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## EU(M) and the United Kingdom: one or several Europe(s)?

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Over and above the issues linked to the negotiation of relations between the United Kingdom and the European Union, which could be completed at the European Council on 18th and 19th February, the question of the articulation of the European Union and the euro zone is fundamental. The time has come to open this debate because the crisis has made necessary work on a rationalisation and clarification of the European Union in order to realign institutions with the two major levels of integration: participation in the internal

market and participation in the European economic and monetary union (EMU). The British question provides an opportunity to do so and it is within this general viewpoint that relations between "the two Europes" should be analysed.

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### Elections :

#### General elections in Ireland on 26th February



On 3rd February, Irish Prime Minister (Taoiseach) Enda Kenny (Fine Gael, FG) went to President of the Republic Michael Higgins (Labour Party), to ask him to dissolve the Dail Eireann, the lower house of Parliament. This dissolution leads to the holding of a general election, which will be held on 26th February. According to the latest opinion poll carried out by the Paddy Power Institute and published on 10th February, Fine Gael will win 30% of the vote, ahead of Fianna Fail (FF) 18%, Sinn Fein (SF) 17% and the Labour Party 8%. All the other parties will win less than 5% of the vote... [Read more](#)

## Foundation :

### Permanent Atlas of the European Union (3rd edition)



The third edition of the European Union Atlas is a reference work that presents the Union, its institutions, each of its 28 Member States and - new this time - their overseas territories, through their history, their culture and their reality... [Read more](#)

### The major challenges of European trade policy



On 19th February Cécilia Malmström, European Trade Commissioner and Matthias Fekl, French Secretary of State with responsibility for foreign trade, will be holding a public debate in Paris on the challenges of the European trade policy... [Read more](#)

## Migration :

### European Commission report on the implementation of action on migration



On 10th February the European Commission published a report on the implementation of priority action planned within the context of the European Agenda on migration... [Read more](#)

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### Delegation from the European Parliament Budget Committee in Ankara



On 9th February, a delegation from the European Parliament Budget Committee went to Ankara for an exchange of views with the Turkish government and parliament on the Syrian refugee crisis and the best way to resolve it... [Read more](#)

### Germany and Turkey call on NATO



German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu decided on 8th February to request NATO aid to stem the flow of migrants into Europe. NATO responded by sending a fleet into the Aegean Sea on 11th February, to intercept people smugglers... [Read more](#)

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### Austrian Chancellor's declaration to Parliament



On 11th February Austrian chancellor Werner Faymann made a statement to Parliament on the migrant crises. He underlined the fact that his country could not manage the situation alone and called for solutions at European level... [Read more](#)

## Commission :

### Agreement between the EU and the United States on the derivatives market



On 10th February, after three years of discussions, the European Union and the United States finally signed an agreement on regulation of the derivatives market... [Read more](#)

### Stricter control of financial markets postponed by one year



On 10th February the European Commission proposed postponing by one year, until January 2018, application of the so-called Mifid II directive, which reforms the rules currently in force on the financial instruments markets... [Read more](#)

### New anti-dumping investigation in the steel sector



On 12th February the European Commission announced the launch of more anti-dumping enquiries targeting the import of three steel products from China... [Read more](#)

### Creation of a European medical corps to deal with emergency situations



Learning lessons from the Ebola epidemic, on 15th February the European Union launched a medical corps with the aim of reacting more quickly to emergency situations. "The European Medical Corps (EMC) aims to provide the EU with the means by which to react both more quickly and more efficiently to any health crises that arise" explained the Commissioner with responsibility for humanitarian aid, Christos Stylianides... [Read more](#)

### EU-Colombia and EU-Mexico trade agreements on organic products



On 8th and 10th February the European Commission announced the start of negotiations respectively with Colombia and Mexico with a view to reaching EU-Colombia and EU-Mexico bilateral trade agreements on organic products... [Read more](#)

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### Council :

