

What type of cooperation given the challenges raised by migratory flows?

Author: Catherine Wihtol de Wenden



Whilst the end of 2014 showed that the catastrophe of immigration with boats abandoned by smugglers who exploit those who want to come to Europe as they try to escape violence and persecution in their own country, the Foundation has published a study by Catherine Wihtol de Wenden on the challenges set by migratory flows into Europe since the continent takes the lead in terms of world immigration. According to statistics by the UN's Department for Population in 2013 of the 232 million international migrants, 72 million were in Europe.

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Elections :

Presidential election in Italy



The President of the Republic of Italy resigned on 14th January. The government now has two weeks to organise the presidential election, the first three rounds of which are due to take place on 29th January. In the meantime the leader of the Senate Pietro Grasso will ensure the interim. The President of the Italian Republic is elected for seven years by a secret ballot by a college of Grand Electors comprising the 630 members of the Chamber of Deputies, 315 Senators, 7 life-long Senators and 58 representatives of the country's 20 regions (3 per region except for the Aoste Valley which only appoints one), ie a total of 1010 Grand Electors. During the first three rounds of voting, in order to be elected, a candidate must win at least 2/3 of the Grand Electors' votes ie 674 votes. As of the 4th round the simple majority (505 votes) is adequate... [Read more](#)

Financial Crisis :

The Commission eases its interpretation of budgetary rules



On 13th January the European Commission presented its new recommendations concerning flexibility in terms of the implementation of the existing budgetary rules in the Stability and Growth Pact. It announced that Member States' direct contributions to the European Funds for Strategic Investments (EFSI) will not be taken into account when budgetary adjustment is being assessed. This will apply to all

States, whether they are subject or not the preventive or corrective chapter of the Pact. States that are not subject to an "excessive deficit procedure" will also be able to deviate temporarily from their mid-term budgetary goals in order to take on board their investments (even outside the EFSI) according to the following terms: their growth is negative or the GDP is below potential, the difference does not lead to the non-respect of the 3% deficit reference value whilst maintaining an adequate safety margin, investment levels are increased as a result. Investments included in this clause will be national spending on projects co-financed by the EU as part of the Structural and Cohesion Policy, the trans-European and inter-connection networks in Europe as well as the co-financing of projects with the EFSI... [Read more](#)

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The dynamics of world growth should stabilise



According to an OECD report published on 12th January the world's growth dynamic should stabilise. The major European economies like Germany, Italy and the UK are due to lose momentum, the Russian economy is due to continue its decline whilst the situation is due to pick up in Japan and India and remain stable in the US, Canada and China. In France, Brazil and more generally in the euro zone, there will also be stable growth although the pace will be relatively slow... [Read more](#)

Fight/Terrorism :

Democracy is stronger than terrorism

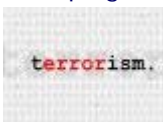


On 15th January German Chancellor Angela Merkel spoke to the Bundestag. During this speech she firmly condemned the terrorist attacks that took place in Paris. She called on MPs as well as all European citizens to stand together against the growing terrorist threat. She insisted on the ideological aspect of these attacks. They

were an infringement of the model of western civilisation of which the freedom of expression is one of the fundamental rights. In Germany this law is provided for in article 5 of the Fundamental Law. Angela Merkel declared that democracy is stronger than terrorism and this is why we have to stand against it together. The Chancellor then lay out a series of measures to try and combat terrorism. These measures will notably help prevent possible candidates leaving for the jihad in Syria but also prevent them from returning to Germany... [Read more](#)

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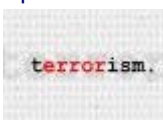
Sweeping anti-terrorist operation in Belgium: the government announces 12 measures



