

## The European Union and Terrorism

Author: Alain Chouet



Following the terrible attacks committed in Paris, the Foundation has published a text on "The European Union and Terrorism" by Alain Chouet, former head of the DGSE - the French Information and Security Department. In his opinion the terrorist threat in Europe requires true multilateral cooperation between the 28 Union Members for the identification, surveillance, monitoring and if necessary, the neutralisation, of dangerous people and circles. "If

Europe enters the fray divided, or worse, if it refuses to engage, it will find only dishonour and destruction." This text is from the upcoming edition of the "Schuman Report on Europe, State of the Union", (to be published in March).

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### Elections :

#### Greek General Elections on 25th January cause concern



10 million Greeks are to re-elect the 300 members of the Vouli Ton Ellinon, the only chamber in Parliament on 25th January. This snap general election that is taking place 18 months ahead of time follows the failure of the presidential election in December which was itself held 2 months early. MPs did not succeed in electing the successor to head of State Carolos Papoulias whose second term in office ends in March and who cannot stand again. The failure of the Presidential election led to the dissolution of Parliament on 31st December and the organisation of general elections. MPs are elected for four years within 56 constituencies according to a proportional voting system. Seven political parties are represented in Parliament at present: New Democracy (ND) 129 seats, the Radical Left Coalition (SYRIZA, 71 seats), the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) 33 seats, Independent Greeks' Party (ANEL) 20 MPs, Golden Dawn (XA) 18 seats, Democratic Left (DIMAR) 17 MPs, the Communist Party (KKE) 12 seats. According to a poll by Marc for the TV channel Alpha TV SYRIZA is due to come out ahead in the elections with 28.3% of the vote. New Democracy is due to take second place with 24.8%. To Potami is due to win 5.8%; Golden Dawn 5.7%; Communist Party 5.1%; PASOK 4.5%; the Independent Greeks' Party 3.3%...

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### Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic is the new President of Croatia



Former Foreign and European Integration Minister, deputy to NATO's Secretary General Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic (Croatian Democratic Union, HDZ) won the second round of the presidential election on 11th January in Croatia. She won 50.74% of the vote and beat outgoing President Ivo Josipovic (Social Democratic Party, SDP) who won 49.29% of the vote. Turnout totalled 59.06% ie 9 points more in comparison with the second round of the previous presidential election on 10th January 2010 and 12 points more in comparison with the first round on 28th December. Ms Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic will take office on 19th February next for a five year mandate... [Read more](#)

### Foundation :

#### Resistance and resilience



Following the attacks in Paris and the overwhelming solidarity of both the French and Europeans, Jean-Dominique Giuliani published an editorial on his site on 11th January in which he notes the lessons to be learned from these terrorist acts... [Read more](#)

### Financial Crisis :

#### In the fourth quarter euro zone records lowest economic growth over the last year



Growth gathered little pace in December in the euro zone but the average recorded for the entire fourth quarter is the lowest year on year leading to fears of a decline in activity in 2015, deemed Markit on 6th January as it published its PMI index. The Composite PMI of the euro zone lay at 51.4 in December according to a second estimate, i.e. slightly better than November (51.1) but not as good as the first estimate (51.7)... [Read more](#)

#### Investor confidence in the euro zone improves



Investor morale in the euro zone improved in January for the third consecutive month in spite of uncertainty associated with the upcoming election in Greece said the monthly survey undertaken by the German institution Sentix. Its investor confidence indicator totalled +0.9 in January after -2.5 in December whilst economists were forecasting an average of -1 when questioned by Reuters. It is the first time since August 2014 that the Sentix index has returned to the positive. "Clearly there are more and more investors who believe Greece to be an isolated case that will have little effect on the rest of the euro zone." A third month of improvement heralds a positive change in trend for the euro zone... [Read more](#)

### European Council :

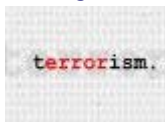
#### The European Council of 12th February will be devoted to the fight to counter terrorism



