

THE EURO BRIEF



SEPTEMBER 11, 2018

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EUROPE – US

[EU and US make first push for closer ties after trade detente](#)

EU trade chief Cecilia Malmström met her US counterpart for the first time since Trump dropped his threat to impose tariffs on EU cars, saying they had discussed how to move forward, identify priorities on both sides and how to achieve concrete soon. [Reuters, September 10, 2018]

[Donald Trump cancels Ireland trip after massive protests planned throughout Dublin](#)

Trump has cancelled an upcoming trip to Ireland – with massive protests having already been planned to greet him. Irish prime minister, Leo Varadkar, said: “There is an open invitation to the US president to visit Ireland at any time.” [The Independent, September 11, 2018]

EUROPE – RUSSIA

[EU calls on Russia to halt separatist 'elections' in Donbas](#)

Federica Mogherini has criticized a plan by Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine to hold elections and has called on Moscow to make full use of its influence on the separatists to stop the vote from taking place. [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, September 8, 2018]

[France accuses Russia of trying to spy on Franco-Italian military satellite](#)

French Defense Minister Florence Parly said Russia attempted to intercept transmissions from the Franco-Italian Athena-Fidus satellite used by both nations’ armies for secure communications, describing the move as an “act of espionage”. [France24, September 8, 2018]

EUROPE – EAST ASIA

[Britain's Brexit trade deal with Beijing put at risk by South China Sea 'provocation'](#)

China warned the UK it had jeopardized post-Brexit relations by sailing a British warship close to islands in the South China Sea and said "What the British side did is wrong and it will have a negative impact on the development of China-UK relations." [The Telegraph, September 7, 2018]

[China and Monaco agree to further push forward bilateral ties](#)

Xi Jinping held talks with Prince Albert II pledging to maintain close exchanges, discuss cooperation in areas of environmental protection, climate change, clean energy, low carbon and wild animal protection under the Belt and Road Initiative. [Xinhua, September 7, 2018]

EUROPE – MIDDLE EAST

[Andalusia calls for deal with Morocco to be able to send back migrant minors](#)

The Andalusian government wants Madrid and Rabat to negotiate the return of underage migrants to Morocco to cope with growing immigration flows that have led to overcrowded centers packed with 2,500 foreign minors. [El País, September 5, 2018]

[Anger as Italy arrests Tunisian fishermen 'rescuing migrants'](#)

A small protest was held outside the Italian embassy in the Tunisian capital, calling Italy to release six Tunisian fishermen who were arrested at sea on suspicion of smuggling migrants, saying they were simply aiding a boat in distress. [BBC, September 6, 2018]

EUROPE – ISRAEL

[Mogherini meets with Israeli Arab leader to discuss the nation-state law](#)

Mogherini said that the EU wouldn't want to see democracy and human rights being put in question or even threatened in Israel. Odeh requested that the EU officially condemn the law and call for its cancellation. [Haaretz, September 4, 2018]

[German governor opens Israel office, refuses to ban Hezbollah and Iran trade](#)

North Rhine-Westphalia's governor wrapped up a three-day visit to Israel with the opening of his state's first trade, cultural and educational in Tel Aviv and said he will continue to develop and deepen continuous, close and friendly relations with Israel. [The Jerusalem Post, September 8, 2018]

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

EU POLITICS

[Oettinger: EU in 'mortal danger' from inside and out](#)

EU Budget Commissioner said the European project is in "mortal danger" from opponents inside who want to weaken it or even destroy it and outside the EU from autocrats using trade wars and aggression. [Politico, September 4, 2018]

[EU future at stake in make-or-break election, Greek PM Alex Tsipras says](#)

Tsipras called on the bloc's pro-European and democratic forces to unite and stand on the same side of history to defeat extreme neo-liberalism and far-right populism, and argued that the 2019 EU parliamentary elections are "more than just one more election." [Deutsche Welle, September 11, 2018]

