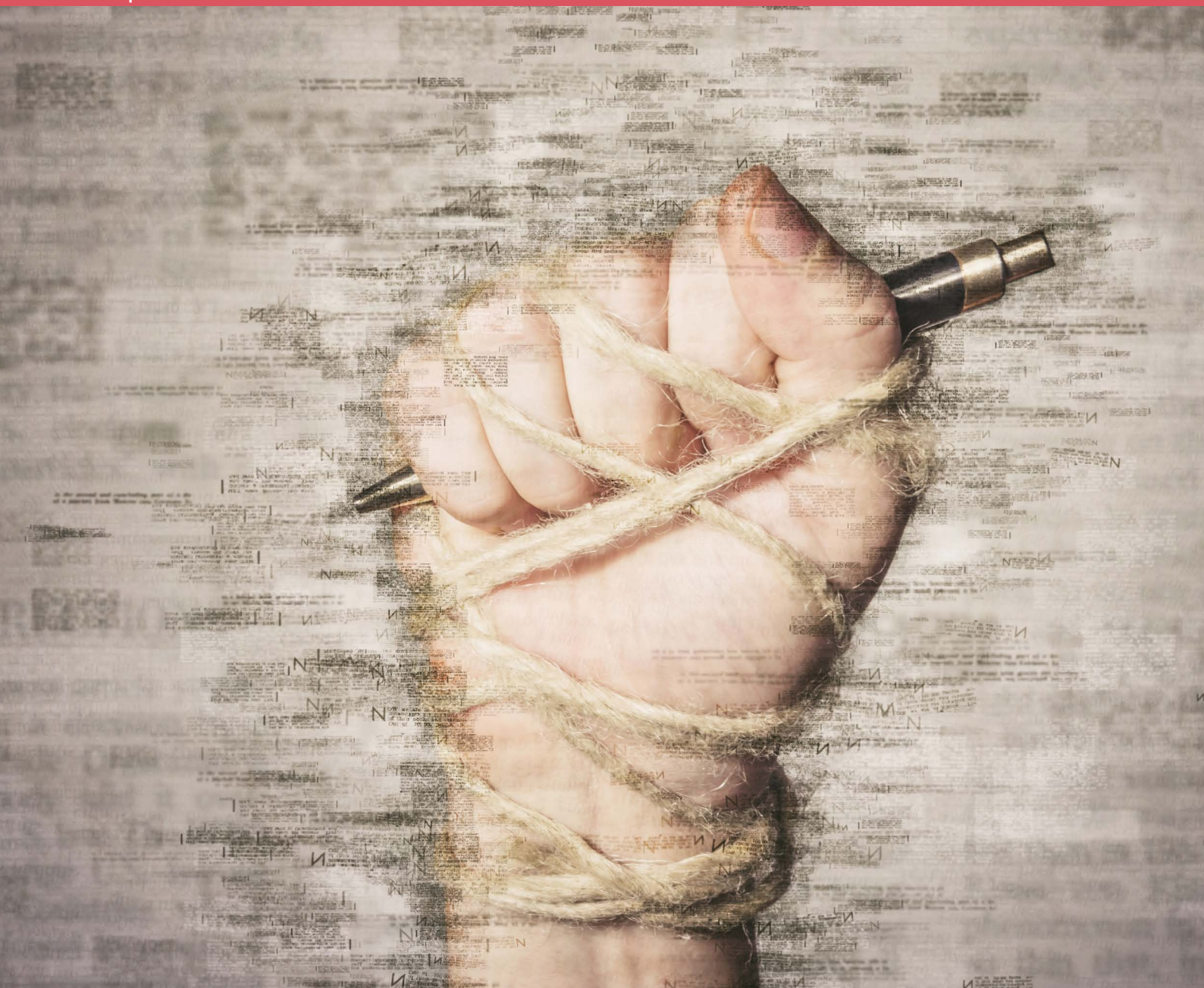
## Bulletin



80 · September 2022

European Parliament Former Members Association

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## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editorial Board would like to thank all those members who took the time to contribute to this issue of the FMA Bulletin. We would like to draw your attention to the fact that the decision to include an article lies with the FMA Editorial Board and, in principle, contributions from members who are not up-to-date with the payment of the membership fee will not be included. Due to the long time lag between the call for contribution and the publication, some articles may be outdated.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Member,

I am pleased to present to you the third FMA Bulletin of 2022, with a focus on the issue of freedom of press. The multitude of recent cases of murders on journalists - in and around Europe - illustrate that even in modern times the freedom of press is not a solved question. This lack of security greatly challenges the media in fulfilling their essential role in contemporary democracies. Given that relevance of the issue, I would like to give special thanks to all FMA members who have shared their insights in this delicate discussion via their contributions to the Focus section.

As I reflect on my first few months as FMA President, I would like to also express my gratitude to all FMA members who have participated in the Association's latest activities. The FMA served its primary goal of promoting political dialogue successfully, by going on two missions abroad. Firstly, from 16 until 18 June the FMA participated in a programme of meetings organised by the European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the member states of the Council of Europe (FP-AP). You can find a report by FMA delegate Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez on his Helsinki mission in the section 'FMA Activities'.

Secondly, the FMA is organising a Study Visit from 22 until 24 September to the Jean Monnet Foundation for Europe in Lausanne (Switzerland) including a visit to the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Geneva. The FMA delegation is led by FMA Vice-President Monica Baldi. A report on this study visit will be included in the December Bulletin.

Another impactful FMA activity was the ninth Librorum event on 15 September, where FMA Member Anna Karamanou presented and discussed her newest book "The peaceful uprising of the female sapiens".

Furthermore, the EP to Campus Programme has continued to allow university students to benefit from the expertise and experience of our active FMA members, whom I would like to thank. The four EP to Campus articles in this edition testify to successful interventions on a wide range of topics, not only in European countries such as Spain, Germany and Turkey, but also in the United States. In addition to the articles on the many FMA activities, this bulletin's edition also contains a number of clarifying commentaries by the Association's members on current affairs in face of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the energy issue and the future of Europe.

Now looking forward, I am delighted to announce the promising FMA autumn programme that lies ahead for all of us. Coming up first, from 23 to 25 October the FMA will organise a visit to the Czech Republic on the occasion of its Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The aim of the visit is to foster dialogue between the former Members and the national parliament on the political agenda for the EU. Next are the annual FMA December events and I am grateful for the House of European History who will host us. On 6 December, there will be guided tour around the House of European History's transnational collections.

Our tenth Librorum event will follow, where Vitaliano Gemelli will present his book *"La finanza per la società. Dal dominio al servizio. Cenni sulla necessità di una trasformazione"* ('Finance for society. From domination to service. Hints at the need for transformation'). Then, we will end this first day of December events with the Cocktail Reception and Gala Dinner. On 7 December, the Annual Seminar including a high-level debate will take place at the European Parliament (Brussels). During the Annual seminar we will reflect on the economic future of Europe with prestigious speakers. A Get-Together lunch will follow after an event to pay homage to former EP President and FMA Honorary President Lord Henry Plumb, organised by the European Parliament Research Service (EPRS) in the European Parliament Library's Reading Room.

Lastly, let me thank all FMA members and staff who have contributed to this September Bulletin. I wish you an interesting reading of the bulletin and look forward to engaging with each of you further, in conversation at our December events.

With my best regards,

**Dr. Klaus Hänsch**  
FMA President

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AT WORK

## Key facts

### Climate change: Parliament pushes for faster EU action and energy independence

(June session - P9\_TA(2022)0246, P9\_TA(2022)0247, P9\_TA(2022)0248)

Parliament wants to incentivise industries to further reduce their emissions and invest in low-carbon technologies. The Emissions Trading System (ETS) should be reformed accordingly. MEPs call for a broader scope and faster implementation of the EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) to prevent carbon leakage and raise global climate ambition.

### Grant EU candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova without delay, MEPs demand

(June session - P9\_TA(2022)0249)

EU leaders must live up to their historical responsibility and give a clear political signal to Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, confirming their European perspective. The parliament restates there is no 'fast-track' to EU membership; accession happens only on the basis of merit and once criteria are fulfilled. Enlarging the EU is in the European Union's own interest.

### Parliament approves plans to restock gas reserves before winter

(June session - P9\_TA(2022)0251)

The new regulation, already agreed upon with EU ministers, sets a mandatory minimum level of gas in storage facilities at 80% by 1 November 2022. Member states and operators should strive to reach 85%. In response to Russia's war against Ukraine, this law aims to refill Europe's strategic gas reserves more quickly before winter to ensure energy supplies are secure.

### EU employment aid for workers in France and Greece

(June session - P9\_TA(2022)0255)

EU aid worth €17.7 million has been approved to support 1,580 workers from Air France and two of its subsidiaries in 16 French regions, who lost their jobs because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Greece, MEPs signed off on €1.5 million in EU support for 206 workers made redundant from six companies producing household appliances in the Greek region of Attica.

### MEPs approve Croatia's entry into the eurozone

(July session - P9\_TA(2022)0271)

MEPs on Tuesday gave a favourable opinion to Croatia's bid to become the newest member of the eurozone from the 1st January 2023. Parliament, by 539 votes in favour, 45 votes against and 48 abstentions, adopted the report of Siegfried Mureşan (EPP, RO) stating Croatia fulfils all the criteria for adopting the euro on 1st January 2023.

### Digital Services: landmark rules adopted for a safer, open online environment

(July session - P9\_TA(2022)0269)

The new EU digital rulebook sets out unprecedented standards on the accountability of online companies, within an open and competitive digital market. The two bills aim to address the societal and economic effects of the tech industry by setting clear standards for how they operate and provide services in the EU, in line with the EU's fundamental rights and values.

### EU fisheries and aquaculture to receive compensation for the war in Ukraine

(July session - P9\_TA(2022)0282)

MEPs agreed to provide financial help to EU fisheries and aquaculture sectors dealing with the economic consequences of the Russian invasion. The compensation would cover operators and producers' lost income as well as additional costs incurred because of the war such as the increase in energy, raw materials and fish feed prices.

### Human rights breaches in Hong Kong, Brazil and Tajikistan

(July session - P9\_TA(2022)0294)

Chinese authorities must drop all charges against Cardinal Joseph Zen and the other four trustees of the 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund. Brazil must protect environmental and human rights defenders. The Tajik authorities must end their violent crackdown against protesters.

### Ukrainians can keep their driving licences in the EU, say MEPs

(July session - P9\_TA(2022)0294)

Ukrainians who fled Russia's invasion of Ukraine and got temporary protection status will be able to continue using their Ukrainian driving licence, without needing to exchange it for an EU driving licence or to sit a new driving test, as long as they enjoy the temporary protection status.

### Fit for 55: Parliament pushes for greener aviation fuels

(July session - P9\_TA(2022)0297)

Parliament adopted its position on new draft EU rules to increase the uptake of sustainable fuels by EU planes and airports, in order to cut emissions from aviation and ensure Europe becomes climate neutral by 2050. In order to further promote the decarbonisation of the aviation sector and to inform the public about greener aviation, MEPs tasked the Commission with developing by 2024 an EU labelling system on the environmental performance of aircrafts, operators and commercial flights.

### Better regulation: Joining forces to make better laws

(July session - P9\_TA(2022)0301)

Parliament welcomed the Commission's aim of ensuring that EU legislation delivers maximum benefits to citizens and businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and its intention to make the better regulation approach more dynamic and adaptable to future developments. Member States and the Commission are invited to recognise the need for better regulation and simplification that takes account of economic, environmental, social and gender impacts in an integrated and balanced way.



## Other main dossiers discussed in the plenary sessions were:

23.06.22

MEPs welcome **Montenegro's continued commitment to European integration**, repeating their position that the country's progress in the accession process continues to depend on meeting the conditions related to the rule of law.

The report calls for an inclusive political dialogue and the commitment of all parliamentary parties in Montenegro to overcoming the **current polarised political climate**.

23.06.22

The European Parliament plenary has endorsed the deal with member states to **extend the legal framework** of the **EU Digital COVID Certificate** for another 12 months.

In response to Parliament's request, the text states that member states should **not restrict the free movement of EUDCC holders** in a way that is disproportionate or discriminatory.

05.07.22

MEPs call on the Commission and EU countries to **address the inequalities women face**, such as barriers to the labour market and access to affordable childcare.

The Commission must develop an **ambitious 2030 European anti-poverty strategy**, with concrete targets and a focus on ending women's poverty, they say.

05.07.22

**Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala** presented on Wednesday the programme and **main goals of the Czech Council Presidency's semester**.

Prime Minister Fiala admitted that the Russian invasion of Ukraine turned most of the Czech Presidency plans upside down. "Our main task will be to find a **united and strong agreement** on measures to mitigate the negative effects of the current crises on our citizens".