The European Council planned for 12th February 2015 in Brussels will in part be devoted to the fight to counter terrorism announced the President of the European Council Donald Tusk on 9th January. This decision follows the terrorist attack in Paris. The 28 heads of State and government will discuss the "EU's response to the challenges" set by the problem of terrorism, notably foreign fighters, said the President of the European Council. He also announced that he was going to call on the European Parliament during the plenary session starting on 12th January to "step up work" on the Passenger Name Record system with the preparation of a "common initiative" that aims to improve the detection of "dangerous people"... [Read more](#)

### Commission :

#### The fight to counter terrorism in Europe



On 11th January the European Commission published an information sheet presenting the actions, measures and initiatives taken by the European Commission in support of the fight to counter terrorism. Although policy to counter terrorism is still a national competence, the Commission recalls that it supports Member States' action notably via the creation of an environment and a legal framework that will facilitate cooperation and also by developing joint capabilities like the Schengen Information System (SIS)

and the Civil Protection Mechanism. The document presents the future measures that the European Commission will adopt as part of the European Agenda for Security 2015-2020. This entails improving the SIS and strengthening cooperation between Europol and European agencies. It will continue to work with the European Parliament and the Council towards the adoption of common rules on Passenger Name Records (PNR)... [Read more](#)

#### The Commission offers further assistance of 1.8 billion € to Ukraine



On 8th January the European Commission decided on further macro-financial assistance to a total of 1.8 billion euro in support of Ukraine in the shape of mid-term loans. This new package is designed to help Ukraine face its economic and financial difficulties notably the weakness of its balance of payments and its budgetary situation that have been worsened by the conflict in the country's east. The payment of this new assistance will be conditioned by the successful continuation of the IMF programme and in particular the implementation of economic and financial policies that the Commission, on behalf of the Union, and the Ukrainian government will conclude in a protocol agreement. These reforms mainly involve the banking and energy sectors, the consolidation of government finances and the improvement of overall macro-economic management. The new programme of 1.8 billion euro must now be adopted by the European Parliament and the Council for it to be implemented over 2015. This will be the EU's third macro-financial assistance programme in support of Ukraine since 2010... [Read more](#)

#### New rules on the recognition and enforcement of cross-border judgments in the EU



As of 10th January 2015 a civil or trade judgments enforceable in a Member State will automatically be enforceable across the whole of the EU. These new rules should facilitate the settlement of cross-border litigation to the benefit of consumers and businesses and save up to 48 million euro yearly says the European Commission. This will cut out long, costly procedures that are applied to around 10,000 cases yearly to achieve recognition and enforcement of legal judgments in civil and trade matters in other EU countries... [Read more](#)

#### The European Commission launches a transparency initiative on the TTIP



On 7th January the European Commission published a series of texts presenting the proposals put forward by the EU for the drafting of a legal text for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership ongoing at present with the USA. The eight draft texts published by the Commission cover the areas of competition, food security and also animal and plant health, customs issues, technical obstacles to trade, SMEs, and the settlement of government to government disputes (GGD). It also published "position" documents on the TTIP explaining the EU's approach to engineering, vehicles and sustainable development, bringing the number of documents relating the "EU's stances" published by the Commission to 15... [Read more](#)

#### The EU facilitates the protection of victims of violence across its entire territory



The European Commission recalled on 9th January that legislation that enables victims of violence, notably those who have suffered domestic violence or harassment, to find better protection in any EU Member State was to enter into force. A citizen who has suffered domestic abuse will now be able to feel safe to travel outside their home country - by simply transferring the order that protects them from the offender. This new mechanism therefore facilitates and simplifies the procedure thanks to two legal instruments, i.e. Regulation on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters and the Directive on the European Protection Order... [Read more](#)

#### Council :

##### Latvia takes over presidency of the Council of the European Union



On January 1st 2015 Latvia took over the presidency of the Council of the European Union from Italy. It will occupy this position until 30th June when Luxembourg then takes over. Ms Laimdota Straujuma, the Latvian Prime Minister, presented the priorities set for this semester, ie a competitive, digital and committed Europe. Included in these priorities is the TTIP - the Transatlantic Trade and Investment

