

A glance at:

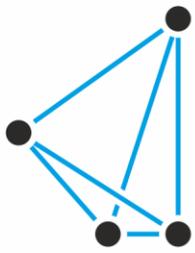
- **US Elections**

The United States' (US) elections of 08/11 largely influences various aspects of international relations, security, trade and fight against climate change. The European Parliament (EP) think tank published a note offering links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks on the elections (04/11). Congratulations to the new US President came from the NATO Secretary General on Wednesday morning, welcoming Donald Trump to Brussels for the next NATO Summit of the coming year to discuss the way forward in the present security situation. A letter of congratulations was also written by Presidents Tusk and Juncker, recalling the deep and historical relationship between the European Union (EU) and the US and expressing the hope that both *would "spare no effort to ensure that the ties that bind us remain strong and durable"*. The Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Group leader, Guy Verhofstadt, called for the EU to stand united and overcome its internal differences in the face of the fact that it can no longer be dependent on the US, after the newly elected President's frequent statements announcing that the EU's priorities are not his.

The EP President Donald Tusk also released a statement following the joint letter of congratulations where he specified that, while respecting the democratic choice of the American people, these results do present new challenges for the EU, namely the future of transatlantic relations. President Tusk further underlines that, notwithstanding the major efforts that both partners will have to undertake to ensure close cooperation, the latter is fundamental in order for both the US and the EU to count on the international scene.

Secretary General Zannier, from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has also expressed his congratulations to Donald Trump, upon his election. The OSCE has been involved in an International Election Observation Mission of the US's 2016 elections and presented its preliminary post-election statement the very same day, affirming that fundamental rights were respected, but that the campaign was marked by *"harsh personal attacks, as well as intolerant rhetoric, particularly by one candidate"*, directed towards women, minorities and people with disabilities.

The European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) has held a conference assessing the future of American policy, where three experts gave their view on how Donald Trump will conduct his Presidency, with a particular focus on the consequences for the EU. With the similar objective of understanding the nature of future EU-US relations, an interview was made with the chair of the EP's delegation for relations with the United States, David McAllister (09/11). In his view, trade negotiations in particular will be more difficult than under the Obama administration. On the same matter, the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) think tank has published a paper which depicts future



US domestic and foreign policies as being “*more volatile and less predictable*”. The consequences for Europe, according to CEPS, will be particularly present in the trade and security fields. Even though the study recognizes that the EU does have some influence on US policies and decisions, it also reminds that its leverage strongly depends on its internal cohesion, which is currently threatened both by Brexit and by the outcome of these US elections.

Links:

- [US elections- what think tanks are thinking](#)
- [NATO secretary General congratulates US President-elect Donald Trump](#)
- [Letters from Presidents Tusk and Juncker to congratulate Donald Trump on his election as the next President of the United states](#)
- [Wake up call for European leaders. Europe needs to take charge of its own destiny](#)
- [Statement by President Tusk on the outcome of the Presidential elections in the US](#)
- [OSCE congratulates Donald Trump on winning the U.S. Presidency](#)
- [Fundamental freedoms respected in highly competitive US elections, campaign characterized by personal attacks, intolerant rhetoric, international observers say](#)
- [As the dust settles: what does America's new President mean for Europe](#)
- [US elections: “we are not very sure what exactly Trump's foreign policy agenda is”](#)
- [Trump's election foreshadows further divisions in Europe](#)

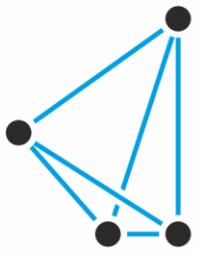
Monitored Policy Areas:

1. Security and Foreign Policy

• News

Poland has answered the European Commission (EC) by saying that its recommendations regarding the maintenance of the rule-of-law were lacking objectivity and knowledge of the Polish legal system, as well as incompliant with State sovereignty, the principle of subsidiarity and national identity. In fact, the government stated that Brussels overestimates the role of the Constitutional Court in ensuring the rule of law in Poland. The document proving said statement was leaked by TVN24 and is enclosed below (28/10).

A delegation of the European Parliament, headed by Elmar Brok, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, met with António Guterres, the **United Nations Secretary-General-designate** (UNSG) (03/11). They had an exchange of views on the main challenges the UNSG designate will have to face regarding peace and security in particular in Ukraine and the Middle East, migration and refugees, radicalisation and terrorism, human rights and gender issues. They also spoke about the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals as an important instrument for a policy of prevention and development.



A spokesperson for the **German ministry** announced that migrants seeking international protection should be stopped at sea and brought back to Africa, where they can apply for asylum in the EU (07/11). The goal of such a procedure would be to “remove the basis for people-smuggling organisations and to save migrants from the life-threatening journey”.