05.07.22

**MEPS** demand preventive **measures against technostress and over-connection**, to tackle mental health issues and boost the benefits of working from home.

They also point to **other factors causing additional stress** because of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic crisis.

06.07.22

Parliament outlined its assessment of the political situation in three accession countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia.

MEPs reconfirm their support for **Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic orientation**. However, they strongly denounce all hate rhetoric and disruptive action.

MEPs commend the country's **increased political stability** and strong commitment to its European path and reiterate their call on EU member states to proceed urgently with **adopting a visa-free regime** for the citizens of **Kosovo**.

Parliament welcomes the fact that **EU membership** continues to be **Serbia's strategic goal**, while regretting the lack of progress and even backsliding on issues that are fundamental for EU accession.

06.07.22

MEPs criticize **countries abusing their vetoes on tax matters** and demand a relaunch of discussions to gradually introduce majority voting.

The resolution also states that **EU and global tax rules** are **outdated for dealing with the modern-day economy**, since they allow for significant tax evasion and tax avoidance, lead to "unacceptable competitive advantages" for multinationals over SMEs, and undermine the EU single market.

07.07.22

The **right to abortion** should be **included in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights**, MEPs urge in a resolution on the US Supreme Court decision to overturn abortion rights in the United States and the need to **safeguard abortion rights and women's health in the EU**, adopted with 324 in favour, 155 against and 38 abstentions.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/plenary>





## THE FUTURE OF EUROPE: MOVING TO PARLIAMENTARISM

The myriad ways to secure and improve the EU's future are all set out in the report on the final outcome of a conference that went to great lengths to involve citizens.

In essence, though, all roads lead back to Article 10 TEU, which states that 'the functioning of the Union shall be founded on representative democracy'. For any new initiative to be politically and legally sound and feasible, it must place the European Parliament in a central role.

**"For any new initiative to be politically and legally sound and feasible, it (the Union) must place the European Parliament in a central role."**

The same applies, first and foremost, to the call for reforms to the very make-up of Parliament to better reflect its 'European identity' by introducing a uniform electoral system across Member States

and moving towards EU-wide transnational lists with candidates from multiple Member States (38.2).

Citizens would also like to see Parliament take the lead in promoting transparency in every EU decision-making process, by making digital tools more accessible to all (including the most disadvantaged) and making greater use of artificial intelligence and machine translation to overcome language barriers (37.3).

To get closer to citizens – and narrow the huge gulf that can open up between Parliament and national political systems right after elections – the Conference devised an action plan for European democracy, in the truest sense of the word (36.8). Aside from the parliamentary institutions, this plan also includes forms of participatory democracy, which would be set out and defined in an EU Charter for the involvement of citizens in EU affairs (36.11).

The first idea on the table is the development of a mechanism

'to monitor policy and legislative initiatives, which have emerged from participatory democracy processes'. This would provide a link between Parliament and the wider electorate, which should, of course, be extended to all decision-making processes that take place within Parliament, to avoid any lack of transparency that could cause significant democratic damage.

The role of individual MEPs then appears to be directly called into question, as there is a proposal to set up 'a system of local EU Councillors' (36.6). It goes without saying that only individual MEPs, representing their constituencies, can and should be the pillars on which active citizens rely for a direct say and influence in the institutional mechanism of the Union. They are the tangible embodiment of the 'strong social model' which, alongside the rule of law, is at the heart of European democracy (38.1).

However, the Conference proposals that most obviously seek to 'parliamentarise' the future of the Union are those which 'meddle with' the delicate interplay between national and EU systems.

In particular, national and regional representatives are called upon to be 'more involved' in the decision-making process, above all 'to take better into account the experiences gained with the implementation of EU law' (39.2). The proposal to allow national parliaments to suggest legislative initiatives within the EU institutions is also hugely significant (40.2). If we think of it, this innovative move could – if it's an 'ever-closer union' we want – prove even more important than our own legislative initiative currently making its way through Parliament.

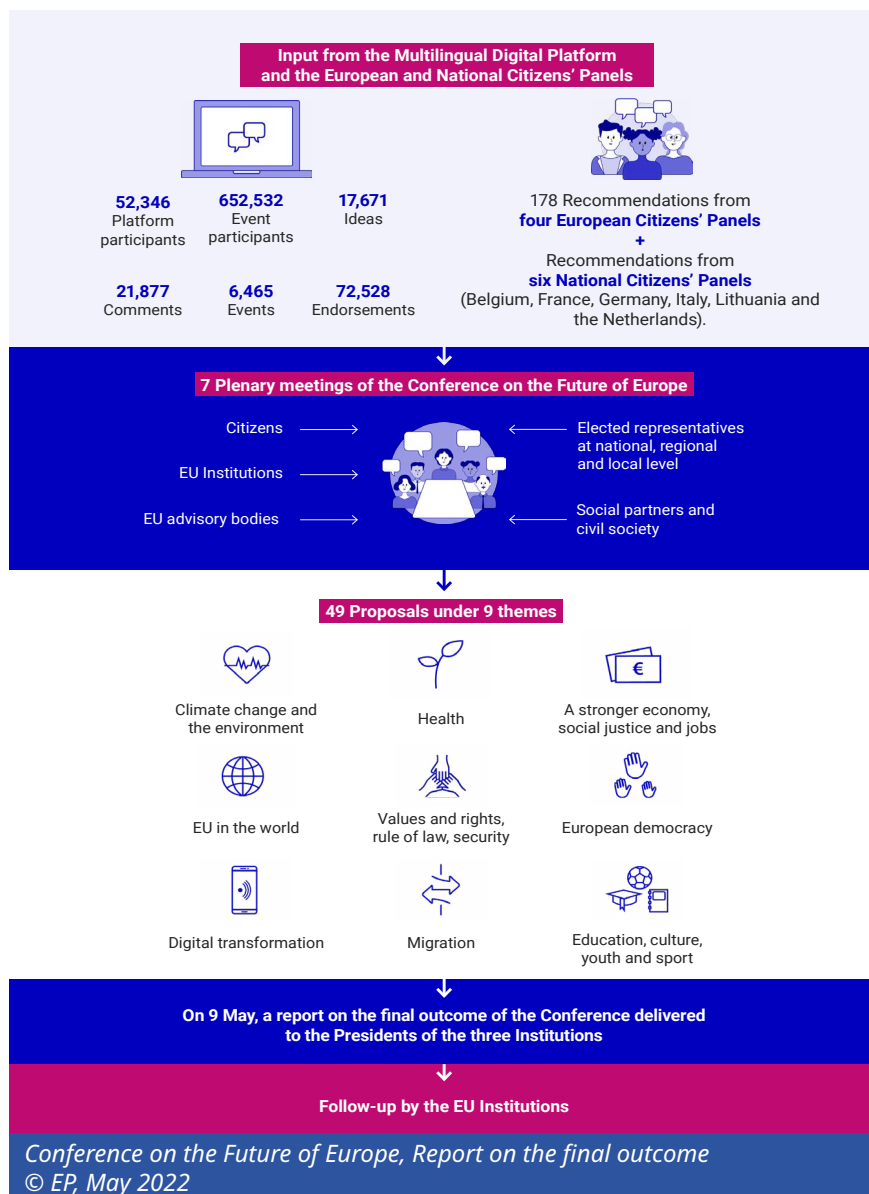


*On Europe Day, the Presidents of the European Parliament, Commission and Council received the final report with proposals to reform the EU © EP, 2022*

Bringing national and supra-national representatives substantively closer together ought indeed to revitalise and confer visibility to the EU-national parliamentary order, on which the true fabric of unity in EU constitutional pluralism rests. This link should therefore be strengthened not only by means of 'active subsidiarity', as called for by the Conference (40.1), but above all by using the 'conference method' to strengthen and increase organic interparliamentary cooperation. This is a tried and tested method; just think of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC), the Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union (Article 13 Fiscal Compact) or the Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CFSP-CSDP).

**“Bringing national and supra-national representatives substantively closer together ought indeed to revitalise and confer visibility to the EU-national parliamentary order, on which the true fabric of unity in EU constitutional pluralism rests.”**

It does indeed make sense, even after this great exercise in participation, for the democratic life of the EU – in all its many guises and with all possible mechanisms of consultation (39.5) – to find its ultimate outlet in the decisions of the representative institutions. In other words, in a large network



of elected assemblies, spread across the EU, with the European Parliament as a necessary element at its core, in line with the powers conferred on it by the Member States and with respect for their national identities (Articles 4 and 5 TEU).

This new constitutional deal is encapsulated in the proposal to empower the European Parliament to hold an EU-wide referendum 'in exceptional cases on matters particularly important to all European citizens' (38.2).

So there you have it: after seeing the destructive effect that national referendums can have on the European project, it turns out that this form of European direct democracy – called by European democratic representatives – marks the clearest way forward for the EU's future.

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# WAR CRIMES AND IMPUNITY

The issue of international judicial intervention now arises with the outbreak of every new conflict in the world, frequently giving rise to virulent controversy between two radically opposed schools of thought. Some see it as a weapon taken up or discarded by governments at will, depending on their interests at the time, while others, on the contrary, regard the fight against impunity as the foundation of the rule of law and democracy. Judicial intervention in armed conflicts has forced those involved to rethink war and peace-building initiatives, leading to the emergence of a new form of diplomacy since the end of the Cold War, that of international criminal tribunals.

This new situation has prompted warring governments/states to rely on lawyers for the selection of their targets in order to minimise the risk of prosecution for international crimes. The background can be summarised as follows: The ICC Statute, which was signed on 17 July 1998 in Rome, has now been invoked over the last few weeks in connection with Putin and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The signature of the Statute marked the end of a 50-year process during which international human rights law was being ratified and consolidated.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed on 10 December 1948. That declaration was intended to be the basic norm (Grundnorm - a concept in the Pure Theory of Law propounded by the Austrian lawyer Hans Kelsen) intended to be the foundation of an international legal order seeking to limit moves at state level designed to generate wars and conflicts.



The picture emerging from that period reveals, on the one hand, sovereign states, including democracies, that were determined to defend their inviolable sovereignty at any cost, be it racial segregation, state-sponsored torture, mass internment, legal and social inequalities, oppression of the poor and of migrants or attacks on other countries.

On the other hand, a supranational legal system was also starting to take shape, albeit in fragmented form, with the aim of setting limits on the infinite capacity for violence being shown in the defence of state sovereignty. The Rome Statute broke through the taboos regarding impunity and war crimes, creating an international court, which, unlike the previous ad hoc courts (in the case of the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda), would be empowered to prosecute perpetrators of war crimes or acts of aggression in accordance with the principles of legality. Unfortunately, this historic legal event occurred at a time when events were already

starting to presage a different climate, prompting countermeasures by sovereign states unwilling to abdicate irremediably areas of competence to universal human rights tribunals.

What therefore needs to be done to get back on track, given the risk of going astray, and once more give due importance to the fight against impunity? Around 20 years after the establishment of the first international criminal courts, international justice has emerged to play a role in international relations.

**“Around 20 years after the establishment of the first international criminal courts, international justice has emerged to play a role in international relations.”**

So far, too many states have remained indifferent, especially regarding the genocides committed in Africa. While passivity and complacency are no longer admissible, it is difficult to overcome scepticism and preoccupation with purely national interests.

The ICC has long harboured doubts as to its ability to deal with the most powerful people in the world, especially given its large degree of financial dependence on the latter.

For example, no tangible results emerged from investigations initiated by Fatou Bensouda, a former ICC prosecutor, into Russia's alleged crimes in Georgia, events in Ukraine following the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the alleged crimes perpetrated by Israel in Palestine. He also refrained from carrying out a preliminary inquiry into the actions of British troops in Iraq.

The investigation of crimes committed in Afghanistan is also highly politicised, given that the ICC is focusing on those committed by the Taliban (final decision of Prosecutor Khan), while seeking to divert scrutiny away from alleged crimes committed by the US army.

While initiatives at national level within the universal jurisdiction of states are important in the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes, their scope is limited. However, such initiatives do reflect a shift in position regarding the willingness of countries to combat impunity. For example, on 4 March 2021, Canada requested formal negotiations, under the 1984 United Nations Convention against Torture, to hold Syria accountable for the human rights violations it has committed since 2011.

**“While initiatives at national level within the universal jurisdiction of states are important for the most serious crimes, their scope is limited.”**

These violations formed the basis for a similar request by the Netherlands on 18 September 2020. Under the terms of Article 30 of the Convention against Torture, to which these countries are parties, any failure of the negotiations could pave the way for the Syrian State to be brought to trial before the International Court of Justice. Fact-finding mechanisms, purges of officials responsible for acts of oppression, reparation programmes for victims, commemorations and institutional reforms to prevent any repetition of human rights violations are some of the other instruments that contribute to the achievement of these objectives.