Partnership and pragmatic relations with the countries in the Eastern Partnership and the countries of Central Asia. Ms Straujuma stressed the fact that these priorities are closely linked to energy policy, one of the areas that requires the most investment, notably in order to complete the independence of Energy Union. The European Commission travelled to Riga on 8th January to inaugurate this presidency... [Read more](#)

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#### Diplomacy :

##### EU-Ukraine Relations



The European External Action Service published a press release on 9th January reviewing relations between Ukraine and the European Union. Apart from a reminder of the various events that have disrupted the country the EU stresses that it is committed to a policy to help Ukraine towards economic and political integration. For example the association agreement between Ukraine and the EU was introduced on November 1st 2014 including measures on human rights, fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, justice, freedom and security but also financial and economic cooperation as well as political dialogue... [Read more](#)

#### ECB :

##### Stability and Prosperity in the Monetary Union



On 2nd January ECB President Mario Draghi insisted on the fact that a monetary union cannot exist without political union. He put forward ideas to complete Monetary Union and to provide stability and prosperity to the euro zone. A simple economic convergence of the various member countries would not be enough. Firstly the conditions to enable all of the countries to prosper autonomously had to be introduced so that each can optimise their comparative advantage within the single market, attract capital and create jobs. This means implementing structural reforms that stimulate competition, reduce superfluous red-tape and increase the labour market's capacity to adapt. It is of our common and not just national interest for reforms like this to be introduced. Secondly countries have to invest more in other shock-cost sharing mechanisms in order to spread the risk and prevent recessions from leaving long term scars and from increasing economic divergence. Hence the need to move towards financial market union. Mario Draghi calls therefore for greater political union with a definition of the rights and obligations within a renewed institutional order... [Read more](#)

#### European Agencies :

##### Arianespace's Priorities for 2015



On 6th January Arianespace (responsible for the marketing and the use of the space launch systems developed by the European Space Agency) reviewed the work accomplished in 2014 and announced its priorities for 2015. It notably announced 11 launches this year of which the first will be on 11th February with a Vega satellite. Several European programmes will be continued including Copernicus and Galileo. The launch of commercial satellites is also on the agenda as well as a new Ariane 6 launcher to compete with SpaceX and Soyuz... [Read more](#)

##### New head of the European Defence Agency



The EU's High Representative Federica Mogherini, appointed Jorge Domecq on 9th January as the Chief Executive of the European Defence Agency (EDA), according to a selection process that started in December. Jorge Domecq is a Spanish diplomat who is at present the Permanent Representative of Spain with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). He will officially take office on 1st February 2015 and takes over from Claude-France Arnould... [Read more](#)

#### Germany :

##### Angela Merkel meets Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseny Yatsenyuk



On 8th January German Chancellor Angela Merkel kept up pressure on Russia by ruling out any relief in the economic sanctions applied against Moscow if no major progress is made in the conflict in the pro-Russian separatist east of Ukraine. "I think that before being able to decide on lifting sanctions we have to be sure that the Minsk agreements have been implemented completely," declared the Chancellor, thereby reassuring Ukrainian

Prime Minister Arseny Yatsenyuk who was visiting Berlin. The agreements that were signed in September notably provide for a "cease-fire and the withdrawal of "illegal armed groups", heavy arms and all fighters and mercenaries from the Ukrainian territory...".. [Read more](#)

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### The sounds of Europe



The project "The sounds of Europe" co-funded by the European Commission and the Europeana Sounds Consortium aims to aggregate a series of digital sound resources illustrating the "extreme variety of European cultural heritage." At the heart of this initiative the German Finance Minister opened a site in December for the discovery of music from all euro zone member states so that European citizens can listen to the "cultural wealth of Germany's partners in the euro zone and the diversity of their musical heritage.".. [Read more](#)