The Belgian police undertook a sweeping anti-terrorist operation in Verviers and in the region around Brussels on 15th January. "Last week the danger of an attack was at a point that we had never reached before," declared the Federal Prosecutor Eric van der Sypt. The federal police building in Brussels as well as the Palace of Justice were the

main targets. In all around 12 searches were undertaken in Belgium. Whilst the country is still on level three alert the government presented 12 measures to counter terrorism on 16th January, as well as steps to foster the exchange of information and to counter the radicalisation of people in prisons more effectively. The inclusion of new criminal proceedings against people who travel abroad for terrorist purposes as well as a widening of possibilities to withdraw nationality from these individuals have also been announced... [Read more](#)

Spain is to toughen up its anti-terrorist legislation after the Paris attacks



On 13th January the Spanish government and the opposition agreed to toughen up measures to counter jihadist terrorism in the wake of the attacks in Paris. "We have agreed to put forward an organic draft bill as a matter of urgency, clearly with an opening to other parliamentary groups," declared the Home Affairs Minister during a press conference.

Several amendments have already been put forward and notably provide for possible prison sentences for individuals who travel to a territory "controlled by a terrorist group", if they belong to this group or if they express the wish to "work" with a group like this. The text also provides for specific prison sentences for any individual who tries to learn, including on the internet, how to use arms and explosives in connection with a terrorist group. Investigators will then not need to prove the intention to commit an attack. The Home Affairs Minister repeated his support for the creation of a

file that includes air passenger data (PNR - passenger name records)... [Read more](#)

Response to terrorist attacks and stepping up security



On 13th January French Prime Minister Manuel Valls paid tribute to the 17 victims of the attacks that took place on 7th, 8th and 9th January as he spoke at the National Assembly, detailing the measures taken by the government to step up the security of the French population and to counter terrorism. On this occasion he declared that "France is at war against terrorism, jihadism and radical Islam. France is not at war against a religion." An exceptional situation requires exceptional measures. "But I also say with the same strength: never will exceptional measures be taken that derogate the principles of law and values," he said... [Read more](#)

Commission :

The Commission unveils the modalities of the 315 billion € Investment Plan



On 13th January the European Commission adopted a legislative proposal that will lead to the creation of the new European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the main instrument in the Juncker plan that aims to mobilise at least 315 billion euro in additional investments in the European economy over the next three years. The proposal presented on 13th January by Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President of the Commission for Employment, Investment and Competitiveness, plans for the creation of a Steering Board which will decide on the general guidelines in terms of investments, risk profile, strategies and the allocation of the Fund's assets and also an Investment Committee responsible for the assessment of the viability of each project. Moreover this legislative proposal plans for the introduction of a European Investment Advisory Hub (EIAH) which will provide advice on the way to use the innovative financial instruments and the public/private partnerships and a "a transparent European project pipeline" that will inform investors about existing projects and potential future projects. It now has to be adopted by the European Parliament and the Council so that the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) can be activated by June 2015... [Read more](#)

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A 215 million euro package for research into the Ebola virus



The European Commission announced on 16th January that it was to finance eight research projects in the fight to counter Ebola; these projects will comprise the development of vaccines against Ebola (three projects) and also rapid diagnostic tests (three projects). Indeed it is difficult to diagnose Ebola and the development of these tests might enable the conclusion or not of contamination within a 15 minute period. The two remaining projects will be devoted to the production of vaccines as well as the financing of the means to ensure the respect of their dosage. These research programmes are part of the Ebola+ programme in the Initiative for Innovative Medicines. They will be financed by the European Commission to a total of 114 million € as part of the Horizon 2020 programme. The remainder of the package ie 101 million € will assumed by the pharmaceutical companies participating in the project... [Read more](#)

Parliament :

The European Parliament adopts the agreement allowing the ban on GMOs by the Member States



On 13th January the European Parliament adopted a new bill allowing the EU's Member States to restrict or ban the cultivation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) on their territory, even if the EU's legislation allows it. The new measures will enable Member States to ban GMOs for environmental policy reasons other than the dangers linked to health and the environment assessed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). They also provide for a discussion phase with the company producing the GMO in question during which the Member State can set a unilateral ban in the event of disagreement. This text, which was the focus of an agreement with the Council in December 2014, was approved 480 votes in support, 159 against and 58 abstentions. The new bill is to enter into force in the summer of 2015... [Read more](#)