The EU should continue to support efforts to improve universal jurisdiction and accountability in third countries, for example through financial support, sharing of best practices, better cooperation between prosecution services and the creation of joint cross-border investigation teams.

In this context, the strengthening of EUROJUST is extremely important. It is crucial to monitor and support the coordination of EU efforts to investigate and gather evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity and ensure that it is safely preserved. Moreover, the judicial approach only partially responds to the needs of the victims and the population, given that the key to rebuilding a society is to restore faith in its institutions.

However, this rests on four pillars, which are ‘the right to truth, justice, reparation and security’ (Louis Joinet) and not just the justice system. Judicial action is not the same as political action. The question now is when and how to take action, and in what combination with other measures outside the field of criminal law to combat impunity. In short, as Kelsen wrote: ‘Sovereignty is a problem’. Here he was in tune with the anti-war sentiments expressed in the extraordinary correspondence between Freud and Einstein. Now it seems the time has come for a fresh narrative. The task of politics and of those involved in various ways is to promote a transition from the idea of unbounded sovereignty to one of sovereignty that is limited in scope, ushering in a new dawn for international law and the fight against impunity - before it is too late!

**Pier Antonio Panzeri**

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# ENERGY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, by far the most critical emergency for the EU is the massive shortage of energy and an increased risk of blackouts, given that the EU derives some 80% of its total primary energy from fossil fuels, a large share of which comes via pipelines from Russia.

The EU has already adopted a clear plan, namely the 'Green Deal', to massively increase the share of renewable energies, e.g. wind turbines and photovoltaic systems, in the EU and thus increase the EU's autonomy regarding energy and energy technologies. However, this energy transition needs huge amounts of materials (like copper, steel and rare earth elements) and a large number of electricians to install the huge number of wind turbines and photovoltaic systems. In addition, the EU must import many critical raw materials from Asia, particularly China, and the EU faces a growing shortage of electricians. Therefore, it is estimated that this Green Deal transition will take approximately 25 years.

I strongly support this Green Deal. Due to the aforementioned shortages, however, I feel that a substantial acceleration of this energy transition will not be possible. For example, to achieve the Green Deal targets, Germany alone has to build 70 000 new wind turbines by 2050 - or even faster. This means commissioning 2 500 new wind turbines per year or seven every day until 2050 in Germany alone. Note that in 2021, Germany built approximately 450 new wind turbines. Therefore, if Germany continues to build wind turbines at 2021 rates, it would take 160 years to reach the Green Deal target.

Thus, I believe that the European Commission and Member States should quickly bring on line intermediate, transition energy technologies until 2040 or 2050. This transition energy strategy can include sourcing LNG (i.e. liquefied natural gas) from other global sources, exploiting natural gas reserves in the EU by new environmentally-friendly fracking technologies developed by EU universities, extending the operating periods of existing coal and nuclear power plants and accelerating the roll out of smart meters. Due to the highly critical nature of the EU's current energy situation, I think no measures for mitigation should be ruled out.

**“I strongly support this Green Deal. Due to the aforementioned shortages, however, I feel that a substantial acceleration of this energy will not be possible.”**

Many hardware and software components for these wind turbines and photovoltaic installations are manufactured in Asia, which means that the EU depends on that part of the world for these supplies. That is why I believe that we should urgently develop a plan for substantially increasing the EU's single market autonomy regarding the manufacturing of energy and production facilities, as well as for facilities for mining the necessary raw materials, including autonomy for the respective technologies needed.

This EU autonomy would comprise the respective R&D, material processing, design, manufacturing, installation, start up, and maintenance of the facilities within the EU's single market to avoid energy poverty and unemployment among EU citizens and consumers.

In order to prevent a massive European energy shortage, I believe the following actions should be considered:

- strengthening and developing the European single market,
- enhancing cooperation and coordination with like-minded partners,
- pursuing an ambitious trade policy and the diversification of sources,
- tackling labour market mismatches,
- improving communication and raising awareness,
- accelerating innovation and digitalisation,
- facilitating access to finance,
- ensuring sufficient investments (to facilitate the green transition, among others),
- ensuring realistic energy policies.

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# THE KEY CHALLENGE – RECREATING THE FISCAL RULES



On May 23rd the finance ministers of the EU 27 concluded, in light of the Spring Semester Forecast, in favour of extending the general escape clause of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) through 2023 in order to provide the space for national fiscal policies to react quickly to evolving circumstances in highly unpredictable times. However, the key challenge of fundamentally revising the SGP rules themselves remains unresolved, despite broad agreement that they have largely proven to be counterproductive.

Back in November 2018, as an MEP (2014-2019), I presented a Working document for the EP Committee on Budget Control on a report by the European Court of Auditors (ECA) that was entitled "Is the main objective of the preventive arm of the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) delivered?" Namely – whether the Commission had effectively coordinated Member States' fiscal policies so as to achieve rapid progress towards their individual midterm structural budget objectives (MTOs). The main conclusion of the ECA report was that "...the Commission has

exercised its discretionary powers very extensively with a view to reduce adjustment requirements, both in setting implementation rules and in individual decisions. However, as a result, the Commission has not ensured meeting of the Regulation's main objective: convergence towards the MTOs in a reasonable period of time." This stark conclusion was equally unequivocally countered by the Commission, stating in its replies that it "...rejects the ECA's conclusion that the Commission has not ensured that the Regulation's main objective is met".

This complete lack of common understanding provoked my conclusion at the time as to the urgent need for an all-round comprehensive re-examination of the SGP rules, including whether it would be appropriate to completely replace the present SGP, founded on the paradigm of fiscal austerity, with an alternative Sustainable Development Pact that would provide the necessary balance, complementarity and mutual enhancement between fiscal prudence and sustainability goals.

Developments over the ensuing three years have only reinforced the urgency of such overall reform.

Observations have since then emerged that the EU seems to work best when the EU fiscal rules are not observed, with low budget deficits and low debt limits suspended for the third year and likewise, the rules on state aid, normally a centerpiece of EU law to prevent unequal treatment of companies, equally temporarily and partially suspended. With the reasonable conclusion that if the main selling point of a rule becomes the fact that it can be ignored, then one should probably start to wonder about how sensible the rule is in the first place.

A recapitulation of experiences gained has led to an all-important realization that the EU must invest significantly more in solidarity, resilience and strategic autonomy. It has proven to be no longer possible to think about the future using concepts and categories from the past. In today's increasingly uncertain geopolitical and economic environment Europe needs a Solidarity and Resilience Pact to replace the largely defunct SGP in order to insure itself against future shocks and to lay the foundation for a socially and ecologically sustainable society.

It remains to be seen whether the leaders of the 27 will rise to this defining challenge or shall rather revert to the old destructive austerity paradigm.

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# LESSONS FROM THE DON

In the 90s I often travelled to Ukraine due to my job at a multinational company, where I had a fantastic colleague, Sergiy. Sergiy told me a lot about his unknown and unrecognized country, pointing out that „Look, even in the CNN weather forecast Kyiv is missing from the map“. Today no news channel would miss Kyiv from their map.

The power projections around the South China Sea in 2021, followed by a Winter Olympics in Beijing filled with tension, were further exacerbated by Putin's visit to Xi Jinping. Few days later the war on Ukraine begun. The events made clear what many of us suspected from at least since 2014, or even since the end of the Cold War: the age of multipolar was a brief pause between two bipolar eras, even if of different kinds:

1. The former between on the one side the USSR and the Warsaw Pact countries, and on the other the USA aligned with the Western-Europe in NATO. State-Socialism versus Capitalism. Democracies versus single party systems. Clear cut for all with an Iron Curtain running across Europe and the rest of the world absent.

2. The new bilateral order is not so simple, even if two poles may be identified: the Sino-Russian versus Transatlantic and like-minded countries. State-Capitalism versus Capitalism. Yet, within the latter we find a continuum of different shades of democracy. The new iron curtain is foreseen from North to South, this time thousand-kilometre to the East, shortening or cutting off the Black Sea shores of Ukraine. Meanwhile, due to globalization and the consequent inter-dependence many countries of the rest of the world

were elevated to a status of “ferry countries” floating between the two harbours. One of them is Ukraine, with clear intention of belonging to the EU.

Political systems change suddenly, while economies react with significant latency. It took time and effort to build trust and security for investment to flow, for economic transitions to occur, and to streamline operations known as global supply chains. As a result, globalisation is complex, multi-speed, multi-layered, and most of all: fragile. The Evergreen accident on the Suez Canal, Brexit, COVID-19, and now the war in Ukraine all shed light on the feebleness of globalization in the face externalities, such as natural disasters or political decisions. The war is a disruption at a new scale for both societies and economies. It affects supply chains of essential commodities, from energy to food systems, but also specialties such as helium for chip production, further overspilling to the financial system. It was a hard lesson for the most advance economies specialized in high added value sectors with production at large outsourced to other continents that the service sector creates systematic risks.

Will the pendulum move back again? Most likely not. The new bilateral order will retain the asymmetries in the imbalance of raw-materials, production and services. The real alternative to dependence is not independence but inter-dependence.

**“The real alternative to dependence is not independence but inter-dependence.”**

The South China Sea is a far and abstract geopolitical challenge, while Ukraine makes us all not a witness, but active participant of the emerging New Order. Our choice matters. Unless the EU commits to remain a lighthouse based on principles, we risk to be a „ferry continent“.

Being a lighthouse starts with our decision to keep the European flag high and stand for the community method instead of a zero-sum game.

Being a lighthouse offers a direction and safe harbour to the ferry countries/continents instead of the rough ocean.

Being a lighthouse means profound understanding of the proclaimed values, remembering that freedom is not a given, but which requires continuous nurturing or as in Ukraine today, a heroic fight. Sergiy and his son Taras are two of the many heroes we salute.

Being a lighthouse means sincere willingness to understand the Ukrainian people. As Czech Ambassador Edita Hrdá recently said: “I have the feeling that many people in Brussels have read Fukuyama and too few have read Sholokhov's ‘And Quiet Flows the Don’<sup>1</sup>. For those whose interest in the region remains superficial, the message is simple: war or peace, peoples around the river Don are inter-dependent on each other.

**Edit Herczog**

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<sup>1</sup>Politico, [Brussels Playbook](#) (22 April 2022)

# ALLEY OF ANGELS IN DONETSK



© Prensa Latina

Viktoria, Dmitrii, Nadejda, Kirill... Listed by name engraved in Tokovsky granite are the angels of Donetsk. Gold letters indicate: 'Alley of Angels'. A two-metre wrought iron arch wrapped with roses is erected to honour them.

The form of the roses is not typical - they resemble fragments of mines and grenades. These explosives and bombs that have killed or injured a good number of children<sup>1</sup> of Donbas since 2014.

On 1 June 2017, a sculpture was unveiled in the same park. It represents a boy who covers his sister with his body.

There is a real story behind this piece of art. It is tragic. Let me share with you a little bit of it.

It happened in the village of Butkevich, Luhansk region, in 2014. The village was being shelled by Ukrainian artillery. A family of two children and their mother were crossing the street, when something whizzed past their ears. Someone yelled, "Get on the ground!" Thirteen-year-old Kirill shielded his little sister Tanya with his own body. Then, the world exploded. Kirill saved her life, but a large number of metal fragments killed him...

The story inspired a Russian school student. Her drawing won a competition and materialised into the sculpture. Together with her classmates and German school students, the team created a book of short stories about happiness...

This is one of the stories buried in the Alley of Angels.

Other stories relate to teachers killed and hundreds of schools and hospitals destroyed.

The annual 'Angels' commemoration enjoys thousands of balloons and lit candles being released to fill the skyline of Donetsk, Luhansk, and other regions.

Today, I release my hopes that virtue and wisdom will soon prevail...

**Mariela Baeva**  
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<sup>1</sup> According to data announced by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights more than 3000 civilians, incl. children have been killed in Donbas since 2014.



# FMA ACTIVITIES

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EPFMA  
PEAAD



# COOPERATION WITH THE EP

## WORKING WITH FORMER MEPS: THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT HISTORY SERVICE

Historical experience and memory can have a huge impact on individuals and countries including their attitudes to war and peace or to participation in European integration. Thus, Russia's president Vladimir Putin has constructed a bizarre narrative about Russia's destiny as a great power and his own role in reconstructing the empire of Peter the Great, unleashing a horrific war of aggression on Ukraine as a first step towards his goal. At the same time, in the 2016 referendum, many voters bought into stories about how Brexit would let loose the British bulldog to achieve great things and transform the country into "global Britain" and perhaps, "Empire 2.0".

