

THE EURO BRIEF

[The European Program at the Institute for National Security Studies](#) is proud to launch THE EURO BRIEF, an online newsletter. The newsletter will be published three times a month, and will cover current political, security, and economic events in the continent. The newsletter includes links to selected articles in the global press regarding internal European issues such as elections, political movements, economic events, immigration, and anti-Semitism, as well as European foreign affairs such as: Europe-US relations, Europe-Russia relations, Europe-China relations, Europe and the Middle East, and Europe-Israel relations.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EUROPE – US

[EU's Mogherini lobbies US Congress to save Iran deal](#)

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini warned Tuesday that the Iran nuclear deal can never be renegotiated, as she urged US lawmakers not to try to reopen the agreement. US President Donald Trump has told Congress that he can no longer “certify” that the 2015 accord is in the US national interest, leaving its fate in the hands of the senators. [*Daily Mail*, November 7, 2017]

[NATO to Discuss Bolstering Cyberwarfare Capabilities](#)

NATO defense ministers will discuss initiatives to bolster their cyberwarfare capabilities, part of a broader effort to offset rising threats from Russia. Key on the agenda will be whether to allow member countries to provide offensive cyber weapons to NATO commanders for use in military operations. Approval of the move is likely, but not assured. [*The Wall Street Journal*, November 7, 2017]

[US backs Europe on Russia deterrent](#)

US defence chief James Mattis has praised European efforts to jointly deter Russian aggression, amid talks on EU military integration. Speaking in Helsinki on Monday (6 November), Mattis said that “by tightening such cooperation here in the north, we see the deterrent capability of democracies strengthened.” [*EUobserver*, November 7, 2017]

EUROPE – RUSSIA

[New EU law takes aim at Russia pipeline](#)

The European Commission has proposed a new law that could complicate Russia's plan to build a massive new gas pipeline to Germany. Wednesday's (8 November) bill amends a 2009 law to clarify that EU anti-monopoly legislation also applies to offshore pipeline segments on EU territory. [*EUobserver*, November 8, 2017]

[Britain Investigating Whether Russia Sought To Influence Brexit Vote](#)

British authorities have begun investigating whether Russia attempted to influence the British vote last year on leaving the European Union. The British Electoral Commission referred to emerging evidence in the United States that Russia may have used Facebook and other social media to sow division and influence the 2016 presidential election. Speculation has been mounting in Britain that Russia may have similarly sought to influence the Brexit vote. [*Referl*, November 3, 2017]

[Russia Says It Won't Extradite Suspect in Montenegro Alleged Coup Attempt](#)

Russian authorities say they won't hand over a Montenegrin man to his home country where he is suspected of involvement in an alleged coup attempt. Authorities in Montenegro say Serbian and Russian nationalists plotted to occupy parliament during the country's October 2016 parliamentary elections, assassinate then-Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic, and install a pro-Russian leadership to halt Montenegro's bid to join NATO. [*REFERL*, November 1, 2017]

EUROPE – MIDDLE EAST

[The US and EU back Lebanon after Saudi Arabia said it had declared war](#)

The European Union on Wednesday affirmed support for Lebanon following the resignation of Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri, echoing U.S. backing for the Beirut government which Saudi Arabia has accused of declaring war. Statements of support from EU ambassadors to Lebanon and the U.S. State Department on Tuesday struck a sharply different tone to Saudi Arabia, which has lumped Lebanon together with the Iran-backed Lebanese group Hezbollah as parties hostile to it. [*Business Insider*, November 8, 2017]

[Turkey-EU Economic Summit Will Show Ties Recovering, Simsek Says](#)

Turkey's relationship with the European Union is in recovery and top economic policy makers are planning to meet at a summit in Brussels next month, Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek said. [*Bloomberg*, November 3, 2017]

[UK sales of bombs and missiles to Saudi Arabia increase by almost 500% since start of Yemen war](#)

Campaigners say 'mountain of evidence' shows British-made weapons being used to commit war crimes. The number of British-made bombs and missiles sold to Saudi Arabia since the start of its bloody campaign in Yemen has risen by almost 500 per cent. More than £4.6bn of arms were sold in the first two years of bombings, with the Government grant increasing numbers of export licenses despite mounting evidence of war crimes and massacres at hospitals, schools and weddings. [*Independent*, November 8, 2017]

EUROPE – ISRAEL

[Priti Patel forced to resign over unofficial meetings with Israelis](#)

Theresa May's government was rocked on Wednesday by a second cabinet resignation in a week after Priti Patel was forced to step down as international development secretary. The minister quit after being summoned back from a trip to Uganda and Ethiopia by Downing Street after it emerged she failed to be candid with May about 14 unofficial meetings with Israeli ministers, businesspeople and a senior lobbyist. [*The Guardian*, November 8, 2017]