#### Conclusions of the "Economic and Financial Affairs" Council (ECOFIN)



On 12th February ministers adopted several texts including guidelines for the 2017 budget, conclusions on the fight against the financing of terrorism and an agreement on fiscal transparency between the EU and Andorra... [Read more](#)

#### Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council



On 15th February, at the end of the Foreign Affairs Council meeting, the 28 ministers adopted conclusions on Burundi (condemning violence), Somalia (reconstruction process) and Moldova (political association and economic integration). They also lifted most of the sanctions against Belarus. Alongside this, the Council returned to the climate agreement reached in Paris and reiterated its commitment to the combat to protect human rights... [Read more](#)

#### Conclusions of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council



Agriculture and rural development commissioner Phil Hogan indicated following the Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting on 15th February, that he will go to Paris on 25th February to meet with French Prime Minister Manuel Valls concerning the crisis affecting dairy producers and pig farmers. Alongside this he announced that a working document on the Council's views and proposals will be presented on 14th March for the second Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting. Ministers also discussed animal health and the prospects of international negotiations on agricultural products... [Read more](#)

#### Eurogroup meeting



At the Eurogroup meeting held on 11th February, the 19 euro zone finance ministers reiterated their confidence in the solidity of the banking sector in the euro zone... [Read more](#)

### European Agencies :

#### Agreement between the EPO and the CPVO



On 11th February, the European Patents Office (EPO) and the Community Plant Varieties Office signed an administrative arrangement to enhance their cooperation... [Read more](#)

#### Increased resistance to antimicrobial drugs in Europe



Resistance to antimicrobial drugs, intended to combat the main food infections, is on the increase in Europe, warned the European Agency for Food Safety (Efsa) on 11th February... [Read more](#)

## Germany :

### Security Conference in Munich



The security conference in Munich was marked by the refugee crisis, the terrorist threat in Europe, the temporary cessation of hostilities in Syria and the general cooling of relations between Russia and its partners in the west... [Read more](#)

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## France :

### 48th Franco-German economic and financial council



At the 48th Franco-German economic and financial council held on 9th February, the Finance Ministers from both countries pressed Brussels to adopt "extremely quickly" its proposals for the fight against the financing of terrorism... [Read more](#)

### Government re-shuffle in France



The French President's office announced a government re-shuffle on 11th February. Jean-Marc Ayrault, former Prime Minister between 2012 and 2014 returns to the government team. He will hold the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development, replacing Laurent Fabius... [Read more](#)

## Italy :

### In Rome, the six founder members commit to an ever closer Union



At the end of their informal meeting, German, French, Italian, Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg Foreign Ministers published, on 9th February, a joint declaration on the future of the European project... [Read more](#)

### Matteo Renzi wants to reform European economic policy



In a letter published by the Repubblica newspaper on 11th February, the President of the Italian Council, Matteo Renzi, explains his position with regard to European economic policy which, he believes, should be modified... [Read more](#)

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## Latvia :

### New government in Latvia



On 11th February the Latvian parliament (Saeima) voted its confidence in the new government led by Māris Kučinskis which includes 14 ministers, of whom 2 are women... [Read more](#)

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## Poland :

### Meeting between Angela Merkel and Beata Szydlo



On 12th February, Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydlo met German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin to discuss economic and political cooperation between the 2 countries, EU-UK relations and migrations... [Read more](#)

### Meeting between Viktor Orban and Beata Szydlo



Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban received his Polish counterpart Beata Szydlo on 8th February at a time when Hungary is demonstrating its solidarity with the new Polish government as it faces calls to order from the European Union... [Read more](#)

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## UK :

### Meeting between David Cameron and Angela Merkel



On 12th February, German Prime Minister Angela Merkel met her British counterpart David Cameron in Hamburg. He expressed his commitment to keeping his country within a reformed Europe... [Read more](#)

### Bosnia and Herzegovina :

#### Bosnia and Herzegovina submit a request to join the EU



On 15th February, Federica Mogherini and Johannes Hahn announced Bosnia and Herzegovina's official request to join the European Union... [Read more](#)