Resolution on the situation in Ukraine and on the sanctions against Russia



On 15th January the European Parliament re-iterated its support to the Ukrainian government against the Russian offensive that continues in the east of the country. The sanctions taken against Russia will be maintained as long as the country continues to undertake an

aggressive policy in Ukraine (violation of the cease-fire and military support to the separatists). Parliament also condemned the "terrorist acts and criminal behaviour of the separatists and the various non-regular armed forces in the east of Ukraine" and is expecting the EU to put forward a plan to counter the "information war" undertaken by Russia and to rise to the humanitarian emergency in Ukraine. MEPs also maintained their support to the policy whereby they refuse to acknowledge the annexation of Crimea by Russia which they deem "illegal". Finally they said to the Council that it should extend the range of the sanctions if Russia continued to undertake other acts to destabilise Ukraine... [Read more](#)

Resolution on the situation of human rights in Russia



On 15th January the European Parliament adopted a resolution on Russia, particularly on the Alexey Navalny case. This resolution stresses that the convictions and sentencing against the lawyer, Alexey Navalny, who is committed to countering corruption and his brother Oleg Navalny, were based on "unsupported details" that were probably driven by "political reasons". In this context MEPs are asking for the legal proceedings in the Navalny cases to be free of any "political interference" and that they respect acknowledged international standards. Finally it asked the EU's High Representative to set out an overall strategy against Russia "that aims to protect the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of European States," and to support the strengthening of democratic principles in Russia... [Read more](#)

Results of the Italian Presidency of the Council



On 13th January Matteo Renzi, the President of the Italian Council presented the results of the Italian Presidency of the Council, which ended in December, to the European Parliament. Mr Renzi spoke of the need for Europe "to invest in success" in order to end the crisis and the recession: "it is vital for us to fight together to overcome the recession and austerity." Regarding security and after the terrorist attacks in Paris, Matteo Renzi declared that "without freedom, there is no security.".. [Read more](#)

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Security, employment, digital market: Latvia presents its presidency's priorities



Laimdota Straujuma, Latvia's Prime Minister - whose country will be assuming the presidency of the Council of the European Union over the next six months - presented her working programme to MEPs on 14th January. This comprises three chapters: security, which includes a response to the jihadist threat in the wake of the attacks in Paris, employment and the digital market. In terms of security the Latvian Prime Minister stressed that she was going to take forward discussions on the Passenger Name Records... [Read more](#)

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First speech by Donald Tusk to the European Parliament



It was during the first debate on the conclusions of the most recent European Council that Donald Tusk, in office since December 1st, made his first visit to the European Parliament. He declared his support to the Juncker Plan for which he also asked for Parliament's support. He also committed to the fight to counter tax fraud on the grounds of social fairness and justice. Finally he took position in support of the finalisation of the Passenger Name Records. Indeed although it is a difficult, sensitive issue, a "patchwork" of 28 national systems would in his opinion endanger the private lives of European citizens without providing them with any greater protection... [Read more](#)

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Diplomacy :

Foreign Affairs Council



The 28 Foreign Ministers who met on 19th January committed to stepping up coordination and information sharing within the EU as part of the fight to counter terrorism more effectively. They also asked the European Parliament to make progress towards adopting a text on the passenger name record issue (PNR). In this context the EU's High Representative Federica Mogherini signed a protocol with the Secretary General of the Arab League that aims to strengthen the EU's cooperation with the Arab countries, the importance of which the Council had previously highlighted. Ministers had a long discussion about the EU's relations with Russia - notably regarding the situation in Ukraine, recalling the need to adopt a common strategy regarding this country. The Council adopted an action plan on climate change setting goals that the EU has to reach before the Paris Climate Conference. They welcomed the "democratic

commitment and the sense of responsibility of the Tunisian people, of the entire political class and of civil society" which led to the smooth running of the general and presidential elections in Tunisia. Finally the Council decided to appeal against the EU Court of Justice's decision to annul the measures taken against the Hamas as it was withdrawn from the EU's list of terrorist organisations. Following this appeal the decision was suspended until a final judgment is given by the Court of Justice... [Read more](#)