Both examples illustrate the need for sound historical knowledge to inform equally sound decisions regarding our present and future. This is also true of the European Parliament and the European Union more generally. The recent creation of the European Parliament History Service (EPHS) has the mission to strengthen such historical knowledge within

the Parliament and connect it to contemporary political and policy issues in meaningful ways. Based in the European Parliament Research Service, it is headed in a part-time capacity by Professor Wolfram Kaiser. Reporting to the Director-General of the EPRS, he coordinates a small team of initially three full-time staff to be formed in second half of this year.

The EPHS's mission is to conduct, coordinate, and commission research on the history of the EP, national parliaments, and transnational democracy in an interdisciplinary historical perspective reaching up to the present-day. It will also support EP institutions and projects like the House of European History and the Network of Houses of Great Europeans. The EPHS will create an academic network with the aim to enhance research capacity in the field. It will also produce studies and briefings on different aspects of the history of European integration and the particular role of the EP. It started last July with a briefing on the EP's

debate about the future of the post-Soviet space at the time of the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, as background to the challenges posed by Russia's war on Ukraine. The EPHS will eventually also produce a variety of multi-media outputs for citizens about the history of the EP, its internal political dynamics, and its role in policy-making.

The EPHS will want to work closely with present and former MEPs from all political groups in reconstructing the history of the EP. In this vein, EPHS staff and external authors will approach former MEPs for interviews to support their studies and would very much appreciate their contribution to on-site or online events and the production of outputs like podcasts or short videos. The EPHS will also organise events to discuss the political life and contributions of former EP presidents starting with one such event devoted to Lord Plumb, EP president during 1987-9 and the founding president of the EP Former Members Organisation.

### Wolfram Kaiser

Head of the European Parliament History Service  
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**Wolfram Kaiser**, Professor of European Studies at the University of Portsmouth, UK, and Visiting Professor at the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium, is heading the EPHS for 50% of his time. He has published widely on the history of European integration and the Parliament including *Shaping European Union: The European Parliament and Institutional Reform 1979-1989* (EPRS 2018), *Writing the Rules for Europe. Experts, Cartels, and International Organizations* (with J. Schot, Palgrave 2014), *Exhibiting Europe in Museums. Transnational Networks, Collections, Narratives, and Representations* (with S. Krankenhagen and K. Poehls, Berghahn 2014), *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union* (CUP 2007), *Using Europe, Abusing the Europeans. Britain and European Integration, 1945-63* (Palgrave 1999).

# FORMER MEMBERS NETWORK

## FP-AP ANNUAL MEETING IN HELSINKI

Former parliamentarians met in Helsinki from 16-18 June this year. Before giving a summary of these meetings, I must first explain the structure of the two organisations into which the two categories of elected representatives have been grouped and which have been in operation in recent years. The older of the two organisations comprises former members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). These parliamentarians were members of parliament or senators of each of the Council of Europe's Member States. The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 by 10 countries initially, growing gradually to bring together 47 countries. PACE comprises national parliamentarians from these countries, and all former parliamentarians can join the institution's Former Members Association.

There is also the European Parliament's Former Members Association that, in parallel, includes MEPs who at some point were elected Members of Parliament, or in other words people who became part of the European Union's

political institution following the various European elections. These representatives have hailed from an increasing number of countries as the EU expanded; there are currently 27 EU Member States, one fewer than previously as a result of Brexit and the United Kingdom's subsequent exit from the European Union. However, the former British MEPs, who were fully-fledged Members of Parliament at the time, remain former MEPs and participate as such in the Former Members Association.

The above clarifications having been made, here is my account of the recent meeting of former parliamentarians that took place in Finland's parliament in Helsinki just a few days ago. The meetings largely involved the two main bodies of the PACE Former Members Association: The Assembly and the Organisation's Management Body. As a board member of Parliament's Former Members Association, I was chosen to participate in the meeting. The session was very interesting and covered some important topics, which I will discuss in more detail below.

It is important to note that the Former Members Association that I represent is a permanent fixture in the framework of the parallel association, and it was in this capacity that I was in Helsinki.

One of the most pressing tasks during this meeting was to end the mandate of Rune Rydén, the organisation's Swedish president. Rydén's statutory mandate of two years ended several months ago, in the middle of the pandemic, which is why the statutory succession could not take place. Without the necessary assembly, the most reasonable response was to prolong President Rydén's mandate for one more regulatory period of two years. In Helsinki, Rune Rydén's mandate came to an end and the assembly was tasked with deciding who should succeed him as president of the association. Two candidates ran in the election: Mr Jean Pierre Fourré, a socialist French Member, and Mr Walter Schwimmer, a conservative Austrian Member. Both candidates received the same number of votes in the election, which posed a real problem when it was suggested that they should draw lots to see who would be elected and who would be eliminated. Fortunately, a second, and in my opinion more reasonable, option was found, which was that both candidates are to share the presidency for two years, one for the 22/23 period and the other for the 23/24 period. Another problem was posed by the withdrawal of the Italian candidate for vice-president. This issue was resolved by deciding that Mr Schwimmer would be vice-president in the first year while Mr Fourré is president, with the two swapping roles in the second year. A seminar on what was known as 'Finlandisation' also took place.



Seminar on 'Finlandization' during the FP-AP Annual Meeting in Helsinki, 17 July 2022





Group picture during the FP-AP Annual Meeting on 17 July 2022 in Helsinki © FP-AP, 2022

'Finlandisation' refers to Finland's historic behaviour as a country that has always had to resist significant pressure from its two neighbours, Sweden and, above all, Russia (and the former USSR for several decades). Highly qualified experts participated in the seminar. I myself highlighted how throughout the Cold War the term 'Finlandisation' was used somewhat pejoratively towards Finland, as the country was accused of distancing itself from Russia to protect its identity and even its own democratic Western norms that had existed since the country gained independence.

**"Finlandisation refers to Finland's historic behaviour as a country that has always had to resist significant pressure from its two neighbours, Sweden and, above all, Russia (and the former USSR for several decades)."**

Another important topic of discussion was Finland's request to join NATO despite the fact that neutrality had been a key feature of the country's policy for many years. Russia's invasion of Ukraine placed huge pressure on Finland. In the debate that followed it was clear that the majority of those present sympathised with Finland's want, and almost need, to take steps to guarantee its security in the face of a threat from such a powerful neighbour that is capable of actions that nobody anticipated.

Another moving moment in Helsinki was the unanimous outpouring of appreciation from representatives of the Former Member Associations for our German colleague Brigitte Langenhagen, who did not run for re-election after being a representative of our European Parliament Former Members Association for many years.

No less importantly, our time in Finland was also spent on an excursion to the island of Suomenlinna, where we were able to better understand the country's history, including the constant challenges of maintaining Finland as a state while continually grappling with the tensions of two neighbours as powerful and often aggressive as Sweden and Russia.

**Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez**

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# EP TO CAMPUS PROGRAMME

## EU REGULATION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FRAMEWORK TO FACILITATE SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, USA | 20 APRIL 2022 | ONLINE

On 20 April 2022 I had the opportunity to give a lecture at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

The lecture was part of a series of seminars organised by the university's anthropology department. The university was founded in 1867 with a total of 77 students. Today the University of Illinois is one of the largest public universities in the United States, with more than 56,000 students enrolled.

Due to the pandemic, the lectures were given online. This format was indeed justified in view of the current situation, but it should be an exception as online debates are somewhat lacking in liveliness. Despite the unfortunate circumstances, the discussion unfolded well.

Professor Jonathan Larson, the organiser of the series, opened the session by introducing the speaker. The professor had asked me to focus, during the preparatory phase, on the European Green Deal. Given that I was a member of the ECON committee, which had adopted the EU report 2020/852, I chose the title mentioned above.

The format meant that I had 30 minutes for an introduction. I started by describing the tasks and challenges of a European strategy that was based on the obligations of the Paris Climate Agreement. I also explained the legislative process initiated by the Commission, starting with the establishment of a high-level expert group.

I talked about the history of this draft legislation following the report by the expert group. I informed the students about the lively debates in our committee and in my own group on the Commission proposal, and the controversial vote in ECON and plenary. As a lawyer, I also familiarised the audience with the Lisbon Treaty rule requiring a constitutional basis for the adoption of a European law. Based on the Treaty, the legal basis applicable here was Article 114. I also posed the question as to whether all the provisions of Regulation 2020/852 were in conformity with the provisions of the TFEU. In particular, Article 1 of Regulation 2020/852 was examined in reference to Article 5 TEU, i.e. the principle of proportionality. A lively debate followed on the question of whether the provision was really necessary.

I also talked about the theory of the Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC). The EKC expresses a hypothesis put forward by economist Simon Kuznets in the 1950s and 60s. Under this hypothesis, as an economy develops, market forces first increase and then decrease economic inequalities.

The EKC is a hypothetical relationship between environmental quality and economic development: various indicators of environmental degradation tend to worsen as modern economic growth develops until average income reaches a certain point during development. In short, the EKC suggests that 'the solution to pollution is economic growth'.

That being the case, the debate focused on the question of whether the EKC was empirically verifiable. Some of the audience seemed surprised that the conclusions of the EKC were not considered during the policy discussion and design of Regulation 2020/852. Other students did not accept the conclusions of the EKC, rejecting the idea of incorporating its elements into the legislation in question.

The session lasted almost two hours. I would like to thank Professor Jonathan Larson, the students and the speakers.

**Dr Stefan Gehroid**  
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*Dr Stefan Gehroid during his lecture at University of Illinois, 20 April 2022.*

# BUILDING UP RESILIENCE AS EUROPEANS

DEUSTO UNIVERSITY, BILBAO, SPAIN | 4 MAY 2022 | ON CAMPUS

Under the FMA EP to Campus programme, I have been invited to a conference at University of Deusto in Bilbao where I was presenting how the EU is building resilience. Bilbao is one of the most creative cities in the world, and also University of Deusto is high-ranking among the European universities.

Post-Covid EU needs to be more resilient, more digital, sustainable and green. The European way of living will be hugely affected by epidemic and post-COVID recovery, Ukrainian war, higher costs and lack of energy, disturbing food chains and climate changes.

As Jean Monnet said: "Every challenge is a new opportunity for the development and so the post pandemic period is a new opportunity."

After the Covid pandemic and the new lockdowns in China, the Ukrainian war is now causing the inflation up to 8.6% on the European level (June 2022, euronews). The most difficult situation in the EU is the high energy prices which will only rise. Growth is down and inflation is up. It can be difficult for the businesses, entrepreneurs and the middle class households.

A few years ago, the FMA visited Georgia. At that time we could see the consequences of Russian occupation in Ossetia and Abkhazia. From this experience we know, that today Ukraine is fighting for their democracy and for their land, but also protecting the doors of the EU. After the Russian attack to Ukraine, the EU today is stronger, together with the united approach related to the war in Ukraine.



Before the pandemic, the EU had a very limited role in public health. The most difficult consequences of the pandemic were the restrictions on free movement, on gatherings and on the physical presence in schools and universities. After the first period, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) took lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic and the EU began to play a more active role; by building a European Health Union, advising authorities in the Member States by giving scientific based guidance and by creating global partnership to develop vaccines, better communication and coordination.

Measures taken to contain the spread of the virus and combat the war in Ukraine have had an impact on the food supply chain. As part of the Green Pact for Europe, the EU has developed the "Farm to Fork" strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system.

The EU is a net importer of energy and its dependence on fossil fuels is increasing.

We do not care about the environment and the consequences are climate change and extreme events. To reduce its energy dependence, the EU needs to make a digital transformation and strengthen its cyber security, reduce its energy consumption, invest in renewable energy sources and raise awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle with a varied diet, travel by public transport or bicycle rather than by private car, etc.

For a majority of Europeans, EU citizens should be taken into account more when it comes to deciding the future of Europe.

Young people say that raising awareness about the EU is important for future elections, so that young people understand that every vote counts. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, it is not with words that we educate young people, but by the way we live and by our actions.

**Zofija Mazej Kukovič**  
EPP, Slovenia (2011-2014)  
[zofija.mazejkukovic@gmail.com](mailto:zofija.mazejkukovic@gmail.com)



## EUROPEAN CLIMATE POLICIES AND THE RULE OF LAW

ZEPPELIN UNIVERSITY FRIEDRICHSHAFEN AND THE IZMIR UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS | 5 MAY 2022 | ONLINE

That was a quadruple case: two universities and two topics to be discussed in one event. Efficiency first principle was strongly applied to get out the best of this morning session of two hours on the 5th of May. The setup was already exciting: to speak to students coming from two countries with different backgrounds and diverging experiences is a challenge in itself. Discussing two issues not obviously belonging to each other still linked together by actual historical reality of the war in Ukraine and the EU's sanction policies was an additional reason for excitement. The discussion went in two consecutive sessions: first we talked about the EU's climate policies for an hour and then we turned to the Rule of Law framework, more precisely to the situation and possible outcomes in Hungary.