### Cyprus :

#### State aid incompatible for Cyprus Airways whose activity comes to an end



On 9th January after an in-depth inquiry the European Commission came to the conclusion that a 100 million euro aid programme to restructure Cyprus Airways, the struggling nation airline, had given the latter undue advantage over its competitors in infringement of the EU rules on State aid. Cyprus Airways therefore has to reimburse all aid that was incompatible with the single market that it has received totalling 65 million euro. On the same day Cyprus Airways announced that would cease its activities following "an unfavourable decision on the part of the European Commission." An administrator will therefore be appointed for Cyprus Airways whose flight licence will be withdrawn. The government announced that measures would be taken for passengers with tickets already purchased from the airline... [Read more](#)

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### Spain :

#### Further measures to reform the Spanish civil service



The Spanish government put forward further measures to complete the reform of its civil service on 9th January as it announced that this had led to nearly 18 billion euro in savings. The measures provide for the widespread distribution of ITCs in relations between citizens and the civil service in order to facilitate procedures and save money notably in terms of numbers of employees and material means. According to the Treasury and Civil Service Minister Cristobal Montoro this reform is a "positive experience" because it "facilitates the end of the economic crisis" and also fosters the development of "a modern, fast, effective and transparent civil service." These measures will enter into force progressively between January and June 2015 so that businesses can adapt to the legislative changes... [Read more](#)

### France :

#### Unanimous European tribute regarding the terrible attack on Charlie Hebdo



In immediate, exceptionally spontaneous response, all of the European institutions and all EU Member States expressed their solidarity with France and the French, who were severely shocked by the cowardly attack on Charlie Hebdo. In addition to the legitimate outburst of emotion we might add the belief that it was the Freedom on which are societies are based that had been attacked, the Freedom for which the French have fought to hard win and on which Europe has been built. Solidarity extended beyond the European borders to all of the international community and institutions. All of the European leaders and others from afar took part in the Republican Rally on 11th January... [Read more](#)

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#### Meeting of Home Affairs Minister on the fight to counter terrorism



Following the attacks that took place in Paris last week the Home Affairs Ministers of 10 countries (Germany, UK, Italy, Poland, Spain, Belgium, Sweden, Netherlands, Denmark and Austria) met on 11th January in Paris. Also present were the European Coordinator for the fight to counter terrorism Gilles de Kerkchove, European Commissioner for Migration and Internal Affairs, Dimitris Avramopoulos, the Homeland Security Minister and the Attorney General for the USA Alejandro Mayorkas and Eric Holder and Canadian Security Minister Steven Blaney. After the meeting the ministers identified

two fields in which to tighten up their cooperation: the means to counter the movements of foreign fighters and the fight to counter factors and vectors of radicalisation, notably via the Internet. To do this the exchange of information will be stepped up, as well as the use of judicial cooperation and police organisations (Eurojust, Europol, Interpol). The issue of the changes to be made to the rules governing the Schengen Border Code was addressed so that the Schengen information system (SIS) can be consulted more extensively when the EU's external borders are crossed by people who have the right to free movement, as well as the need to establish a tool that enables the exchange of data on air passengers between member states (PNR). The ministers set the goal of countering the free movement and trade of illegal firearms... [Read more](#)

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**Greece :**

#### The Greeks want to stay in the euro zone



Three-quarters of the Greeks want to stay in the euro zone "at all costs" maintains a survey published on 8th January in the Greek press just three weeks from the controversial general elections which threaten to take the country out of the single currency. According to a survey by GPO 75.7% of those interviewed answered "yes" or "rather" to the question of whether Greece should stay "in the euro zone at all costs". The "no" or "not really" was expressed by 22.3% of those interviewed... [Read more](#)