[European liberals seek alliance with France's Macron for European elections](#)

The leader of the liberal group in the European Parliament Guy Verhofstadt said he is seeking an alliance with French President Emmanuel Macron's political party for the European elections in a bid to build an alternative to nationalist populism. [*Reuters*, September 10, 2018]

['No hope for EU' Swedish MEP claims Swexit referendum on the cards if EU doesn't change](#)

Peter Lundgren claimed a Swexit referendum on whether Sweden should remain or leave the EU would be inevitable if Brussels does not drop its political ambitions and reverted to its original function of peacekeeping. [*Express*, September 9, 2018]

[Tory Eurosceptics' plan for Brexit](#)

A draft plan for Brexit to be proposed by Tory Eurosceptics includes significant tax cuts, Canada-style trade deal, a new military expeditionary force to defend the Falklands and a domestic-built missile defence system. [*The Guardian*, September 9, 2018]

[Italy could still leave EU, senior government adviser says](#)

The adviser to Luigi Di Maio attacked the arrogance of the European Commission and EU leaders for making no changes since the Brexit and forced Italy to reconsider its membership of the bloc and keep the option of "Italexit" open if reform fails. [*The Telegraph*, September 8, 2018]

[Hungary's leader rejects criticism in EU parliament debate](#)

As EU lawmakers debated whether to sanction Budapest's policies on migration, the media, corruption and civil society for allegedly undermining the bloc's values, Orbán strongly rejected criticism and said it "does not give respect to the Hungarian nation." [*The Washington Post*, September 11, 2018]

DOMESTIC POLITICS

[The bad Germans](#)

Three decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the lives of people in the east and west are far too interconnected to allow for a distinction between good and bad Germans. Right-wing populism, extremism and violence occur elsewhere in the country. [*Politico*, September 4, 2018]

[Germany increases surveillance of far-right party's youth wing](#)

Security officials in two German states began monitoring youth wings of the far-right Alternative for Germany citing "unmistakeable signs of structural ties to organized right-wing extremists". [*Haaretz*, September 3, 2018]

[Sweden election: far right makes gains as main blocs deadlocked](#)

Sweden faces a protracted period of political uncertainty after the election left the two main parliamentary blocs tied but well short of a majority, and the far-right Sweden Democrats set for significant role in policymaking. [*The Guardian*, September 10, 2018]

[French right wing calls into question proposal for more Arabic teaching in schools](#)

French conservative and far-right political forces blasted Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer's welcome of a proposal to "revive the teaching of Arabic" in schools in a bid to combat Islamism in the country. [*France24*, September 11, 2018]

[Spain's new PM in favor of a vote in Catalonia – but not on independence](#)

Pedro Sánchez said there will not be a vote on self-determination of Catalonia but he would like to see a vote on the legal framework covering the rights and obligations of the citizens of Catalonia, as well as the region's financing, political institutions and competences. [*El País*, September 3, 2018]

[NI Business leaders call for same-sex marriage legislation](#)

Drinks manufacturers, law firms, consultants and banks have signed an open letter calling for the introduction of same-sex marriage in NI and said they wanted to see their LGBT employees enjoy the same rights as those in the rest of the UK. [*BBC*, September 11, 2018]

JEWISH COMMUNITIES

[Attack on Jewish restaurant exposes deep-rooted extremism](#)

Germany's Central Council of Jews said the attack on a kosher restaurant in Chemnitz by masked neo-Nazis on the sidelines of an anti-migrant protest shows there's a deep problem with right-wing extremism in the region and should be treated as a call to action. [*Haaretz*, September 9, 2018]

[Blow to Jeremy Corbyn as Archbishop of Canterbury backs anti-Semitism definition](#)

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has taken a swipe at Jeremy Corbyn as he praises Labour's decision to accept the international definition of anti-Semitism "without any riders or caveats of any kind." [*The Telegraph*, September 7, 2018]