

THE EURO BRIEF



FEBRUARY 1, 2018

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EUROPE – US

[Europe is back. And rejecting Trumpism](#)

In contrast to Trump's pullback from international trade agreements and the Paris climate accord, the European leaders emphasized their commitments to prosperity through global commerce. [*The New York Times*, January 24, 2018]

[President Trump predicts 'tremendous increase' in UK-US trade](#)

After talks with Theresa May, Donald Trump has predicted a tremendous increase in UK-US trade and said the US and UK were "joined at the hip" on military matters. [*BBC*, January 25, 2018]

EUROPE – RUSSIA

[Russia is biggest threat to UK since cold war, says head of British army](#)

The chief of the general staff, Gen Sir Nicholas Carter, has described Russia as the biggest state-based threat to the UK since the cold war and warned that hostilities could begin a lot sooner than the UK expects. [*The Guardian*, January 23, 2018]

[Russia says Britain's claim of attack threat 'like something from Monty Python'](#)

Russia has dismissed the warning by UK's Defense Secretary and said it is likely he has lost his grasp on reason. Adding it is like something out of a children's comic or the show 'Monty Python's Flying Circus'. [*The Telegraph*, January 26, 2018]

EUROPE – EAST ASIA

['Golden era' of UK-China trade links in peril](#)

A mutually proclaimed "golden era" in bilateral ties between China and the UK has been thrown into jeopardy ahead of May's visit to Beijing amid disagreements over China's overseas investment drive. [*Financial Times*, January 26, 2018]

[Japan and France agree to deepen maritime security ties in 'two plus two' meeting](#)

The foreign and defense ministers of Japan and France agreed to beef up mutual diplomatic cooperation in securing a “rule-based order” in maritime security, including the East and South China seas. [*The Japan Times*, January 26, 2018]

EUROPE – MIDDLE EAST

[Deputy Secretary General in Istanbul: Turkey is a vital member of NATO](#)

Deputy Secretary General Rose Gottemoeller thanked Turkey for its many contributions to the Alliance, including counter-terrorism expertise, deployments to Kosovo and support for Ukraine. [*NATO*, January 23, 2018]

[Turkey migration deal sparks second-phase EU funding row](#)

The dispute over the next phase highlights how the EU's desire to cut migration is threatened by internal disagreements and pressure on national and union institutional budgets. [*Financial Times*, January 25, 2018]

EUROPE – ISRAEL

[Middle East Peace Process: "This is not the time to disengage"](#)

The EU is firmly committed to a two-State solution in the Middle East, with Jerusalem as the capital of both Israel and Palestine, and will continue to concretely support the peace process and the Palestinian people. [*European External Action Service*, January 22, 2018]

[German FM: Is Israel Prepared to Pay the Price of Perpetual Occupation?](#)

Speaking at the INSS conference, Sigmar Gabriel expressed concern about the growing distance within Israel's government from the two-state solution and said Germany looks forward to moving its embassy to Jerusalem, only as shared capital. [*Haaretz*, January 31, 2018]

[Palestinian leader urges EU recognize state, boost role](#)

Abbas urged EU countries to recognize the state of Palestine, step up political efforts in the Middle East and recommitted to a negotiated solution to the conflict with Israel. [*The Washington Post*, January 22, 2018]

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

EU POLITICS

[Davos: New momentum for Europe?](#)

Some Europeans think it's time for them to step up to the plate and play a more important role on the world stage. In Davos, Merkel and Macron both spoke out for free trade, international rules and universal humanist values. [*Deutsche Welle*, January 25, 2018]

[Brexit may amplify east-west EU friction](#)

UK departure could lead to a radically reshaped European order. Brexit coincides with a lengthening list of disputes that pit some of the EU's western European states against some central and eastern countries. [*Financial Times*, January 24, 2018]

[Crown Princess of Denmark: we cannot take our human rights for granted](#)

The protection of human rights cannot be taken for granted stressing the need for the principles and values underlying them to be passed on to new generations. [*Council of Europe*, January 23, 2018]

[EU bans countries from using 'homosexuality tests' on asylum seekers](#)

The EU has banned its members from imposing 'homosexuality tests' on asylum seekers, warning that the processes are unreliable and also breach fundamental human rights. [*Independent*, January 25, 2018]

[Bosnian Mijatovic to be New Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights](#)

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has elected Bosnian Dunja Mijatovic as the new Council of Europe commissioner for human rights for a nonrenewable term of six years. [*Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, January 24, 2018]

[Romanian president says will stand up for courts' independence](#)

The EU is concerned that Bucharest's judicial overhaul will reverse any progress Romania has achieved in fighting against corruption and said the laws would ensure Romania remained outside the bloc's Schengen zone. [*Reuters*, January 31, 2018]

DOMESTIC POLITICS

[Macron under pressure to hold vote as rivals attack president](#)

Marine Le Pen's former aide is calling for Emmanuel Macron to hold a referendum on constitutional reform, urging the centrist leader to make good on one of his key election pledges. [*Express*, January 23, 2018]

[Government to dispute Puigdemont's candidacy despite State Council ruling](#)

State Council has found no legal basis to block Puigdemont's candidacy. The Spanish government has said it will continue with its efforts to block him from being sworn in as the next Catalan premier. [*El País*, January 26, 2018]

[Italy elections: as left splinters, Berlusconi waits in wings](#)

As the Italian center-left seems poised to be heading for a humiliating defeat, Silvio Berlusconi has portrayed the center-right coalition he leads as a safe pair of hands against the insurgency of the populist Five Star Movement. [*The Guardian*, January 23, 2018]

[Finland elections: President Sauli Niinisto reelected with huge majority](#)

Finnish voters opted for reliability and stability by overwhelmingly handing a second term to President Niinisto. His huge victory means Finland will avoid a presidential runoff for the first time in history. [*Deutsche Welle*, January 28, 2018]

[Czech Republic re-elects Milos Zeman, populist leader and foe of migrants](#)

The Czechs decided to stick with President Milos Zeman and his often-caustic brand of populism that has stoked resentment toward Muslim immigrants. [*The New York Times*, January 27, 2018]

JEWISH COMMUNITIES

[Polish Parliament's Votes to Criminalize Mention of Polish Crimes in the Holocaust](#)

The controversial bill would forbid any mention of participation of the "Polish nation" in crimes committed during the Holocaust. Anyone who violates the legislation would be subject to a fine or imprisonment of up to three years. [*Haaretz*, January 27, 2018]

[UK Jewish group calls Amnesty 'disgraceful' over cancelled debate](#)

The Jewish Leadership Council organised a panel on the UN, Israel and human rights, which was to be hosted by the charity. [*The Guardian*, January 22, 2018]

[Austria's Jews boycott Holocaust commemoration over rise of far right](#)

Austria's main Jewish body will boycott a parliamentary Holocaust commemoration event because of the rise of the far-right Freedom Party, who was founded by former Nazis, and entered government last month. [*Reuters*, January 25, 2018]