**“First we talked about the EU's climate policies for an hour and then we turned to the Rule of Law framework, more precisely to the situation and possible outcomes in Hungary.”**

The climate topic was started with a short introduction to the most up-to-date facts of climate change, followed by a sketch of the EU's related policy making with a short historical lookback and then a more detailed analysis of the actual policies on the table including the European Green Deal and the Fit for 55 package.

The students and professor Bűrgin also actively participated in the discussion posing excellent questions regarding intra-institutional dynamics in climate policy negotiations, conflicts and frontlines between the institutions, Member States or political groups. The lively dialogue covered the social aspects of the climate transition, effects of the Russian aggression in Ukraine to the EU's climate efforts as well as questions to name the most difficult climate policy areas (transport and agriculture was my answer, keeping in mind that energy markets or the building sector is not done either) and hardly ended when the one hour dedicated to the first session expired.

The rule of law session concentrated to the case study of Hungary but also sketched up the systemic shortcomings of the EU's institutional and legal environment to manage democratic deficits in the Member States in general.

We talked about the gradual de-democratization process in Hungary from 2010, the reasons behind the lack of an effective EU answer to the obvious problems (from limited tools and competencies to political games played by EPP and Germany's CDU/CSU) and the birth of the rule of law conditionality proposal and its bumpy road to be adopted, to step in force and to be applied. Of course, the actual situation and conflicts between the EC and the Hungarian government were also discussed, as well as potential murky outcomes of this fight.

As a conclusion we agreed that the wrestling between European institutions and PM Orban is not only about Hungary: it is at least as much about what kind of Europe we believe in. A simple economic cooperation and a single market, or a political project based on fundamental values, principles and rights creating a political community on the European level.

**Benedek Jávör**

*Greens/EFA, Hungary (2014-2019)  
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**EURAC Video Chat with Benedek Jávör**

- Head of Representation of Budapest to the EU
- Member of the European Parliament 2014-19
- Member of the Hungarian National Assembly 2010-14

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alexander Bűrgin**  
Izmir University of Economics

May 5, 2022 | Thursday

11:00 – 12:00 The EU's climate and energy politics  
12:00 – 13:00 The EU's options against democratic erosion in Hungary

Logo: FMA PROGRAMME EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT TO CAMPUS

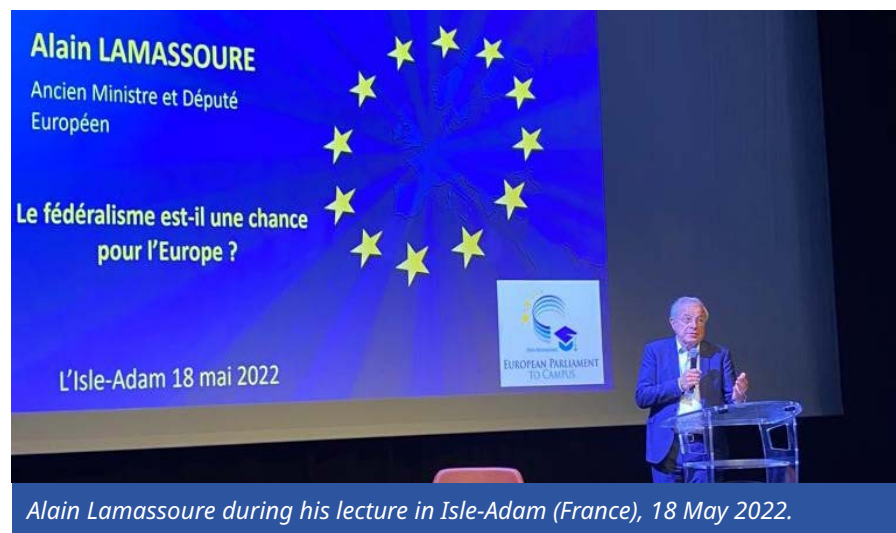
# IS FEDERALISM AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EUROPE?

L'ISLE-ADAM, FRANCE | 18 MAY 2022 | ON CAMPUS

The answer to that question is, quite simply, no. The development of Europe as a political entity started more than 70 years ago, and it is now a new legal entity for which there is no precedent. Europe's institutional architecture mirrors that of federal states, with a bicameral parliament representing the citizens, on the one hand, and the components of the Union (regions, provinces, American federal 'states') on the other.

The aim of classical federalism, however, is to establish a single nation state combining national political unity with a decentralised administration. At the moment, the EU is made up of 27 nations, all of which are fiercely committed to their independence and identity; it seeks to combine united collective action with the diversity of its constituent nations.

Another major difference relates to the powers that are transferred upwards. Foreign policy and defence are usually the first powers to be conferred on a federation, and yet those responsibilities, which are so intrinsically linked to national identities, remain principally at the level of the Member States. The same is true for education and culture. Since all social justice policies (redistribution between the rich and the poor, the young and the old, the sick and the healthy) have also remained within national remits, the EU operates with a paltry budget worth just 1% of GDP: the EU may be a regulatory giant, but it has a budget fit for a dwarf. The economic crisis brought about by the pandemic has started to even out this imbalance, with large-scale borrowing providing the finance for



Europe's recovery plan. We will find out whether, as a result of the war in Ukraine, this shift will become a genuine sea change.

The conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe recommend treaty change, but given the relentless pace of events there is no time for that. Thanks to the Lisbon Treaty, we do actually have a largely under-used yet very handy provisional toolbox. Enhanced cooperation is an option that allows the countries that are ready to abandon the requirement for unanimity in the areas they consider to be priorities to do so without waiting for the others. France is now the only EU country that is also a member of the UN Security Council – what is stopping it from deciding to vote on a case-by-case basis from now on, as most of its EU partners wish to do? The bona fide parliamentary system established by the Lisbon Treaty paves the way for the Commission President to be democratically elected via European Parliament elections, without anyone having to change as much as a comma in the Treaty.

**“Thanks to the Lisbon Treaty, we do actually have a largely under-used yet very handy provisional toolbox.”**

Under Lisbon, the European Council acts as a kind of collective head of state whose task it is to propose, on the basis of the results of the parliamentary elections, a leader who can garner the support of a majority (in practice a majority coalition) and maintain it throughout their term of office. If each European political family were to designate their candidate in advance, the winner would have the same high profile, and above all the same legitimacy, as all the prime ministers in Europe. Genuine efforts are at last being made to give the EU the financial own resources it needs to shoulder the ever-increasing number of responsibilities with which it is being entrusted.

**Alain Lamassoure**  
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# FMA ANNUAL MEETING

## KLAUS HÄNSCH ELECTED AS FMA PRESIDENT

On 2 June, the Annual General Assembly elected a part of its Management Committee with Monica Baldi, Edward McMillan Scott, Jean-Pierre Audy and Paul Rübig. Dr Klaus Hänsch was elected as new President of the FMA.

Former President Dr Hans-Gert Pöttering got a lot of appraisal for his great engagement during the last years for the Former Members Association. All participants agreed to further develop and deepen the valuable programs and activities of the Association in the next years.

Many members followed already on 1 June the debate in the EP Library on the topic 'The Present Future of Europe, key issues before and after the Conference.' MEPs from different political groups expressed the expectation that the dialogue with the citizens of the EU will continue and that their recommendations will be translated into concrete EU actions, with or without a change of the Lisbon Treaty.

A very emotional Ceremony followed in the Hemicycle to commemorate 47 former members who passed away in 2021 and 2022, among them Former Parliaments Presidents David Maria Sassoli and Lord Henry Plumb.



*From left: Jean-Pierre Audy, Miguel Ángel Martínez Martínez, Elisabetta Fonck, Klaus Hänsch, Hans-Gert Pöttering, Monica Baldi, Pierantonio Panzeri and Teresa Riera Madurell.*

The Dinner Debate in the Presidential Salon was opened by an inspiring speech of Pat Cox, Former EP President, on 'War in Ukraine-the 21st century's most momentous event'. This war is an eye-opening wake up call for all democracies across the world. The EU needs to show solidarity and respond in a clear and substantive way.

**Jo Leinen**

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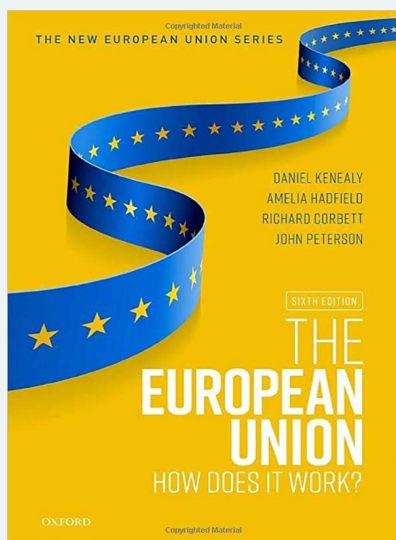






## THE EUROPEAN UNION. HOW DOES IT WORK?

by **Daniel Kenealy, Amelia Hadfield, Richard Corbett and John Peterson**,  
published by Oxford University Press 2022 (6th edition)



Change as a constant and a sense that the EU is an experimental system always in flux bookend this excellent text, a sixth edition that, like the EU itself, builds on the legacy of those that have gone before, in this case the first five editions and their authors and editors.

I began my working life several decades ago as a young academic, teaching on Ireland's first ever third level undergraduate programme in European Studies, at what is now the University of Limerick. Like change, the search for good textbooks was a constant. For anyone interested in how the EU works then look no further, this is the book for you. It is not bed time reading, nor should it be since it is designed for a student audience or for the curious reader who would like to know more. Taken in whole or part this is a top class reference book. It would be worth a place on the shelf of any office, public or private, where understanding the EU matters, in addition to its intended core academic audience.

Over a 277 page text in four parts, comprising an introduction to the EU, how it works, what it does and where it is going, complemented by easy to read summaries, helpful content highlights, discussion questions, suggested reading, web links and a glossary of terms, this book is a prime example of lucid presentation, concision, and erudition that will inform specialist and generalist readers alike.

My own life has been suffused with EU engagement before, during and since my years in the European Parliament. What I found particularly appealing in this text, as someone with a long experience as a practitioner familiar with the EU and how it works, was the intuitive plausibility of how it describes not just the mechanics of the EU, its institutions, and procedures but also its dynamics and multi-tiered complexity.

There are many academic theories of observation of how the EU works, elegantly presented in small bites, a kind of taster's menu to whet the appetite of those wishing to know more. The book presents these theories but is the prisoner of none, accepting that there can be no single theory of the EU. It acknowledges the rise of identity politics and Euroscepticism as part of the complex political fabric that both animates and constrains the EU in that continuum between concepts of democracy and legitimacy.

It is a book about EU integration but delivers a comprehensive review of the impact of Brexit, a first act of disintegration. It describes the growing role and influence of the European Council in decision making since the Maastricht Treaty. It identifies climate change and relations with China, among other issues, as future challenges. It ends at another staging post in the story of EU integration – the Conference of the Future of Europe, calling attention to the strengths and weaknesses of the EU in terms of its scope and capacity as an actor to deliver the goods.

I think there still is truth in Schuman's and Monnet's assertion that 'Europe will be made through her crises'. Having enumerated the multiple crises of the past decade and more the book was published before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a future chapter in the making, but one where the EU's resolve to act dramatically and at speed transcended its typical studied incrementalism, as it agreed in days many issues that it and its member states had dodged for decades. Web links will permit interim updates of this worthwhile 6th edition, before in time it surely and deservedly will mature into its seventh incarnation.

**Pat Cox**

*ELDR, Ireland (1989-2004)*

[pat@patcox.eu](mailto:pat@patcox.eu)

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## ACTIVITIES

22-24  
SEPTEMBER 2022

### FMA Visit to the Jean Monnet Foundation, Lausanne (Switzerland)

From 22 to 24 September, an FMA Delegation led by Vice-President Baldi will visit the Jean Monnet Foundation in Lausanne. Registrations are closed and a report about the visit will be available in the FMA Bulletin of December.

23-25  
OCTOBER 2022

### FMA Visit to the Czech Republic

Details will be communicated at a later stage. Please check your emails and the FMA website.

6  
DECEMBER 2022

### Librorum 'La finanza per la società. Dal dominio al servizio. Cenni sulla necessità di una trasformazione' (Finance for society. From domination to service. Hints at the need for transformation), by Vitaliano Gemelli, preceded by a guided tour in the HEH

From 17.00 to 18.30, House of European History. Details will be communicated at a later stage. Please check your emails. The Librorum event will be preceded by a guided tour in the House of European History from 15.30 to 16.30.

6  
DECEMBER 2022

### Annual Cocktail Reception and Dinner

This year a Gala Dinner from 19.30 to 21.30 will be organised. The dinner will be preceded by a cocktail from 18.30 to 19.30. More information will be communicated at a later stage via email.