Meeting between Federica Mogherini and the Iranian Foreign Minister



The EU's High Representative Federica Mogherini met Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on 15th January in Brussels. The Iranian nuclear programme was addressed, for which "negotiations are due to lead to a conclusion within the time set." Human rights, the regional crisis in the Middle East, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan were also discussed. Ms Mogherini invited Iran to use its influence in the region to promote and participate in the creation of a stable, inclusive Iraq. She also took advantage of this occasion to reiterate that she wanted to make Iran her ally in the Middle-East... [Read more](#)

Court of Justice :

Outright monetary transactions (OMTs) are compatible with the treaties



Whilst only the mention of a programme to purchase national government debts by the ECB were enough to settle the sovereign debt crisis, German judges from the Karlsruhe Constitutional Court challenged the idea and asked the EU's Court of Justice stating that it was not the ECB's responsibility to undertake economic policies and that quantitative easing measures in Europe would have damaging effects on the German population. The ECJ's General Advocate returned his decision saying that OMT's were compatible with the European Treaties if the programme was implemented "within the right time" so as to allow the formation of a market price in respect of the government bonds... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Germany achieves budgetary balance



On 13th January the German Finance Ministry announced that Germany had achieved budgetary balance in 2014 i.e. a year earlier than planned. This result is due to excellent fiscal revenues and low interest rates. Moreover federal spending was lower than planned (one billion € less). Hence at 295.5 billion €, they have never been as low since 2009... [Read more](#)

German growth better than forecast in 2014



The German Federal Statistics Office (Destatis) published its data on the country's growth in 2014 on 15th January. Germany revealed GDP growth of 1.5% in 2014 which is in line with expectations but higher than the initial government forecast of 1.2%.. [Read more](#)

Spain :

Towards an effective, fair Spanish labour market



On the occasion of the Council of Ministers on 16th January the Spanish government said it wanted to boost the labour market. The reduction of long term unemployment and the personalisation of careers are the main measures that have been announced. The budget allocated to policies allocated to employment will be increased by 16.8% in 2015. The government's Vice-President supported this saying that he wanted to make employment his priority stressing the national dimension of these measures: "a common framework has been established that will have to be implemented by the various employment departments on a regional level".. [Read more](#)

France :

François Hollande would like to review the pace of staff reductions in defence given the terrorist threat

During his New Year's wishes presented to the army on 14th January



the President of the Republic of France, François Hollande announced that staff reductions would not be as great in the area of defence so that the army will enjoy larger numbers to combat the terrorist threat. "The exceptional situation that we are now experiencing must lead to a review of staff reductions which were programmed over the next three years as part of the military programming law" he declared stressing that France was "at war" against terrorism. The President has already asked Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian to "make suggestions" about how to ease the reduction of staff numbers so that it is adapted according to "budgetary requirements." Final arbitration on this will be undertaken at the end of the Defence Council on 21st January. These announcements should lead to changes in the military programming law which provides for the destruction of 7500 posts in 2014 and 2015, 34,000 in all before 2019... [Read more](#)

Extension of the French intervention forces in Iraq



On 13th January in application of article 35 subparagraph 3 of the Constitution the French National Assembly extended a government declaration on the permission to extend the French intervention forces in Iraq. MPs debated this declaration then approved it 488 votes in support, one vote against and 13 abstentions. On the same day the Senate debated and then approved the authorisation to extend the intervention of the armed forces in Iraq, 327 votes in support and 19 abstentions... [Read more](#)