**Latvia :**

#### First visit by the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU in Ukraine



Latvian Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkēvičs met Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, Prime Minister Arseny Yatsenyuk as well as his counterpart Pavlo Klimkin on the occasion of his journey to Kiev on 10th January. As the country that is presently presiding over the Council of the European Union Latvia said it was prepared to use all of the possibilities available to mobilise the EU's support for the peace process in the east and major reform that Ukraine urgently requires for its long term development and to guarantee its socio-economic stability. Edgars Rinkēvičs stressed the symbolic nature of the Latvian Presidency making its first trip to Ukraine. The Ukrainian President thanked Latvia for its constant, continued support for the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine and said he wanted the Eastern Partnership Summit that was to take place in Riga in May 2015 to be successful. "Ukrainians hope that the introduction of the new visa-free regime with the EU will be the outcome of the Riga Summit. It will be extremely symbolic", added Mr Poroshenko... [Read more](#)

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**Lithuania :**

#### Lithuania joins the euro zone



On 1st January Lithuania joined the Economic and Monetary Union thereby becoming its 19th member. ECB President Mario Draghi declared, "On behalf of the ECB's Council of Governors I welcome this new enlargement of the euro zone. Lithuania has taken exceptional measures in a difficult time in order to achieve a goal and that was to join the single currency." This move will strengthen the European strategy of a country that depends in part on the Russia economy and which is suffering directly the consequences of its support to the member countries of the Eastern Partnership and the sanctions policy taken out on Russia. At the same time a new mode of ECB governance has entered into force as decided in 2003 but whose implementation was deferred to enter into force after the original date of 2009... [Read more](#)

**Poland :**

#### Creation of Aid Fund for Agriculture in Poland



On 7th January the Polish government adopted a draft bill providing for the creation of a "Mutual Aid Fund" to stabilise the incomes of the country's farmers. The money from the Fund will be paid to farmers who have suffered economic losses because of situations beyond their control - for example a decline in income of over 30% due to weather conditions or the introduction of measures to protect the environment (protection of species etc ...). The fund, which will be managed by the Agricultural Market Fund, will not be subsidised by the State budget... [Read more](#)

**UK :**

## Meeting between David Cameron and Angela Merkel



In a bid to win the favour of German Chancellor Angela Merkel in his battle to reform the European Union, British Prime Minister David Cameron reassured her of his commitment to the free movement of European citizens in a meeting on 7th January. "I support the freedom of movement, but I want to put an end to the abuse of this," maintained David Cameron during a joint press conference with Angela Merkel who was on a visit to London. Questioned about the UK's possible exit from the EU he answered that he thought that this was not "the right answer". "I want to succeed in bringing about reform within the EU," he added. "I do not want to hide the fact that I want the UK to remain in the EU," answered Ms Merkel. They firmly condemned the terrorist attack against Charlie Hebdo in Paris... [Read more](#)

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## Long term economic plan for the North-West of the UK



British Prime Minister David Cameron and his Finance Minister George Osborne presented a long term six-point economic plan for the revival of the economy in the north-west of the country. This notably entails the construction of a power station in the region which should enable it to reach its potential as a "driving force for the British economy" stressed David Cameron. The two men will undertake a tour of the north of the UK over the next few weeks in order to promote the government's action in support of national economic recovery. This new plan should lead to the creation of jobs, better transport connections, the encouragement to investment in science and better living standards, stressed D. Cameron and G. Osborne... [Read more](#)

## Switzerland :

### Simonetta Sommaruga, President of the Helvetic Confederation in 2015



Since January 1st 2015 Switzerland has had a new president, Simonetta Sommaruga. Elected on 3rd December 2014 by the Federal Assembly (Swiss Parliament) she now leads the sessions of the Federal Council (executive body of the Swiss government comprising seven members each responsible for a ministry), her mandate will last for a year. The President of the Confederation is "prima inter pares" ie formal equality exists between the Members of the Federal Council. More than just a president, Ms Sommaruga is responsible for the federal department (ministry) of Justice and Police... [Read more](#)