6  
DECEMBER 2022

### Annual Seminar and Get-Together Lunch

A high-level debate will be organised from 09.30 to 12.00 in the European Parliament, Brussels. Following the Annual Seminar, a Get-Together lunch will be organised in the European Parliament from 12.15 to 13.15.

7  
DECEMBER 2022

### EPRS Roundtable - "President Lord Plumb: A Historical Appraisal"

A roundtable will be organised in the EP Library's Reading room from 13.30 to 15.00. Details will be communicated at a later stage. Please check your emails and the FMA website.



**Evelyn GEBHARDT**

PES, S&D, Germany  
(1994-2022)



**Leslie HUCKFIELD**

S&D, United Kingdom  
(1984-1989)



**Richard SEEBER**

EPP, Austria  
(2004-2014)

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# FMA AT WORK

## MEMBERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Klaus  
HÄNSCH



Monica BALDI



Jean-Pierre  
AUDY



Teresa RIERA  
MADURELL



Michael  
HINDLEY



Miguel Angel  
MARTÍNEZ  
MARTÍNEZ



Edward  
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Pier Antonio  
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Manuel PORTO



Paul RÜBIG

## FMA BUREAU

President: **Klaus HÄNSCH**

Vice-President: **Monica BALDI**

Treasurer: **Jean-Pierre AUDY**

Secretary: **Teresa RIERA MADURELL**

### LIST OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

#### FMA Bulletin Editorial Board:

Ms Baldi (Chair), Mr Audy, Mr McMillan-Scott, Ms Riera Madurell and Mr Rübig.

**EP to Campus:** Mr Hindley (Chair) and Mr Porto.

**Relations with Budgets Committee, DG Finance:** Mr Audy.

**Dinner Debate:** Ms Baldi and Mr Panzeri.

**Delegates to the Bureau of the European Association of Former Members (FP-AP):** Mr Martínez Martínez and Ms Riera Madurell. If necessary they will be substituted by Mr Audy.

#### Delegates to the Annual General Assembly, seminars and colloquies of the FP-AP:

Mr Audy, Mr Martínez Martínez and Ms Riera Madurell. Besides the FMA delegates or their substitutes and in agreement with the European Association, other FMA Committee Members may participate in the annual seminars or colloquies at their own expense.

**Relations with Former Members Associations outside Europe:** Mr Audy and Mr Martínez Martínez.

**Annual seminar and relations with think tanks, policy institutes and foundations:** Ms Riera Madurell (Chair), Ms Baldi and Mr Rübig.

**Archives:** Ms Baldi.

**FMA Communication:** Ms Baldi (Chair) and Mr Hindley.

**Working Group on Democracy Support and Election Observation:** Mr Hindley, Mr Martínez Martínez, Mr McMillan-Scott, Mr Panzeri and Ms De Keyser (FMA member with advisory role).

**Relations with the House of European History:** Mr Martínez Martínez.

**Relations with the European University Institute (EUI):** Ms Baldi.



# IN MEMORIAM



## **Giorgos KATIFORIS**

☞ 12 April 2022  
*PES, Greece (1994-2004)*

He served as a Greek Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Katiforis represented 'Panellinio Socialistiko Kinima'.



## **Jean-Claude FRUTEAU**

☞ 28 April 2022  
*PES, France (1999-2007)*

He served as a French Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Fruteau represented 'Parti socialiste'.



## **Ursula BRAUN-MOSER**

☞ 2 May 2022  
*EPP, Germany (1984-1994)*

She served as a German Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Ms Braun-Moser represented 'Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands'.



## **Yves PIÉTRASANTA**

☞ 28 May 2022  
*The Greens/EFA, France (1999-2004)*

He served as a French Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Piétrasanta represented 'Les Verts-Europe-Ecologie'.



## **Martin BANGEMANN**

☞ 28 June 2022  
*ALDE, Germany (1979-1984)*

He served as a German Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Bangemann represented the 'Freie Demokratische Partei'.

# IN MEMORIAM



## **Georgs ANDREJEVS**

✝ 16 July 2022  
*ALDE, Latvia (2004-2009)*

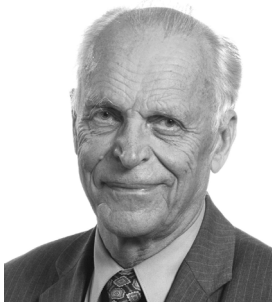
He served as a Latvian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Andrejevs represented "Savienība "Latvijas Celš".



## **Ilona GRAENITZ**

✝ 17 July 2022  
*PES, Austria (1995-1999)*

She served as an Austrian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Ms Graenitz represented the 'Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs'.



## **Aloyzas SAKALAS**

✝ 18 July 2022  
*S&D, Lithuania (2004-2009)*

He served as a Lithuanian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Sakalas represented 'Lietuvos socialdemokratų partija'.



## **Reino PAASILINNA**

✝ 21 July 2022  
*PES, Finland (1996-2009)*

He served as a Finish Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Paasilinna represented 'Suomen Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue/ Finlands Socialdemokratiska Parti'.



## **Hartmut PERSCHAU**

✝ 25 July 2022  
*EPP, Germany (1989-1991)*

He served as a German Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Perschau represented the 'Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands'.

# IN MEMORIAM



## **Marit PAULSEN**

☞ 25 July 2022  
*ALDE-ELDR, Sweden (1999-2004, 2009-2015)*

She served as a Swedish Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Ms Paulsen represented 'Liberalerna'.



## **Jan SONNEVELD**

☞ 2 August 2022  
*EPP, Netherlands (1989-1999)*

He served as a Dutch Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Sonneveld represented 'Christen Democratisch Appèl'.



## **Anthony SIMPSON**

☞ 14 August 2022  
*EDP-EPP, United Kingdom (1979-1994)*

He served as a British Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Simpson represented the 'Conservative and Unionist Party'.

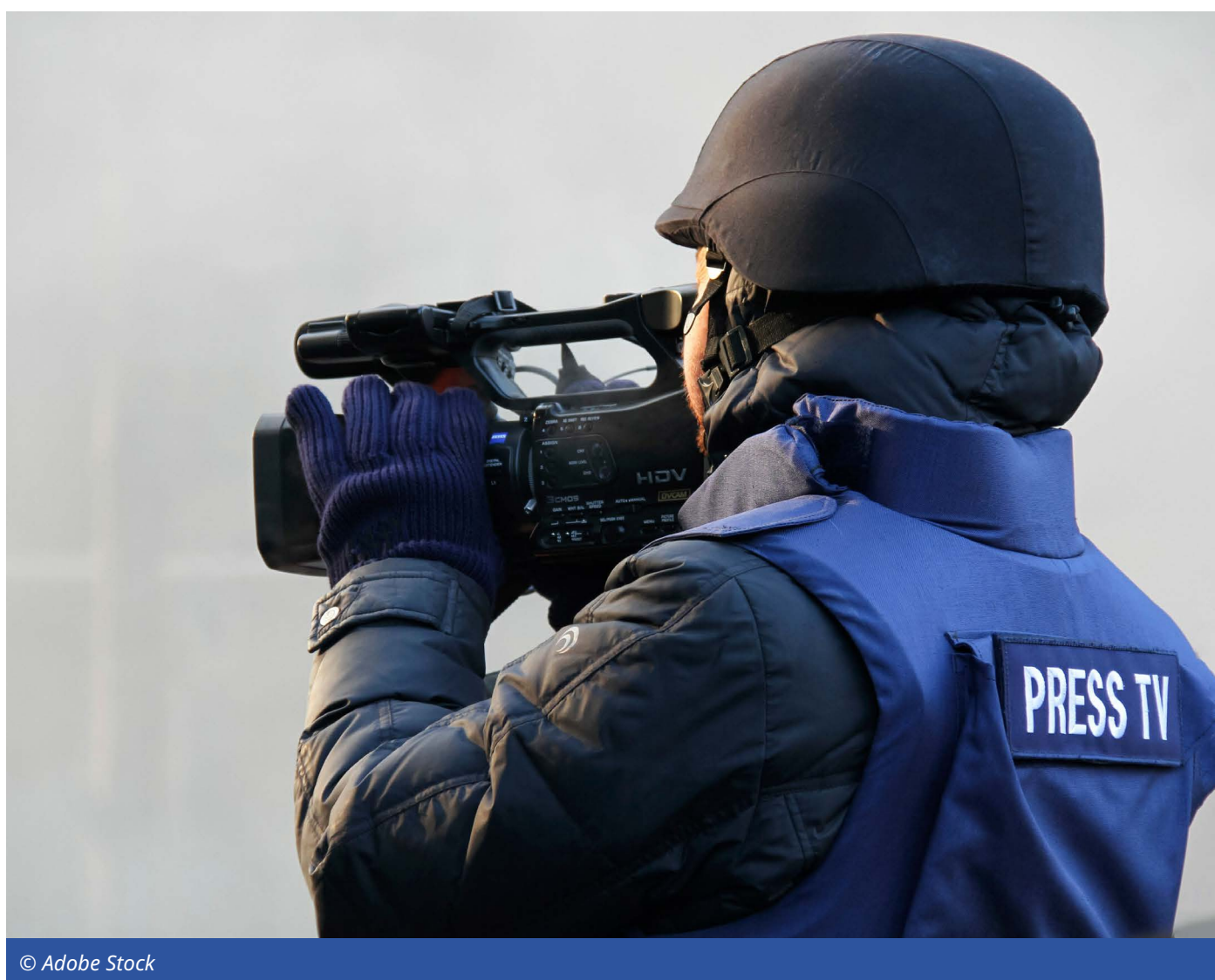
### ***Anthony Simpson: Founding member of the Bureau of the Former Members Association, FMA Treasurer from 2001 to 2005.***

*Anthony Simpson will always be remembered, not only for his political activities, but also for his professional, academic and social contributions; as well as for his enduring friendship and the great pleasure his colleagues took in working with him. He undertook prestigious work as a lawyer and had academic responsibilities at De Montfort University in Leicester, UK. He contributed greatly to a number of social issues he held dear: from 1996 to 2000, he set up and managed the DAPHNE programme to fund organisations active in the fight to counter violence against children, young people and women, and from 2003 to 2011, he served as Treasurer of the European Foundation for Street Children. He was a Member of the European Parliament, as part of the EPP group, from 1979 to 1994. He had important responsibilities, including as a Quaestor for Parliament's Bureau, a position in which he served from 1979 to 1984 and again from 1989 to 1994. Anthony Simpson played a key role in establishing the European Parliament's pension scheme in 1993, and served as a member of its board from 1999 to 2006. After leaving Parliament, he was a founding member of the Bureau of the Former Members Association, where he held the post of Treasurer from 2001 to 2005. At the European level, he will also be remembered for his role as an official at the Commission's Inspectorate-General of Services (now a part of the Internal Audit Service) from 1994 to 1996. In all cases, in his country and in the European institutions, Anthony Simpson's active participation will always be remembered.*

Manuel Porto on behalf of the FMA Management Committee



## FREEDOM OF PRESS AND THE MURDER ON JOURNALISTS



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## JOURNALISTS AT WORK FACE INCREASING RISKS BY OPERATING IN WHAT WAS ONCE SAFE

**By Maja Sever**  
President of the  
European Federation of  
Journalists

Security has become a top priority for the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) especially after unprecedented attacks on journalists and media workers. The Media Freedom Rapid Response, a Europe-wide mechanism which tracks, monitors and responds to violations of media freedom, recorded 626 violations in EU Member States and Candidate Countries in 2021. Of the 626 reported cases, 410 involved physical and psychological threats. Six journalists lost their lives in Europe last year and 13 (12 in Ukraine) this year. Safety has been recognised as a top problem for European journalists for several years. It is now an integral part of the organisation's work programme. Myself, as a representative of the union, I witnessed organised smear campaigns against journalists, advised colleagues and editors to report physical attacks, and participated in discussions with the police about establishing a system for protecting journalists.

On the ground, there is no country in Europe where journalists are not under attack and their security is not compromised. Online, nearly all journalists received threats to their safety. This has a considerable impact on journalists' mental health, on their working conditions and, ultimately, on the quality of information. Our members are well aware of the EU Recommendation on the protection, safety, and empowerment of journalists.

Plans at the national level are being developed to strengthen offline and online safety, including dialogue with police forces. Journalists are "high-risk" workers because of the nature of their work. However, there is still a lack of public awareness of threats and risks, protection systems, and strategic security policies for journalists and media workers. As a result, journalists at work face increasing risks by operating in what was once safe, but are now hostile environments. The COVID-19 pandemic has reconfirmed that the health and safety of journalists are crucial. This is the reason why the EFJ has stepped up its activities to better protect them.

