

THE EURO BRIEF



JANUARY 21, 2018

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EUROPE – US

[Europe survives Donald Trump's first year in office](#)

The Trump presidency has shaken, but not broken the foundations of trans-Atlantic ties. Europe has found a way, for now, to deal with his idiosyncrasies [*Deutsche Welle*, January 19, 2018]

[America Last? EU says Trump is losing on trade](#)

Europe's trade commissioner said America is shooting itself in the foot by withdrawing from global leadership on trade. The EU has eagerly filled the gap and juggled a dizzying array of trade talks over the past year. [*Reuters*, January 15, 2018]

[Trump criticizes US London embassy site sold by Irish developer](#)

US president Donald Trump dramatically cancelled a planned visit to London to open the new embassy and claimed the embassy has been funded purely from selling US government properties in London for “peanuts” only to build a new one in a “bad deal”. [*The Irish Times*, January 12, 2018]

EUROPE – RUSSIA

[Facebook is investigating possible Russia meddling in Brexit](#)

Facebook is expanding a U.K. investigation into possible interference by Russia ahead of the country's election to exit the European Union, after facing pressure from lawmakers who were unsatisfied with the earlier probe. [*Fortune*, January 17, 2018]

[NATO alliance is not ready to defend against cyber warfare with Russia](#)

NATO has been in a “state of denial” about the danger posed by hackers acting on behalf of countries such as Russia and is not ready to defend against a major cyber-attack. [*Express*, January 16, 2018]

[Sweden sends leaflets to 5m homes on how to prepare for war with Russia](#)

Sweden is preparing to issue a public information manual on what to do in the event of war, as debate in the country grows over how to deal with the threat from Russia. [*The Telegraph*, January 17, 2018]

EUROPE – EAST ASIA

[Japan-EU trade agreement is about freedom](#)

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit this week to six eastern European countries is historic and reflects Japan understanding that the future of the international economic order will be played in and with Europe. [*The Japan Times*, January 17, 2018]

[What was Japan's prime minister doing in Eastern Europe?](#)

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe toured six countries over five days seeking to bolster political diplomacy and bilateral business links in the region as well as addressing regional security issues. [*The Diplomat*, January 18, 2018]

[EU preparing for trade war with Southeast Asia by banning palm oil](#)

The plans by the EU ban palm oil from Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand are officially to protect rain forests, but the three countries claim it is to protect their flagging oil industry in Italy, Spain and Greece. [*Express*, January 17, 2018]

EUROPE – MIDDLE EAST

[European nations step up Iran pressure in face of Trump threat](#)

European countries have stepped up the pressure over Iran's ballistic missile program and its role in regional conflicts as they struggle to respond to Trump's threat to junk a landmark nuclear deal with Tehran. [*Financial Times*, January 16, 2018]

[Turkey says it would reject any deal with EU other than full membership](#)

Association agreement dismissed by country's government. The process has now been effectively suspended, with EU institutions citing the growing authoritarianism of Turkey's government. [*Independent*, January 19, 2018]

[Qatar signs security agreement with NATO](#)

Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and U.A.E. have signed individual security agreements with NATO, which provides the framework for the protection of exchange of classified information, as defined by all 29 member countries. [*NATO*, January 18, 2018]

EUROPE – ISRAEL

[The EU's new role in the Middle East?](#)

As Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas rejects any further American role in the negotiations, EU Foreign Minister Federica Mogherini has maintained relations with both parties and remains committed to a two-state solution. [*Euronews*, January 15, 2018]

[EU 'Deeply Concerned' Over Israel's Arrest of Palestinian Minors](#)

Representatives of the organization in the region cautioned Israel against trampling children's rights, calling on it to act responsibly with Palestinian minors as 'the occupying power'. [*Haaretz*, January 15, 2018]

[Advice for Israel and Jews: Facing Europe's Challenges](#)

On a continent where Nazi Germany had so many collaborators in the countries that it occupied, the Israeli government is fully within its rights to confront governments about extreme anti-Israel bias and demonization. [*Algemeiner*, January 16, 2018]