## Eurostat :

### Decrease in unemployment in the EU and the euro zone



Unemployment, adjusted to seasonal variations, lay at 11.5% in the euro zone in November 2014, stable in comparison with October 2014, but clearly down in comparison with 11.9% recorded in November 2013. In the European Union the unemployment rate lay at 10% in November 2014 down in comparison with October 2013 (10.1%) and November 2013 when it lay at 10.7%. In terms of the Member States the lowest unemployment rates in November 2014 were recorded in Austria (4.9%) as well as in Germany (5%), the highest levels were in Greece (25.7% in September 2014) and in Spain (23.9%)... [Read more](#)

### Euro zone annual inflation rate down



According to an estimate published by Eurostat on 7th January annual inflation in the euro zone lay at -0.2% in December 2014, down in comparison with November when it lay at 0.3%. According to Eurostat this low inflation rate, negative since December, can be attributed to the collapse of energy prices (-6.3%, against -2.6% in November), whilst prices have remained stable in other areas of activity (food, industrial goods ...). The only annual rise recorded involves services whose price increased by 1.2% (stable in comparison with November)... [Read more](#)

## Studies/Reports :

### European employment records modest but constant growth since mid-2013



In spite of sluggish economic recovery and low growth forecasts European employment figures have been rising "modestly but constantly" since mid-2013 said the most recent Quarterly Employment Review published on 8th January by the European Commission. Employment has increased in most EU Member States including in countries with very

high unemployment rates like Greece, Spain and Portugal. However the report highlights that many problems continue particularly regarding long term unemployment with rare opportunities for work offered to young people (15-24 year olds) and to young adults (25-39 year olds). To remedy this the report notably advocates reducing fiscal pressure on labour, stepping up the fight to counter tax fraud and evasion, and the continuation of social goals to reconcile "targets of efficiency and fairness" thereby enabling the improvement of budgetary consolidation policies and support to employment... [Read more](#)

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#### Publications :

##### Jean-Paul Betbèze publishes "Nouvelles d'éco - Saison 2"



The Chair of the Robert Schuman Foundation's Scientific Committee, Jean-Paul Betbèze has published "Nouvelle d'Eco - Saison 2". Shops are to open on Sundays, the 35 hour week will become 36, and employees will engage more in dialogue with more relaxed executives. The social networks are working a revolution: what is secret today is spread the world over tomorrow. We must play the card of openness and transparency: we should change and prepare for this information revolution. We should not be naive, of course. We also have to take care. But we have to move forward exchanging views, discussing, debating, with clients, employees, suppliers, shareholders, competitors, financial markets, civil society ... In depth with everyone, with the world recalls the author... [Read more](#)

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##### Laurent Cohen-Tanugi publishes a new essay: "What's wrong with France?"



Laurent Cohen-Tanugi, an international lawyer will publish a new essay called "What's wrong with France?" in the series "Essais Français" with Grasset publishing on 14th January. The author tries to answer this question which he is frequently asked about France... [Read more](#)

#### Culture :

##### "Realms of Imagination" exhibition at the Städel Museum



The Städel museum of art in Frankfurt is running an exhibition, "Realms of Imagination", until 8th February 2015. Albrecht Altdorfer, Wolf Huber and other artists from the Danube are the foundation of the exhibition which highlights the renewal of artistic work in Europe at the beginning of the 16th century. The exhibition presents around 100 pieces of work by Lucas Cranach, Albrecht Dürer and Hans Leinberger which illustrate how landscapes, historic paintings and portraits were re-invented by an innovative combination of light, colour, shape and pose. The exhibition was designed together with the Liebieghaus Museum of Frankfurt and the Kunsthistorisches Museum of Vienna... [Read more](#)

##### Joint Declaration on the Freedom of Expression



On 11th January the Ministers of Culture of the 28 EU Member States published a joint declaration in the wake of the tragic events that took place in the offices of Charlie Hebdo in Paris on 7th January 2015... [Read more](#)

#### Agenda :



12th-15th January  
Strasbourg  
Plenary session at the European Parliament



19th January  
Brussels  
"Foreign Affairs" Council



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