**"The COVID-19 pandemic has reconfirmed that the health and safety of journalists are crucial. This is the reason why the EFJ has stepped up its activities to better protect them."**

One of the activities is the Safety4Journalists project, which promotes health and safety at work through training and social dialogue with employers. How can journalists strike a work-life balance in a digital age that produces 24-hour news? How can journalists' unions and associations support workers? How to reach out to more vulnerable workers, such as women and freelance journalists? There is a need for a culture of safety in media outlets and coordinated efforts from all sides. As part of the project, we intend to strengthen workers' organisations to promote health and safety at work, develop a universal risk assessment model that will be used by journalists and media outlets, and to exchange



**The European Federation of Journalists**, the umbrella organisation of journalists' trade unions and associations organising more than 320 000 journalists in 44 European countries.



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best practices from different parts of Europe. The project will involve five national trade unions and associations in Croatia (Croatian Journalists' Union, TUCJ), Germany (German Journalists' Union, DJV), France (National Journalists' Union CGT, SNJ-CGT), the Netherlands (Dutch Journalists' Association, NVJ), Sweden (Swedish Journalists' Association, SJF,) and their respective national employers' organisations.

The EFJ develops trade union actions and strategies that include onsite training, exceptional practical support, psychological support, cooperation with employers' associations, cooperation with the police, developing protocols, strengthening collective bargaining and social dialogue, and developing internal policies within media outlets. Protecting the safety of journalists is part of safeguarding our working conditions. Therefore, negotiations with employers at the

national level with representatives of publishers should be partly focused on security requirements, resources, and mechanisms to protect the safety of journalists and media workers in collective agreements. Employers have a duty of care which is an obligation to protect employees' health and safety. It is a prerequisite for media freedom.

**“Employers have a duty of care which is an obligation to protect employees' health and safety. It is a prerequisite for media freedom.”**

We will certainly do everything in our power and capacity to provide a safe environment, strengthen journalists' organisations, raise

awareness, and fight for systematic changes. However, it is of utmost

importance to change the attitude of the whole society towards this problem. From the political and public condemnation of attacks on journalists, efficient and transparent investigations of every case of endangerment of journalists' safety, the end of impunity for attacks on journalists, and full respect for the work and safety of journalists at all levels. In this task, everyone has a responsibility. Because journalism is a public good, and as such, we must preserve and defend it.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF JOURNALISM

**By Jaume Duch**

*Director General of DG  
Communication in the  
European Parliament  
jaume.duch@europarl.  
europa.eu*

Recent events and clouds on the horizon in the east becoming darker serve as a reminder that it is the duty of each one of us to safeguard democracy, recalling journalism's essential role in defending the values and principles we cherish most.

Brexit, COVID and now Ukraine. Upheavals whose magnitude also tell us that awareness for the importance of free and fair media was perhaps slightly neglected or taken for granted of late. The work of the European Parliament reflects this new realisation, both in its resolutions but also among its Secretariat.

**“Brexit, COVID and now Ukraine. Upheavals whose magnitude also tell us that awareness for the importance of free and fair media was perhaps slightly neglected or taken for granted of late.”**

The European Union is synonymous with democracy, respect for human rights and for the values on which it was founded, including freedom of speech and press. Unfortunately, we are witnessing a democratic regression globally: increased populism, disinformation, electoral interference and war is back on the European continent. Against this background, the European Parliament has a duty to stand for democracy inside its borders and beyond.

Democracy cannot survive without independent media and free journalists. In the last few years, even within the European Union, a number of shocking attacks violating freedom of speech and freedom of information have been successful. As difficult as it is to believe considering we are in the twenty-first century, journalists have been murdered in Europe for doing their jobs. The recent cases of Peter de Vries, a Dutch journalist; Ján Kuciak, in Slovakia; Giorgios Karayvazen, in Greece or Daphne Caruana Galizia in Malta are the tip of the iceberg.

Following a severe condemnation of Caruana's assassination, the Bureau called for a prize to recognise the investigative journalism in Europe and to raise awareness of the importance of the freedom of speech and press. Next month the Parliament will unveil the winner of its second edition.

Other attacks against the press fortunately do not have such tragic consequences on a human level, but they have devastating ones collectively. The pressure that media sources are subjected to in certain member states are another unacceptable example and a barometer for the health of democracy. Indeed, journalists are often the first ones to suffer the consequences of weakening fundamental values and rights.



© European Union 2021 - Source : EP

In this era characterised by disinformation and fake news that destabilises rule of law and democracy; quality, meticulous journalism needs to be both nurtured and defended. Europe will not progress without journalism, and journalism can be only delivered successfully under the umbrella of the European Union's values.

**“Europe will not progress without journalism, and journalism can be only delivered successfully under the umbrella of the European Union’s values.”**

Support for the media is achieved through concrete actions. First through laws: this Parliament legislates. In recent years, rules have been passed on intellectual property that help the media to achieve necessary economic viability: do not steal their work, do not steal their content. Progress has also been made on data protection legislation, the audiovisual media directive or thanks to legislation on the responsibility of social media platforms in the fight against terrorist propaganda.

The European Parliament is working in the Legal Affairs and Civil Liberties committees now in improving the mechanisms against abusive lawsuits targeting critical journalism (SLAPPs), a regulation that will feed the European Democracy Action Plan and the Action Plan for Media. In addition, MEPs periodically scrutinise the media freedom standards in the EU and beyond, with particular attention to the funding values of the EU such as the rule of law.



*European Democracy Action Plan © European Commission, 2021*

On a practical level too, Parliament's communication services facilitate the work of the press as much as we can.

The European Parliament's communication services provide journalists with extensive multilingual press material and a large pool of press officers both in Brussels and in Member States, working rooms, television and radio studios and high quality, free audio-visual material. We are aware of the economic difficulties linked to the monitoring of European news, especially in times of crisis.

To this end, the Parliament manages a system of grants via public calls for tender to media wishing to extend their coverage of parliamentary news, obviously with complete independence and without any interference by the institution's press services. At the same time, liaison offices in all Member States maintain and strengthen links with journalists working in newsrooms across the EU.

One of the latest actions to support press is the creation of training programmes and scholarships for young working journalists named

after President Sassoli, who was a journalist for more than thirty years.

**“One of the latest actions to support press in the creation of training programmes and scholarships for young working journalists named after President Sassoli, who was a journalist for more than thirty years.”**

Challenges to democracy are not new. They will continue to exist and manifest themselves in different ways. Citizens can count on the European Parliament to always stand up to the adversaries of freedom and rule of law. Fundamental values are the bedrock of the European Project and our Union will continue to thrive in the future only if the Europeans and their representatives defend our Union's fundamental principles robustly every step of the way.

# THE RUMBLE SEAT

**By Brian Maguire**  
*US Correspondent for*  
**EURACTIV**  
*brian.maguire@*  
*euractiv.com*

Sunday newspapers after Mass. An inaugural speech drafted on yellow notepaper. Kennedy was here, in The Rumble Seat. Tucked into a corner of Wisconsin Avenue, in Washington's Georgetown district, Martin's Tavern is a hallowed political bistro, serving United States' presidents, senators and politicians for generations. I've come here to write about the delicate State of the Union between journalism, politics, and Dollar Bill – the de facto head of state.

JFK would recognize Martin's today. Aged wood and jazz mid-afternoon; Sinatra is playing. Sitting in The Rumble Seat, a two-seater booth with a green and brass-lined tabletop, Kennedy could read the room, and all but two tables would have to pass the Senator from Massachusetts before stepping outside to smoke on the curbside or hail a cab.

As a 28-year-old reporter in Berlin, Kennedy covered the 1945 Potsdam Conference. Of Berlin, he wrote in his diary: "The devastation is complete..."

Yet, just five years ago, in Berlin, I visited a fine exhibition of Kennedy heirlooms and photographs. The exhibition fascinates for the clarity of purpose it reveals - a fictitious non-fiction - a story arc shaping JFK's future presidential campaign, more than twenty years before he ran for the presidency. It's truth well told.

JFK's Sunday editions were not clickable. The 'metrics' as we say today, were simple – with Jackie on the front of a magazine, revenue went up. Front page photos and sensational headlines sold the paper; Kennedy was a commercial sensation.

'Freedom of the Press' has always been a nuanced banner above democracy, a dance between influential dinner parties and party lines, with quietly contrived agreements to ensure every dime spent on newsprint was profit converted to power. Kennedy learned alchemy early, harnessing a steady gaze and theatrical storylines to turn publicity into political gold, while enriching press barons along the way. So, ask me, sitting here in The Rumble Seat, where JFK's pen sat upon a yellow legal pad - 'Was the press ever free?'.

**“‘Freedom of the Press’ has always been a nuanced banner above democracy, a dance between influential dinner parties and party lines, with quietly contrived agreements to ensure every dime spent on newsprint was profit converted to power.”**



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© Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Addressing the nation for the first time as President, he said: “The torch has been passed to a new generation...” but this generation, our generation, has squandered truth in pursuit of ‘Likes’, keywords, and algorithmic pseudo-realities. No news outlet is free of this virus, though a few still swim against the tide. Today’s teens are the first generation without a truly common social narrative binding them as a nation, as a people – the town square is as devastated as Berlin, splintered into millions of pixelated AI-driven sub-plots.

**“Today’s teens are the first generation without a truly common social narrative binding them as a nation, as a people – the town square is a**

**devastated as Berlin, splintered into millions of pixelated AI-driven sub-plots.”**

Newsrooms today are a fraction of the size they were when I started as a journalist more than twenty years ago. Artificial intelligence is already used by leading newswires to write data-driven articles. You can join the dystopian dots when these articles are tailored to one hundred million social media profiles.

To counter, this generation must ignite a revolution in the boardrooms – defunding lies, advocating, and bolstering democracy, improving control of malign advertising.

It was Bobby Kennedy who said: “We develop the kind of citizens we deserve.” It is our duty to enhance the quality of our democracy

by educating Europe’s citizens as guardians of a free press, an imperfectly free press, for sure, but with rigor of intellect and due process as a sword and shield, we can preserve a noble discourse.

Finally - public service broadcasting is essential and merits European Union investment, for journalists are more likely to be silenced by commercial needs than an assassin’s bullet.

**“Finally - public service broadcasting is essential and merits European Union investment, for journalists are more likely to be silenced by commercial needs than an assassin’s bullet.”**

# DEMOCRACY ON THE LINE

**By Katherina  
Daskalaki**

*EDA/UFE, Greece  
(1994-1999)  
katerinadask8@  
gmail.com*

My generation may have been the last to serve traditional journalism. By that I mean that for the journalists of my generation, newspapers and, more broadly, printed material were at the top of the information pyramid – you could count on them for information that was reliable, as it should be. To each opinion piece a name was clearly attached, albeit occasionally a pseudonym, and that signature marked the culmination of years of work and carried a certain weight. I experienced the transition from traditional to digital printing methods, the latter directly involving the editor in the technical aspects of reporting, a process that has gradually, almost imperceptibly, come to influence the style of the resulting texts. Journalism, and television, have taken the plunge into the entertainment world. The immediacy of images and their ability to effortlessly convey ‘reality’ without words has always had other implications: there is a natural tendency, for example, to want to show real-world displays of violence, only encouraged by the fierce competition

between ‘channels’ (which are, let’s not forget, commercial businesses), and to exaggerate, for the same reasons. All of this leads to programmes being watered down to appeal to the ‘widest’ audience possible, as the survival of the business depends on advertising. It is perhaps worth reminding you here of the MEDIA 1 and 2 programmes we voted for in Parliament many years ago. There were very interesting remarks made on the role that public television channels (which are, in theory, not only interested in making a profit) could play in improving the quality of programmes. But even television is now a thing of the past; we all know it, even the older generations, for whom it still remains a vital source of company.

We are now in the age of ‘social media’ and digital platforms. Journalists still find themselves on the front line or even killed at world events, armed conflicts and natural disasters affect our planet on a daily basis and war may soon return to the heart of Europe, but the ‘power’ and ‘influence’ now lies in the hands of these platforms, which are largely out of control. There are some earnest and legitimate ‘signatures’ on them, but they also contain a load of nonsense. Everyone expresses their own truth, in their own way, often with the naive belief that these platforms are leading the way for modern democracy. But it’s usually populist, poor quality and vulgar content that thrives. And, needless to say, disinformation.