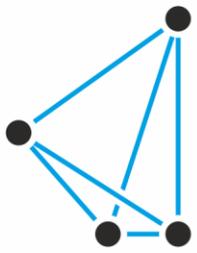
EU-Turkey relations plunge to a new low, when the Turkish police arrested 11 MPs from the liberal and pro-Kurdish HDP opposition party, including two of its co-chiefs, accused Germany of sheltering terrorists and threatened again to scrap the EU migrant deal. Moreover, it is now talking of re-instating the death penalty, which would end Turkey’s EU membership bid (04/11). Meanwhile the EU condemns the arrests, as the High Representative’s remarks show, but is not considering changing its relations with the country, as it needs an interlocutor in Ankara to deal with both the internal situation and the Syrian refugees living in camps. Although the EC still thinks Turkey has made a strategic choice to turn to Europe decades ago, its leverage is somewhat diminishing now that Erdogan is focused on consolidating its position inside Turkey, with Russia as a new partner (04/11). The ALDE Group leader, Guy Verhofstadt called for the EC to suspend Turkey’s accession talks until the MPs are released and the proposals for the re-introduction of the death penalty are withdrawn (07/11).

Augustus Henning, Michael Chertoff and David Omand, three former Chiefs of the German, US and UK intelligence services, put forward the proposal of creating **an EU-US intelligence hub** at the Tatra summit, a conference organised by the Globsec think tank in Bratislava on Saturday, 29/10. According to Mr. Henning, the need would stem from the recent terrorist attacks and Brexit, considering that the EU military integration is unlikely to bear fruit (03/11).

UK’s High Court has ruled that the government cannot launch exit talks without the Parliament’s approval on Thursday, 03/11. However, Prime Minister May remains determined to invoke article 50 of the EU Treaty, which would formally trigger **Brexit** negotiations, by March 2017 (04/11). The Prime Minister has warned the MPs not to block the UK’s exit from the EU and stated that her government would challenge the ruling by the High Court, as she would not allow “*the British people’s vote for Brexit to be sabotaged*” (07/11).

Links:

- [Poland rejects EU ‘interferences’ on rule of law](#)
- [Polish position, TVN24](#)
- [EP delegation led by AFET Chair Elmar Brok meets Antonio Guterres](#)
- [German Ministry wants migrants stopped at sea](#)
- [EU-Turkey relations plunge to new low](#)
- [Declaration of the High Representative of the EU on the latest developments in Turkey](#)
- [EU willing to keep contact with Turkey](#)
- [Verhofstadt: “Accession talks with Turkey should be suspended now”](#)
- [Former spy chiefs call for EU-US intelligence hub](#)
- [High Court ruling casts doubt on Brexit deadline](#)
- [May warns Parliament not to block Brexit](#)



- **Legislative Developments**

The European Parliament (EP) released the final edition of the adopted text on the VISA requirements unilaterally imposed by Canada on citizens of the Czech Republic. The EP calls for the EC and the European Council to increase political pressure on Canada to abolish said requirement.

Links:

- <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2011-0087&format=XML&language=EN>

- **Publications**

The EP think tank has published a briefing on the US Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA), the aim of which is to facilitate lawsuits by victims of terrorism against foreign States and officials supporting terrorism. Said bill has generated much debate both within and outside the US because it is seen as potentially violating international law and State Sovereignty. In fact, some countries have already announced reciprocal measures against the US (28/10).

The Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford published a report following an extensive study assessing the British press's coverage of the Brexit referendum, which was launched at Europe House in London (03/11). The idea behind the study was to ultimately assess whether the press coverage of the referendum campaign was biased towards Brexit or not.

Augustus Henning, former Head of Germany's BND intelligence service, was interviewed by EU-Observer on Russian propaganda. The former Chief stated that Russia is trying to influence EU public opinion, but is not succeeding owing to the fact that it depicts reality too far from the truth. He also affirmed that the best way to respond to it is for European media to give an "objective picture of the situation" (03/11).

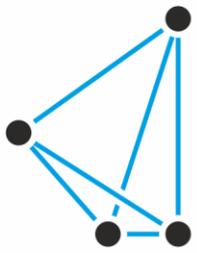
Links:

- [Justice against sponsors of Terrorism: JASTA and its international impact](#)
- [UK press coverage of the EU referendum](#)
- [Russia 'not so strong' inside EU as feared](#)

- **Events coming up:**

Monday, 14/11: next meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs;

- <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=COMPARL&reference=AFET-OJ-20161114-1&format=XML&language=EN&secondRef=01>



2. Economic Issues

• News

The Belgian entities agreed a set of documents that were finally approved by Wallonia's Parliament, allowing for the signature of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade agreement (CETA) and the EU-Canada Strategic Partnership Agreement. The agreement in itself has remained unchanged, although Belgium (like other countries) has asked for guarantees and clarifications alongside the agreement (28/10). The signature of the latter by the EU and Canada then took place on Sunday, 30/10. During the Summit President Tusk, President Juncker and Prime Minister Trudeau made a joint declaration covering not only the CETA and Strategic Partnership Agreement, but also underlying cooperation in matters ranging from Syria and Libya to Iraq. President Schulz spoke ahead of the EU-Canada Summit, stating that the agreement was the evidence that the EU is effective, conclusive and outward-looking. President Tusk's remarks welcoming the important step undertaken with Canada are also enclosed below. The ALDE Group also expressed its support and approval of the agreement and expresses confidence that it will set the standards for future EU trade agreements.

