

## THE EURO BRIEF

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**MARCH 11, 2018**

### **FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

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#### **EUROPE – US**

##### [Trump steel tariffs: European Union gears up for trade war](#)

EU officials have said they will respond "firmly" if US President Donald Trump presses ahead with his plan for steep global duties on metals. EU trade chiefs are considering slapping 25% tariffs on around \$3.5bn of imports from the US. [BBC, March 2, 2018]

##### [U.S. and Baltic states discuss Russian ‘threat’ to European security](#)

The United States and the Baltic states discussed strategies to address the threat Russia poses to European security and Russia's lack of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbors and agreed to deepen their cooperation. [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, March 6, 2018]

#### **EUROPE – RUSSIA**

##### [NATO condemns Russia threats of new hypersonic weapons](#)

NATO said that Russian statements threatening to target Allies are unacceptable and counterproductive and the alliance would press ahead with its twin-track approach with Russia- dialogue paired with strong deterrence and defense. [France24, March 3, 2018]

##### [How Russian networks worked to boost the far right in Italy](#)

An analysis of social networks reveals how Kremlin-backed media outlets boosted xenophobic discourse and a disinformation campaign on the migration situation in order to drum up support for radical parties ahead of the Italian general election. [El País, March 1, 2018]

## **EUROPE – EAST ASIA**

### [China could be using 'divide and rule' tactics to gain influence in Europe](#)

The EU is worried of China's growing investment in the Balkans and Central and Eastern European countries, as it might be using it to control major European infrastructure and pressure EU member states to take stances favorable to China. [*Business Insider*, March 2, 2018]

### [India and France sign security deal with China in mind](#)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Emmanuel Macron signed an accord aimed at stepping up cooperation in the fields of defense, security, technology, space and counterterrorism and securing commercial contracts worth €13 billion. [*France24*, March 10, 2018]

## **EUROPE – MIDDLE EAST**

### ['A national disgrace': fury over £100m aid deal between UK and Saudi Arabia](#)

The controversial aid deal between the UK and Saudi Arabia has been branded a national disgrace and greeted with fury by opposition MPs and the aid sector, with grave concerns expressed about Saudi Arabia's role in the Yemen conflict. [*The Guardian*, March 9, 2018]

### [AfD courts Assad in Syria in bid to send migrants home](#)

Angela Merkel and other leading German politicians have criticized the far-right Alternative for Germany party for taking a “disgusting” trip to Syria designed to prove the country is safe enough to send home migrants. [*Telegraph*, March 7, 2018]

## **EUROPE – ISRAEL**

### [EU: Jerusalem residency law could make Palestinians' status 'precarious'](#)

The EU warned that a new Israeli law that allows stripping East Jerusalem Palestinians of their residency status in the city if they are involved in terrorism or treason would make the lives of Palestinians even more precarious than it is today. [*The Times of Israel*, March 9, 2018]

### [Macron: France will recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital one day](#)

Speaking at the annual dinner of the Jewish community, Macron said he would like France to strengthen its ties with Israel but he will not make the 'error' of recognizing Jerusalem as Israeli capital as the consequences would be bad for everyone. [*Haaretz*, March 8, 2018]

## **INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

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### **EU POLITICS**

#### [World Bank blasts EU's deepening economic divides](#)

The World Bank has issued a highly critical report on the economic structure of the EU warning that it is leaving the bloc's poorer states and regions behind and creating growing divides between members as a result. [*Telegraph*, March 7, 2018]

#### [Italy anti-establishment parties make big gains in election](#)

Italian voters put their country on a potential collision course with the EU, on everything from budget rules to immigration, after delivering sweeping gains for populist and Eurosceptic parties in the general election. [*Financial Times*, March 5, 2018]

### [Donald Tusk rejects Theresa May's Brexit vision](#)

European Council President put forward a six-page draft document negotiating guidelines that seek to maintain as close as possible a partnership with the UK but that is effectively constrained to a free-trade agreement. [*Politico*, March 7, 2018]

### [Irish PM rules out three-way Brexit talks](#)

Leo Varadkar has ruled out three-way talks over May's Brexit proposals for the Irish border. He said it was not in Ireland's interests to take part in such talks with the UK and EU and called on the UK to produce more detailed proposals. [*BBC*, March 5, 2018]

### [Jean-Claude Juncker warns Balkan leaders to stop corruption if they want to join EU](#)

European Commission President said that the Western Balkans have a place in the EU but they would need to undertake political reforms, fight corruption and organized crime as well as resolve outstanding conflicts with neighbors. [*Euronews*, March 2, 2018]

### ['Our aim is clear' Kurz vows to use EU presidency to prevent illegal immigration](#)

Austria will take over the rotating six-month presidency of the EU in July and Sebastian Kurz vowed to use his country's EU presidency to focus away from resettling migrants in Europe towards preventing further waves of illegal immigration. [*Express*, March 9, 2018]

## **DOMESTIC POLITICS**

### [Victory for Eurosceptic, populist parties shocks the establishment in Italy election](#)

Italian voters have flocked to anti-establishment and Eurosceptic parties and rejected mainstream and traditional political parties. Five Star is the big winner of the general election, while the governing Democratic Party performed dismally. [*Telegraph*, March 5, 2018]

### [Germany's SPD members approve coalition with Angela Merkel's conservatives](#)

More than five months after Germans went to polls in the national election, Germany will be getting a new government. Angela Merkel will get a fourth term after her junior partners, the SPD, voted for a coalition deal. [*Deutsche Welle*, March 4, 2018]

### [Ousted Catalan premier withdraws bid to be voted back into post](#)

In a video recording from Brussels, Carles Puigdemont officially withdrew his nomination to lead the region again and instead endorsed Jordi Sànchez, the former head of a pro-independence association called Catalan National Assembly. [*El País*, March 2, 2018]

### [France's far-right National Front is getting a new name to hide its old problems](#)

The National Front is trying to start fresh and will hold a "refoundation congress" where Marine Le Pen is expected to present a new name for the party and a vision for its future, while grappling with its past demons. [*HuffPost*, March 3, 2018]

### [Death of investigative journalist sparks mass protests in Slovakia](#)

Tens of thousands of Slovaks have rallied to demand the resignation of prime minister Fico's government following the murder of the journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée, after he wrote an article linking Slovakia's top politicians and the Italian mafia. [*The Guardian*, March 9, 2018]

### [Why are Poland's nationalists so popular?](#)

The populist message and promises of the Law and Justice party to restore traditional values have resonated deeply in the vast countryside, where many rural voters long for a sense of stability and security in a fast-changing Europe. [*The New York Times*, March 3, 2018]

## **JEWISH COMMUNITIES**

### [France's Macron vows to fight anti-Semitism online and off](#)

In a speech to France's leading Jewish group, Macron pledged to fight firmly against anti-Semitism wherever it surfaces, whether in the street or online, and to protect the nation's Jews amid growing concerns about intolerance. [*France24*, March 8, 2018]

### [Poland's President apologizes for 1968 purge of Jews](#)

Polish President Andrzej Duda apologized to the victims of the Communist regime in Poland, including Polish Jews, who were persecuted by the regime, stripped of their jobs and expelled or forced to leave the country and forgo their citizenship in 1968. [*Haaretz*, March 8, 2018]