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Greece :

Mariano Rajoy supports Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras



On 14th January the Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras hosted his Spanish counterpart Mariano Rajoy in Athens. The two men re-iterated the friendship and cooperation that link their two countries. Discussions focussed notably on the need for EU action to concentrate on the fight to counter terrorism and on economic issues. During this meeting the Greek Prime Minister declared that he was prepared to meet his European counterparts in the context of discussions on the Greek debt issue. Mariano Rajoy for his part maintained his support to Antonis Samaras in rising to the challenges faced by his country. He called on the Greeks to support their government's austerity policy... [Read more](#)

Last polls before the Greek election in 7 days' time



The Greeks are being invited to renew the 300 members of Parliament on 25th January. Just one week before the election the radical left, SYRIZA leads in terms of voting intentions with a two to three point lead over New Democracy, the party of outgoing Prime Minister Antonis Samaras - will SYRIZA win a majority to govern? What will happen otherwise?... [Read more](#)

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Italy :

Resignation of Italian President Giorgio Napolitano



On 14th January the President of the Italian Republic Giorgio Napolitano resigned. His departure from office had been forecast for a long time. In office since 2006 he was the first former Communist militant ever to be elected to the presidency. The President of the Italian Council, Matteo Renzi paid him tribute during a speech to the members of the European Parliament declaring "I would like us all to acknowledge Napolitano, a devoted European, who in the next hours will leave office after leading Italy with intelligence and wisdom." "The leader of the Senate Pietro Grasso will be ensuring the interim until the successor to Giorgio Napolitano is sworn as demanded by the Constitution. The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate are convened to vote in a joint session on 29th January with the participation of the regional delegates to elect the new President of the Republic.".. [Read more](#)

Luxembourg :

Launch of an investigation into Amazon's tax practices in Luxembourg



On 16th January the European Commission published its decision justifying the launch of an investigation into the tax practices of the American group Amazon in Luxembourg. According to this decision taken in October 2014 the Commission accuses the Luxembourg

authorities of having "granted advantages" to Amazon by introducing a tax regime (tax ruling) which in fact comprises illegal State aid, and is contrary to the European treaties. This fiscal arrangement used by many multi-nationals to optimise their gains by spreading profits and costs between their branches in various countries allows a business to ask what its fiscal situation will be in a country ahead of time. The European Commission has launched four investigations on this type of fiscal scheme that it suspects as being State aid: two target Luxembourg on agreements made with Amazon and with the Italian car group FIAT. The two others target Ireland with Apple and the Netherlands with Starbucks. The authorities of the Grand Duchy immediately responded with a press release declaring that Luxembourg is confident that the allegations of it having granted State aid in this affair are not true and that it can prove to the Commission that the early decision in question was legitimate and that no selective advantage had been granted.".. [Read more](#)

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UK :

[Meeting between David Cameron and Barack Obama](#)



David Cameron and Barack Obama met at the White House on 16th January. The British Prime Minister and the President of the USA took advantage of this meeting to re-iterate that they wanted to anchor the defence of freedom within economic emancipation. Cyber-security and investment were the focus of discussions. They adopted measures that aim to strengthen economic cooperation between the UK and the USA: subsidising SMEs, supporting an increase in the minimum wage, developing education, promoting the development of renewable energies and the reduction of carbon emissions. In their open letter to the Times Barack Obama and David Cameron also said they wanted to build international peace founded on security and justice... [Read more](#)

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Ukraine :

[The Ukrainian Parliament approves three waves of mobilisation in 2015](#)



On 15th January the Ukrainian Parliament adopted a bill planning for three waves of partial "mobilisation" of reserve troops into the army in 2015 in answer to the conflict that is continuing with the pro-Russian separatist rebels in the east of the country. According to this text, which follows a presidential decision signed the previous day, the first wave will start on 20th January and will mobilise around 50,000 people. The other phases are planned for April and June. The decision taken by President Poroshenko explains this decision via the need to "have an adequate response to the threats caused by aggressive action taken by Russia" which is weighing on "national security", "the independence" of Ukraine and its "territorial integrity".." [Read more](#)