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

EU POLITICS

[May faces tougher transition stance from EU amid Norway pressure](#)

Norwegian officials tell Brussels they may seek radical rethink of their terms if UK has access to single market for key sectors and the EU toughened up its terms for a transition period. [*The Guardian*, January 16, 2018]

[Hard Brexit could 'derail' Theresa May's fight to wipe out modern slavery](#)

May's fight to wipe out modern slavery could be "derailed" by plans for a hard Brexit. Leaving the EU without legal and security agreements could damage progress and leave 'gaping holes' in anti-trafficking laws. [*Independent*, January 14, 2018]

[The UK and France have signed a treaty on the control of immigration at their borders](#)

The UK will increase its contribution to the security of the border in Calais by 50 million euros. The two heads of state also announced that they had signed a military cooperation agreement called the "Sandhurst Treaty". [*Le Monde*, January 18, 2018]

[Merkel plots EU army with Macron as she vows to create a United States of Europe](#)

Angela Merkel vowed Germany and France would help create a United States of Europe with its own EU army and common euro zone budget. [*Express*, January 19, 2018]

[Sebastian Kurz and Angela Merkel find common ground on immigration](#)

The two nations will work together on "stronger borders" to reduce illegal immigrants. [*Politico*, January 17, 2018]

[EU concerned by Italy's election campaign](#)

European leaders have expressed concerns over the outcome of Italy's election and condemned a senior politician who warned that the "white race" was at risk from uncontrolled immigration. [*The Telegraph*, January 17, 2018]

[Baltic forming to meet at security forum in Lithuania](#)

The foreign ministers of the three Baltic States and NATO Deputy Secretary General are to meet in Lithuania in order to discuss challenges that the transatlantic community will face and the solutions to those challenges. [*The Baltic Times*, January 12, 2018]

DOMESTIC POLITICS

[Madrid exploring ways to stop Puigdemont from being reinstated](#)

The Spanish government is exploring all legal options to prevent a hypothetical scenario in which the Constitutional Court strikes down the possibility of an appointment of Puigdemont by video link or by proxy. [*El País*, January 19, 2018]

[Inside Germany's Rocky Coalition Talks](#)

Preliminary talks to form a new government in Berlin, following the collapse of a previous effort, underscore the degree to which the power of the leaders of Germany's main political parties has eroded. Angela Merkel's own weakness is more apparent than ever. [*Spiegel*, January 19, 2018]

[Can France's far-right reinvent itself?](#)

Eight months after the presidential election, the National Front still hasn't figured out how to become the party of the people. [*The Atlantic*, January 14, 2018]

[Who will win the Italian election 2018? Berlusconi makes comeback](#)

The controversial former Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, is making an extraordinary political comeback by teaming up with the xenophobic Northern League and the far-right Brothers of Italy ahead of the next Italian election. [*Express*, January 18, 2018]

[Czech Republic Faces Political Turmoil After No-Confidence Vote](#)

The Czech Parliament rejected the minority government of Prime Minister Andrej Babis in a no-confidence vote, a move is likely to prompt weeks, if not months, of further political wrangling. [*New York Times*, January 16, 2018]

[Romania to have first female prime minister, Viorica Dancila](#)

Viorica Dancila has been named as Romania's first female PM following the sudden resignation of Mihai Tudose. Ms Dancila is Romania's third prime minister in seven months. [*BBC*, January 17, 2018]

JEWISH COMMUNITIES

[German parliament creates anti-Semitism commissioner post](#)

Members of Germany's Bundestag passed a bill to implement tougher laws on anti-Semitism. They voted in favor of creating a commissioner post to develop and implement a strategy to root out anti-Jewish sentiment and crime as part of a 17-point proposal. [*Deutsche Welle*, January 18, 2018]

[UK ups efforts to fight anti-Semitism across a variety of fields](#)

A week ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day, initiatives to tackle antisemitism in the UK are being unveiled in a variety of fields, from football pitches to university campuses to the parliament. [*The Jerusalem Post*, January 17, 2018]