**“Everyone expresses their own truth, in their own way, often with the naive belief that these platforms are leading the way of modern democracy.”**



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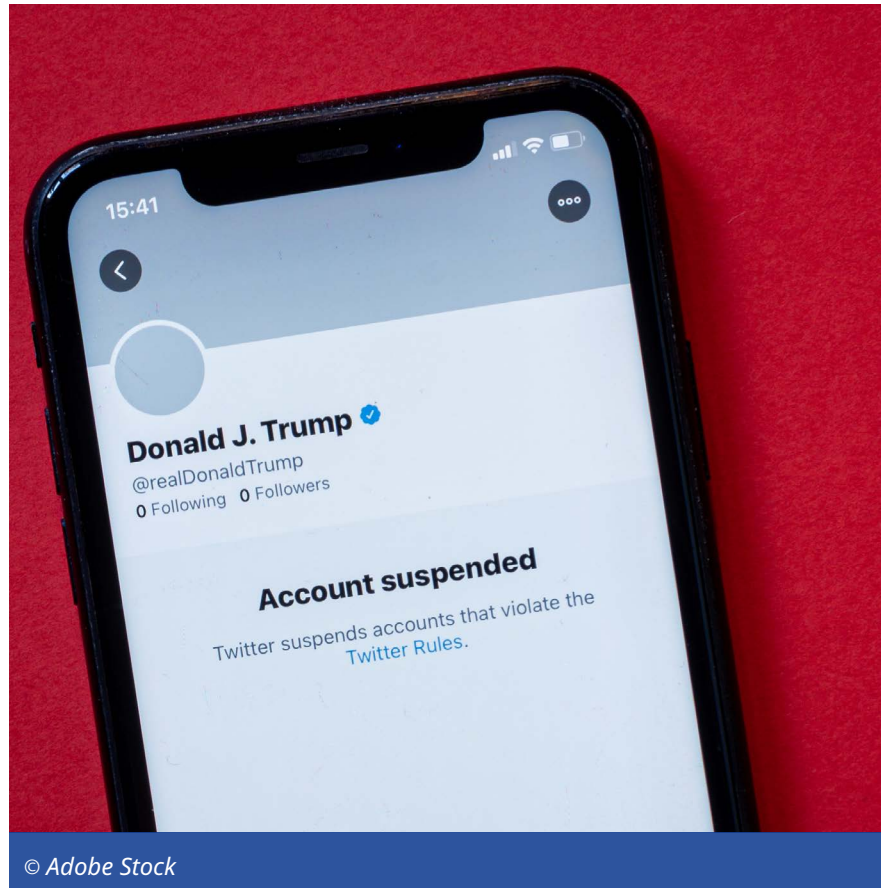
**“The power and influence lies in the hands of digital platforms, which are largely out of control.”**

Are these platforms to blame? Of course not. The ‘platforms’ are only the backbone and product of what characterises our current times: extreme narcissism at all levels (as evidenced on a mundane day-to-day basis by the ubiquitous craze for selfies) and widespread mediocrity in public discourse. The great political figures that we once knew who rebuilt Europe out of the ruins of the war in the face of adversity have for the most part been replaced by technocrats managing power they ultimately have little control over, as it has largely been transferred to other spheres where globalised economic interests prevail.

The ‘platforms’ and the interactive opportunities they offer contribute to this, even if unwittingly, and the game is well and truly on.

But if we are not careful and do not report (how?) the problems and shortcomings, it could be a dangerous game for democracy. Because what is at stake is democracy as we have known it on this old careworn continent that is our own and that – at least regarding the essential humanist values on which the western world was built – still has no equal.

Democracy is on the line. Democracy which, according to Greek etymology, means the people hold power. Not the mob. Democracy which, in order to function, requires laws and respect for those laws, which in turn implies the famous principle of equality before the law. ‘Platforms’ certainly represent our times.



But they also amplify the dangers. We saw the effect they can have with the events that shook American democracy at the Capitol and although that may be an extreme example, it is far from being the only one. Democracy goes hand in hand with serious, responsible, reliable and verified information, for which there will always be journalists prepared to shed their blood.

**“Democracy goes hand in hand with serious, responsible, reliable and verified information, for which there will always be journalists prepared to shed their blood.”**

So what can be done about this? How can the current chaos on the internet possibly be sorted out without authoritarian intervention? This is perhaps one of the great questions of our times, and is one that the European Parliament would do well to address. Some 35 years ago, we prepared an own-initiative report on the future of the press in Europe. It will now seem more than outdated. Is it not time for the European Parliament to do something about how information in our current times is provided?



# 'CRISES, WAR AND VIOLENCE': LITTLE HOPE FOR THE WORLD'S PRESS

By **Karin Junker**

*PES, Germany  
(1989-2004)  
karin.junker@  
t-online.de*

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, celebrated to promote an independent, pluralistic press as a key feature of democratic societies, Reporters without Borders, an organisation originally founded in France, published the twentieth iteration of its report on developments in the sector, indicating that the situation is becoming more difficult and the scope of action is widening. When I was elected to the European Parliament in 1989, neither the NGO nor World Press Freedom Day – designated as such in 1994 by UNESCO and the UN General Assembly – existed. The media landscape, which at that time consisted of the print media and growing television and radio offerings, has since expanded to include a multitude of digital possibilities, with the smartphone and the internet being bywords for versatility.

While the Index published this year by 'Reporters Without Borders' under the heading 'Crises, wars and violence' placed the European Union towards the

top of the list, it also made it clear that a great deal remained to be done in Europe. In Germany, the Netherlands, France and Italy, violent attacks by extreme right-wing groups or the lack of police protection at demonstrations are a cause for concern.

World Press Freedom Day is celebrated on May 3 – including in the European Parliament. The annual Press Freedom Index ranking the situation of the media across 180 countries plays a prominent role in this. The list in 2022 makes for depressing reading and reveals that 32 journalists and two other media professionals were killed, while 362 journalists were imprisoned, with a further 19 media professionals and 92 bloggers being held in custody. This is mostly happening in other parts of the world, but such tragedies also take place at Europe's doorstep. This is the reason behind the Daphne Caruana Galizia Prize, awarded for the second time this year by the European Parliament in commemoration of the journalist killed in Malta whose

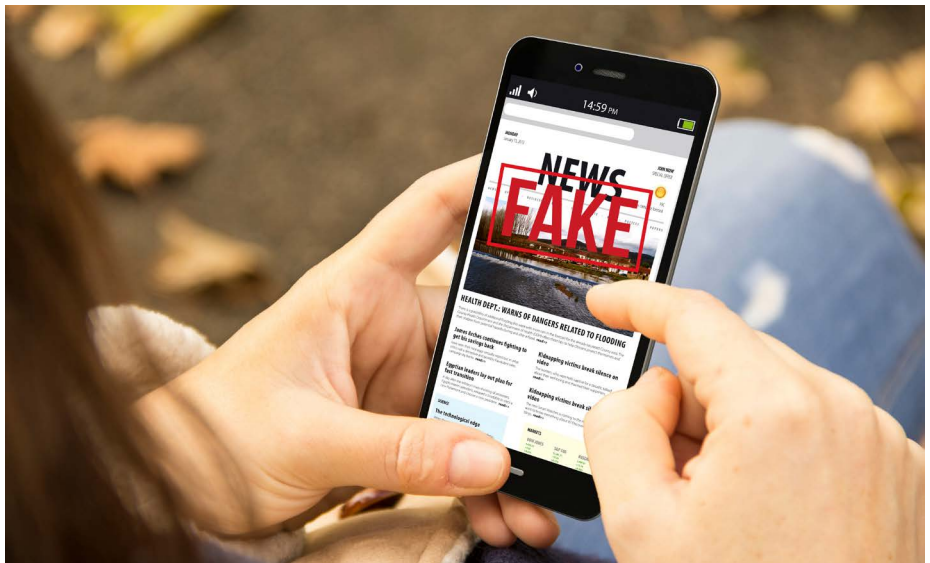


investigations into criminal activities came too close to revealing the truth.

**“The annual Press Freedom Index ranking list in 2022 makes for depressing reading and reveals that 32 journalists and two other media professionals were killed, while 362 journalists were imprisoned, with a further 19 media professionals and 92 bloggers being held in custody.”**

The list of those who have lost their lives more recently include George Karaivaz in Athens and Peter R. de Vries in Amsterdam, along with many early victims of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine launched on 24 February 2022. This war has had a significant negative impact on news coverage by many media outlets, especially in Russia, where the mere use of the word ‘war’ is punishable by years in prison, and where all even remotely independent media have been eliminated. In contrast to this, the allegedly necessary ‘special operation’ for the political ‘liberation’ of Ukraine is praised by the Russian state media, this being believed by many in Russia because they lack alternative sources of information, while those who know better prefer to keep their mouths shut.

As far as the EU is concerned, the countries ranked highest are the seven with a ‘good’ rating: Denmark, Sweden, Estonia, Finland,



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Ireland, Portugal and Lithuania. There is then a number of EU Member States with a ‘satisfactory’ rating, ranging from Germany (16th place) through to Spain (32nd place), while another group of countries in the EU is said to have ‘identifiable problems’, ranging from Italy (48th place) through to Greece (108th place), the lowest ranking of any EU Member State. This EU must not settle for this!

Of the 180 countries on the list worldwide, 26 are in a ‘good situation’, 27 in a ‘satisfactory’ situation, 69 have ‘identifiable problems’, 38 are in a ‘difficult situation’ and 20 in a ‘very serious’ situation.

China is on the way to an all-encompassing control over media professionals and media users. It thus ranks in 175th place, with Myanmar (176th), Turkmenistan (177th), Iran (178th), Eritrea (179th) and North Korea (180th) bringing up the rear.

**“The European Parliament advocates a special committee on a common strategy against foreign-led fake news initiatives that are increasingly apparent.”**

The European Parliament advocates a special committee on a common strategy against foreign-led fake news initiatives that are increasingly apparent. The aim is to increase support for independent journalism, fact-checkers and researchers. The Commission intends to tackle abusive practices. It also plans a new scholarship programme and a training programme for young journalists. After all, a vibrant democracy is only possible with a vibrant press!

# FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

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Freedom of thought, speech and the press are fundamental rights that should be respected in every society but it is often only in progressive and democratic societies that this actually happens.

In the last few years we have seen how some countries that are run on autocratic lines have prevented freedom of the press, closed down a number of newspaper offices, and imprisoned and prosecuted many journalists. Many civil rights have been gradually lost, or else cut back, in these countries.

Nor are countries like Afghanistan, China or other countries with despotic monarchic systems the only examples of this. We know that in Russia, and also in Turkey, the free flow of information was cut to a minimum years ago and is now practically non-existent. Still today there are too many countries where the press is the voice of the regime and information is strictly controlled.

If there is no free flow of information, if there is no means of expressing dissent and criticism, then there is often little hope of a better life for the country's population. Over the years thousands of journalists have faced dangers of many kinds and in too many cases have even sacrificed their lives just to ensure that news arrives from even the most dangerous war zones. What is happening right now in Ukraine is a blatant example of how journalists are clamped down on to stop the public learning from their reporting and photos the truth about what is really happening.

**“If there is no free flow of information, if there is no means of expressing dissent and criticism, then there is often little hope of a better life for the country's population.”**

While there are many different ways of providing information, the Internet and the social networks have been and continue to be a great means of spreading news and knowledge. Thanks to the worldwide web people can keep in contact even while living under violent regimes that suppress freedom of the press and information. However it should be remembered that while the printed press, radio and television are subject to rules and laws monitoring the accuracy of their content, unfortunately – and this is a long-standing but so far unresolved problem – there is no way of rapidly checking or controlling how information networks are being used, as none of the commonly agreed rules that would prevent manipulation, and even misinformation, exist here.



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Due to the lack of rules and because taking prompt action is just not possible, there are people lurking undisturbed on the internet who use it to commit serious crimes, ranging from terrorism to the sale of illegal and dangerous substances, or to spread false information, causing problems for social stability.

**“Due to the lack of rules and because taking prompt action is just not possible, there are people lurking undisturbed on the internet who use it to commit serious crimes, ranging from terrorism to the sale of illegal and dangerous substances, or to spread false information, causing problems for social stability.”**

The European Union must have a shared commitment to defending within the EU the right to freedom of thought, speech and information and to employing all the tools needed to be able to defend these freedoms everywhere in the world.

Similarly, every trade agreement signed by the EU with a non-EU country should take account of the degree to which freedom of information is upheld in that country, and the EU should take upon itself responsibility for all the initiatives needed to ensure that the restoration of at least some degree of freedom for information providers and the people entitled to receive their fair and accurate information underpins every economic agreement with autocratic countries.

The public has a right to accurate and truthful information, which is why we must now start clearly asserting that information and news have to be kept separate from comments, so the two cannot be confused.

The whole of society suffers when what is real is supplanted by a biased ‘truth’. The rights of those reporting information must go hand in hand with their duty to be impartial and accurate.

**“The rights of those reporting information must go hand in hand with their duty to be impartial and and accurate.”**

We are convinced that the right of the public to be informed must be combined with the right and duty of those providing the information to ensure that said information is accurate and corresponds to reality.

It is crucial that every journalist makes a clear distinction between items of news and their own comments, as to do otherwise will harm freedom and democracy.



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