The president of Walloon party CDH, Benoît Lutgen, has repeated that there had been insinuations about negative consequences for the region if it continued to veto CETA. At the press conference following the signature of the treaty, however, President Juncker attacked President Lutgen for his statements (31/10).

Links:

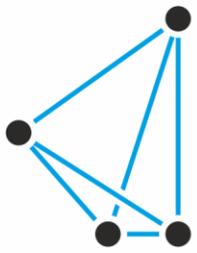
- [Belgium green lights unchanged CETA](#)
- [EU-Canada trade Agreement: Council adopts decision to sign CETA](#)
- [Joint declaration](#)
- [Martin Schulz on the EU-Canada Summit](#)
- [Remarks by President Tusk at the 16th EU-Canada summit](#)
- [ALDE welcomes CETA and hopes this sets standards for future agreements](#)
- [CETA: controversy over EU pressure on Wallonia](#)

• Legislative developments

The European Commission (EC) has found the Hungarian advertisement tax to be in breach with EU State aid rules, as the tax rates grant an advantage to those companies that did not make a profit in 2013 by allowing them to pay less taxes. On the other hand, Hungary has not proven that the progressive tax rates were justified by the objective pursued by the advertisement tax.

Links:

- http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-3606_en.htm



- **Publications**

The European Parliament (EP) think tank has published a briefing assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the EC's Impact Assessment (IA) on the amendment of the Directive concerning the Prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing (03/11).

The Bruegel think tank has published a policy contribution assessing the stability of advanced economies and, in particular, the risks that the latter are facing in terms of their public debts (10/11).

Links:

- [Prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing](#)
- [Are advanced economies at risk of falling into debt traps?](#)

3. Energy Issues

- **Legislative developments**

The Industry, Research and Energy Committee held a workshop to look at energy poverty in the EU. Workshops are organised by the policy departments in order to discuss important issues associated with parliamentary business with top experts in the field. At the present workshop, the aim was also to tackle possible policy initiatives in connection with the ongoing work on legislative packages related to the Energy Union, especially the upcoming reviews of the Energy Efficiency Directive, the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and a review of electricity market design (09/11).

Links:

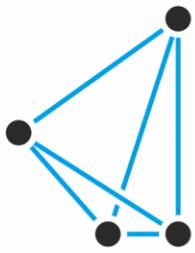
- <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/itre/events-workshops.html?id=20161109WKS00081>

- **Publications**

The European Parliament (EP) think tank has published a study focusing on the Paris Agreement and on the further implementation process and roles of the main stakeholders and parties involved in said process (07/11). The study also focuses on the challenges of the climate change conference that is taking place in Marrakesh (COP22) from the 7th to the 18th of November.

The Bruegel think tank published a study assessing the future of the US climate change policies, signalling a possible U-turn of the direction of the latter, promoting disengagement as opposed to commitment brought by former President Obama with the 2015 Paris Agreement (09/11). Links:

- [Implementing the Paris Agreement- COP 22](#)
- [President Trump: what next for global climate action?](#)



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EU POLICY MONITORING

Week 44-45 / 2016

Think Visegrad in Brussels

- **Events coming up:**

Monday, 7/11- Friday, 18/11: Climate Change Conference in Marrakesh (COP 22);

- <http://www.cop22-morocco.com/agenda/>

4. Digital Agenda

- **Legislative developments**

The European Commission (EC) is preparing the Next Generation Internet Initiative. An open consultation has just been launched that will last two months, from 10/11/2016 to 09/01/2017, consisting of questions related to specific technology areas that might become important for the Internet of the future, such as decentralised architectures, immersive environments and networking solutions beyond IP.

The EC also hosts the launch of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, a new flagship initiative bringing together all stakeholders and Member States committed to reduce the digital skills gaps in Europe.

Links:

- <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/consultation-next-generation-internet>
- <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/launching-digital-skills-and-jobs-coalition-boosting-europes-digital-skills>

- **Events coming up:**

Monday, 14/11: 10th meeting of the IMCO working group on Digital Single Market;

- <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/imco/events-other.html?id=20161107EOT00101>

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