[Cyprus, Greece and Israel strengthen defense cooperation](#)

The defense ministers of Cyprus, Greece and Israel met in Athens on Tuesday to discuss strengthening cooperation to promote security, stability and peace in the Eastern Mediterranean. [*Cyprus Mail*, November 7, 2017]

[Joint List MKs advocate for Palestinian citizens of Israel in Belgium, France](#)

A delegation of Members of Knesset from the Joint List is in Brussels this week, as part of efforts to advocate on behalf of the rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel. Participants in the advocacy mission, who is in the Belgian capital before heading to Paris, include MK Yousef Jabareen, MK Aida Touma-Suleiman, MK Jamal Zahalka and MK Masud Ghnaim. [*Middle East Monitor*, November 7, 2017]

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

EU POLITICS

[Brexit is 'getting dramatic', says EU](#)

UK negotiators have long been frustrated with the format of the (so far) monthly rounds of talks. [*BBC*, November 9, 2017]

[EU states poised to agree joint defense pact](#)

More than half the EU's member states are expected to sign up within days to a landmark joint defense effort in response to pressures on the continent's militaries. Germany and France have led the attempt to persuade countries to pool military logistics and crisis response troops while co-operating to develop weapons such as a new generation of tanks. [*Financial Times*, November 8, 2017]

[Italian general chosen to lead EU military committee](#)

The top general in Italy's armed forces, Claudio Graziano, was elected Tuesday to lead the EU's highest military body, the European Union Military Committee, as the bloc gears up for greater integration of defense and security initiatives. [*Politico*, November 7, 2017]

[Eastern Europe Set for Strongest Economic Growth since Crisis](#)

Central and southeastern European economies are on course for their strongest year of growth since the global financial crisis, in part due to a surge in wages and stronger demand from the recovering eurozone. Poland seen growing by 4.1% this year; Romania seen expanding by 5.3%. [*The Wall Street Journal*, November 7, 2017]

[September's asylum seekers down 50% on 2016](#)

Over 60,000 people claimed asylum in the EU, Norway and Switzerland in September 2017, compared to some 125,000 the same month last year. According to the latest asylum trends report, the largest share of applicants was Syrians, followed by Iraqi and Afghan nationals. The overall EU recognition rate was 36 percent, compared to 63 percent in September last year. [*EUobserver*, November 3, 2017]

[Finns oppose NATO membership](#)

The majority of Finns (59 percent) are opposed to joining Nato, according to a public opinion poll published on Sunday. Just 22 percent were in favor of joining the military alliance while 19 percent said they could not make up their minds. [EUobserver, November 6, 2017]

DOMESTIC POLITICS

[Catalonia independence VOID: Spain's court annuls declaration as chaos erupts on streets](#)

CATALONIA'S declaration of independence has been officially thrown out by Spain's top constitutional court as secessionist protestors continue to cause chaos in the region. [Express, November 8, 2017]

[Catalonia's ex-leader granted freedom to campaign for independence](#)

Catalonia's former leader Carles Puigdemont was spared custody on Monday, when a Brussels court ruled he could remain at liberty in Belgium until it had heard Spanish charges against him of rebellion. The court's decision means Puigdemont, who left Spain last month after Madrid fired his secessionist government and dissolved the Catalan parliament, is free to campaign for independence in an election in the region on Dec 21. [Reuters, November 6, 2017]

[Angela Merkel's latest migration headache](#)

Greens clash with potential conservative partners in coalition talks over deportations. The migration question, which loomed large in Germany's fall election, now threatens to dash her efforts to form a new government. Germany's future course on refugees quickly emerged as one of the most contentious in ongoing exploratory coalition talks between Merkel's conservatives, the liberal Free Democrats and the Greens. [Politico, November 6, 2017]

[Refugee centers in Germany suffer near daily attacks](#)

Far-right attacks on refugee homes in Germany still happen nearly every day, statistics show. Data from Germany's Federal Criminal Police Agency (BKA) shows that there have been 211 attacks on refugee homes throughout Germany in the first nine months of the year, plus an additional 15 incidents up to October 23. Though the total number of attacks is down, there are still more incidents than before the 2015 refugee crisis. [DW, November 6, 2017]

JEWISH COMMUNITIES

[UK Jewish community leaders meet Prime Minister Netanyahu](#)

The Board of Deputies and the Jewish Leadership Council hosted a meeting on Sunday morning between Prime Minister Netanyahu and the UK's Jewish communal leadership. The discussions were part of the Israeli Prime Minister's celebrations of the centenary of the Balfour Declaration. The Prime Minister stressed the need for the British Jewish community to continue its support for Israel despite growing anti-Israel feelings in wider society. [BOD, November 6, 2017]