[Viktor Yanukovich and other former Ukrainian leaders sought by Interpol](#)



On 12th January, on the request of the Ukrainian government, Interpol launched Red Notices (international wanted persons alert) against four former Ukrainian leaders including Viktor Yanukovich, for embezzlement. Interpol has taken on the task of searching for and identifying the people being sought in order to facilitate their arrest/extradition and their trial before the national authorities... [Read more](#)

Switzerland :

[Swiss stock-exchange crash after an unexpected monetary decision](#)



On 15th January the Swiss National Bank (BNS) removed the minimum exchange rate on the Swiss franc against the euro, which has been the backbone of its monetary policy for the last three years and reduced its interest rate to -0.75%. The Swiss currency then dropped to 0.8517 Swiss francs to one euro, a record level in terms of the European currency since its creation in 1999. In response the Swiss stock-exchange plummeted by 10% before continuing its losses. According to the UBS these decisions might have a major negative impact on the Swiss economy. The bank's experts estimate the decline in exports at 5 billion Swiss francs. The direct effect on the GDP is estimated at -0.7%, whilst the consumer price index in Switzerland might decline by up to 0.9%... [Read more](#)

Council of Europe :

[The Council of Europe publishes a report on torture in Turkey](#)

On 15th January the Council of Europe's European Committee for the



Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) published its report following its visit to Turkey in June 2013. During this visit the CPT assessed the treatment and conditions of detention of people deprived of their freedom by the police as well as the implementation of fundamental guarantees against poor treatment (such as access to a lawyer). Specific attention was given to the situation of people deprived of their freedom in the context of the public demonstrations that took place during the visit in various regions of the country (Gezi Demonstrations)... [Read more](#)

NATO :

German Chancellor meets NATO Secretary General



German Chancellor Angela Merkel hosted NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on 14th January in Berlin. The latter thanked Germany for its leadership, but he also indicated that "although Germany was ensuring a leading role in many areas in Europe we are also looking for Germany's leading role in terms of defence investment." "We need to invest in our defence to be able to protect our allies and to maintain security and stability in Europe," added the Secretary General who was visiting Berlin for the first time since he took office in the autumn... [Read more](#)

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Eurostat :

Euro zone inflation at its lowest since 2009



In December 2014 the euro zone recorded an annual inflation rate of -0.2% which was down in comparison with November at 0.3%. This is the lowest rate recorded since September 2009. In December 2013 the euro zone's annual inflation rate lay at 0.8%. Annual inflation in the European Union decreased in December 2014 to -0.1% against 0.3% in November. A year ago the rate lay at 1%. In December 2014 negative annual rates were recorded in 16 Member States. These figures were published by Eurostat on 16th January 2015... [Read more](#)

Europe's international trade still largely in surplus



The international trade of goods from the euro zone and also the EU was still in surplus at the end of 2014. According to a Eurostat press release on 15th January 2015 the euro zone recorded a surplus of 20 billion euro in November 2014 (+16.5 billion in November 2013). The EU achieved a surplus of 10.1 billion euro ie four times the November 2013 figure. Moreover although imports into Europe have decreased by 1.1% exports have increased by 0.9%. The highest increases were recorded in terms of exports to China (+11%), South Korea (+10%) and the USA (+6%). The trade in goods with other countries is down however: -20% of exports towards Switzerland, -12% towards Russia, -5% towards Brazil... [Read more](#)

Eurobarometer :

European sensitive to the cause of development



On the occasion of the European Year for Development, Neven Mimica, European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, presented a Eurobarometer survey on development, published on 12th January. According to this survey the number of people who support increasing development aid has grown significantly. European citizens are still very positive about development and cooperation since 67% of them believe that development aid should be increased (a higher percentage than the last few years in spite of the economic situation) whilst 85% deem it important to help the population of developing countries. Finally Europeans believe (75%) that volunteering is the most effective means to help reduce poverty in developing countries... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