### Vatican :

#### Meeting between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow



On 12th February Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and all Russia signed a joint declaration in Havana calling for unity between the catholic and orthodox churches... [Read more](#)

### Council of Europe :

#### Poland called to order by the Council of Europe



At the end of a visit to Poland, Nils Muižnieks, Human Rights Commissioner at the Council of Europe, stated on 12th February that he believed that Warsaw was not offering sufficient protection for Human Rights... [Read more](#)

### IMF :

#### Christine Lagarde warns Ukraine about its political instability



On 10th February, the Managing Director of the IMF, Christine Lagarde, warned Ukraine about its corruption and its sluggishness in implementing promised reforms, threatening to withdraw the €40 billion aid plan... [Read more](#)

#### Christine Lagarde, sole candidate for a second mandate



On 11th February, Aleksei Mozhin, doyen of the IMF board, announced that following closure of the candidatures for the position of managing director on 10th February, Christine Lagarde was the sole candidate. She is therefore set to be appointed for a second mandate... [Read more](#)

### Eurobarometer :

#### Major trends in European public opinion with regard to the EU



The Eurobarometer has published an up-date of its exploratory study into the major trends in European public opinion with regard to the EU... [Read more](#)

### Studies/Reports :

#### Employment at its highest level in the EU since 2008

The quarterly review for winter 2015 on the social and employment situation in the EU, published on 11th February, reports a level of employment and activity on the European labour market which is up;



this level actually caught up with its pre-crisis level in the 3rd quarter 2015... [Read more](#)

#### OECD report on school education



According to an OECD report published on 10th February, the majority of countries have made only very slight progress over the past 10 years in helping their pupils improve skills in reading, mathematics and sciences... [Read more](#)

#### Annual report into the world military balance



The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) published its annual report on the world military balance (The Military Balance 2016) on 9th February... [Read more](#)

#### Eurostat :

##### GDP up by 0.3% in the 4th quarter 2015



The European Union economy and that of the euro zone increased by 0.3% in the 4th quarter, at the same moderate rate as in the previous quarter, bringing growth in 2015 up to 1.8% and 1.5% according to figures published on 12th February by Eurostat... [Read more](#)

##### Trade surpluses in the European Union and the euro zone in 2015



According to a communiqué published by Eurostat on 15th February, trade surpluses in the euro zone and the European Union amounted respectively to €246 billion and €64.2 billion in 2015 (compared respectively to +€184.3 billion and +€13.3 billion in 2014)... [Read more](#)

#### Culture :

##### Concert for refugees



On 1st March, Sir Simon Rattle, Daniel Barenboim and Ivan Fischer - three internationally famous conductors - will conduct at a free concert in Berlin organised for refugees and those who help them... [Read more](#)

##### Brussels Book Fair



The 2016 Brussels Book Fair will be held from 18th to 22nd February. This year the Fair is spotlighting particularly on poetry... [Read more](#)

##### Delacroix exhibition at the National Gallery



Through until 22nd May, London's National Gallery will be holding the exhibition "Delacroix and the rise of modern art", organised in celebration of one of the main representatives of French Romanticism... [Read more](#)

##### Symbolism exhibition at the Palazzo Reale



The exhibition on symbolism will be held at the Palazzo Reale in Milan through until 5th June. It includes over 100 works by the main Italian and foreign representatives of this art genre... [Read more](#)

##### Rembrandt exhibition in Amsterdam

Through until 16th May the Rembrandt house in Amsterdam is organising an exhibition entitled "Rembrandt's Naked Truth", dedicated



to the nudes drawn by the artist... [Read more](#)

### Jean-Baptiste Huet, the pleasure of nature



Through until 5th June the Cognacq-Jay museum in Paris is presenting the first retrospective exhibition of the work of Jean-Baptiste Huet, with almost 70 different works... [Read more](#)

### Agenda :



15th February

Brussels

"Foreign Affairs" Council, "Agriculture and Fishing" Council



16th and 17th February

Brussels

"General Affairs" Council



17th February

Frankfurt/Main

ECB Governing Council



18th and 19th February

Brussels

European Council

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