Annual report on the development of employment and the social situation in Europe



The 2014 report on the development of employment and the social situation in Europe published on 15th January announces that the countries which best resisted the economic crisis were those which associated quality jobs, effective social protection and strong

investment. The report indicates that investments in education and life-long training reduced the effects of the recession on employment and income. Marianne Thyssen, the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Mobility announced that structural reform would be "necessary", just as "measures to support consumption and demand." In this way she showed support to the Juncker Investment Plan. The report encourages the re-establishment of convergence between European countries which have suffered major structural imbalances over the last few years in terms of productivity, investment and social protection... [Read more](#)

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Europeans consulted on the TTIP highlight their scepticism



On 13th January the European Commission published its report on the consultation regarding the protection of investments in the trade negotiations with the USA (TTIP). The 150,000 answers received on-line reflect a "great amount of scepticism regarding the ISDS instrument (investor-to-state dispute settlement)", announced Cecilia Malmström. The Europeans, who are trying to protect their right to regulate, are worried, notably about the legal functioning of the arbitration courts, of their relations with the national legal systems and the introduction of an appeal mechanism. The European Commissioner for Trade has tried to be reassuring and maintains that the "transatlantic partnership will be an agreement which is beneficial for all Europeans - beneficial for growth and employment in Europe..." [Read more](#)

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Culture :

Mozart week in Salzburg



From 22nd January to 1st February 2015 the International Mozarteum Foundation is organising "Mozart Week" in Salzburg - the city in which the famous Austrian composer was born. World famous musicians such as Nicolaus Harnoncourt, Andras Schiff and Marc Minkowski and orchestras such as the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, or the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra will be performing in operas, concerts - there will be productions of chamber music and solist work. The striking event of Mozart Week 2015 will be the cantata "Davide Penitente" - a magnificent work whose stage version will be produced by the "horse choreographer" Bartabas and his team, the Académie équestre of Versailles... [Read more](#)

60th Art and Antiques Fair in Brussels



The 60th BRAFA, one of the most prestigious art and antiques fairs in Europe will start on 24th January and will be on until 1st February 2015. The BRAFA aims to be eclectic and offers buyers a wide variety of works: Asian, Oriental, African and Australian art, primitive art, jewellery, furniture, porcelain, carpets, antique pictures and also modern art work ... On this occasion many conferences will be taking place as part of the BRAFA Art Talks: "Steamers and Art Déco, an exceptional crossing" by Brigitte Sabule on 24th January, "The history of the acquisitions of the African collections of the Quai Branly Museum," by Hélène Joubert on 25th January... [Read more](#)

Re-opening of the Gustave Moreau National Museum



On 22nd January the Gustave Moreau Museum in Paris will be opening some renovated rooms. Hence the ground floor, closed since 2002, will be open again offering visitors nearly 80m2 of extra room that contain over 400 paintings, hundreds of drawings including copies made in Italy between 1857 and 1859 and a unique collection of Gustave Moreau's water-colours. Visitors will be able to see more than one hundred works, including the view out over what was Moreau's garden - so typical of the New Athens quarter... [Read more](#)

Mons and Pilsen, European Capitals of Culture 2015



On 17th January the Czech town of Pilsen launched celebrations as European Capital of Culture 2015. On 24th January the Belgian town of Mons will do the same. The two towns are putting on many events and a programme is available on their sites... [Read more](#)

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Agenda :



19th January
Brussels
"Foreign Affairs" Council



19th-22nd January
Brussels
European Parliament - Parliamentary Committees Week



22nd January
Frankfurt
Council of Governors of the European Central Bank



25th January
General Elections Greece



26th January
Brussels
Agriculture and Fisheries Council

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