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Digital Revolution and Illegal Trade: is Europe on the leading edge?

Author: Chantal Poirat



The European Union, which is the leading trade force in the world, is facing a constant rise in product smuggling and counterfeiting. The rise of illegal trade sets a triple challenge: sanitary, with the dangers caused by counterfeit products; security, with illegal trade contributing to the funding of crime and terrorism; and financial with the loss of tax revenue. The fight to counter illegal trade demands a series of political measures. It also means technological response, with the introduction of innovative, modern product traceability and authentication systems that can protect logistics circuits.

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Foundation :

17th Energy Meeting



On 29th November the 17th energy meeting is taking place in Paris. Pascale Joannin, the Foundation's Managing Director will be speaking on the theme "What challenges are being made to energy issues in Europe?".. [Read more](#)

"Europe: how to recover given the new challenges" in Rouen



On 1st December together with the Association Savoirs et Perspectives, Jean-Dominique Giuliani, the Chairman of the Foundation is taking part in a debate in Rouen entitled "Europe: how to recover given the new challenges"... [Read more](#)

European Union post-Brexit



The Faculty of Law, Economy and Management at the University of Angers is organising a conference on 5th December with Jean-Dominique Giuliani, Chairman of the Foundation, on the theme of "The EU after the Brexit"... [Read more](#)

Second Career Forum of Europe



The Secretariat General of European Affairs is organising the 2nd Forum of Careers in Paris on 3rd December. Thierry Chopin, the Foundation's Studies Director will be hosting a workshop. It is obligatory to enrol... [Read more](#)

Commission :

Report on the implementation of the "Milk Package"



On 24th November the European Commission published the second report on the implementation of the "milk package". It maintains that since the launch of measures in 2012 European milk producers have been using these instruments on a growing basis, thereby improving their negotiation capacities, and due to this, their position in the supply

chain... [Read more](#)

Proposal to tighten the Commissioners' code of conduct



On 23rd November the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker suggested the reform of the Commissioners' code of conduct. He suggests that Commissioners be allowed to stand in the European elections without having to quit their post and for them to be able to extend the "cooling down" period which currently stands at 18 months, to two years for former Commissioners and to three years for the President of the Commission... [Read more](#)

Reforms to strengthen the banking sector



On 23rd November the Commission presented a reform of the banking sector. These include own funds requirements, as well as the recovery and resolution of banks, and aim to remedy the threats made to financial stability, whilst helping banks support the real economy... [Read more](#)

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Parliament :

Definitive VAT system and the fight to counter VAT fraud



In a resolution adopted on 24th November MEPs responded to the action plan put forward by the European Commission regarding VAT fraud in a bid to reform the system in force which dates back to 1993. The resolution demands that the definitive VAT system be based on the principle of taxation in the Member State which is the final destination

of the goods and services... [Read more](#)

Fight to counter propaganda



On 23rd November MEPs adopted a resolution denouncing increasing disinformation coming from Russia and Islamic terrorist movements which are trying to cause division in the European Union... [Read more](#)

Freezing of membership negotiations with Turkey



In a resolution approved on 24th November 479 votes in support, 37 against and 107 abstentions MEPs asked for membership negotiations with Turkey to be frozen until the repression has stopped and the bill to re-introduce the death penalty has been rejected... [Read more](#)

Martin Schulz leaves the European Parliament



On 24th November the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, announced that he would be leaving office as MEP in January to devote himself to German politics. Several candidates have already stepped forward... [Read more](#)

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Mario Draghi speaks to the European Parliament



The President of the ECB, Mario Draghi, was in the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 21st November to present the ECB's 2015 Activity Report. It was adopted on 22nd November 437 votes in support, 121 against and 140 abstentions. MEPs believe that the monetary policy is not enough and that structural reforms are necessary... [Read more](#)

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Greater pressure for more defence cooperation



On 22nd November MEPs voted on a resolution that suggests that Member States devote 2% of their GDP to defence and that they establish multi-national forces. They also recommend the introduction of a European Chief of Staff for the planification and command of crisis management operations and also to enable the EU to act in place where the UN is not willing to intervene... [Read more](#)

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Council :

Results of the "Education, Youth, Sport and Culture" Council



On 22nd November the Ministers responsible for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture adopted conclusions youth employment as well as the need to acknowledge and give value to their skills and qualifications at European level... [Read more](#)

European Agreement on Conflict Minerals



On 22nd November the European institutions concluded an agreement on conflict minerals. According to the agreement all European import companies dealing in tin, tantalum, tungsten, gold and other minerals will have to comply with due diligence obligations regarding their suppliers... [Read more](#)

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Diplomacy :

Meeting of the EUBAM Consultative Council



On 22nd November the 27th Meeting of the Assistance Mission on the EU's border in Ukraine and Moldova took place in Chisinau, Moldova. Those involved lauded the cooperation between the two States in the conflict in Transnistria as well as the work being done to protect their borders... [Read more](#)

Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council on Development



On 28th November the Foreign Affairs Council met in Brussels to assess the revision of European consensus on development as suggested by the European Commission. This review aims to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Ministers also discussed future relations between the EU and the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP), and the follow-up to the La Valette Summit one year after... [Read more](#)

European Agencies :

Airbus inaugurates its biggest twin-engined jet, the A350



On 24th November Airbus inaugurated its biggest ever twin-engine, the A350-1000, designed to compete with Boeing 777 with maiden flight of 3 hours over the airport of Toulouse-Blagnac... [Read more](#)

Launch of European Data relay system (EDRS)



On 22nd November the European Data Relay System 'EDRS' was launched. It will enable the provision of a commercial service for to the Copernicus programme. It is the first initiative of its kind and has been set in place thanks to a public-private partnership between the European Space Agency and Airbus Defence and Space... [Read more](#)

Report on the quality of air in Europe



Air pollution which damages the health of 85% of Europe's urban dwellers causes 500.000 premature deaths per year on the continent, said the European Agency for the Environment on 23rd November. It explained in its annual report that the situation was improving but that this was occurring far too slowly still... [Read more](#)

Germany :

Budget-more defence spending



On 23rd November as part of the debate over the budget German Chancellor Angela Merkel spoke to the Bundestag. In her speech she indicated that she believes that the fight to counter terrorism is part of German freedom and that said she wants to strengthen German investment in defence... [Read more](#)

Visit by Iraqi Prime Minister to Berlin



On 21st November German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier hosted his Iraqi counterpart Ibrahim al-Jaafari in Berlin. They first discussed the liberation of Mosul, the only town still occupied in by IS in Iraq. They also spoke of the regional conflicts that are raging in Yemen and Syria... [Read more](#)

Austria :

Presidential: two candidates run neck and neck



On 27th November there was lively exchange between the ecologist candidate Alexander van der Bellen and his far-right rival Norbert Hofer during a TV debate just one week before a new presidential election takes place - the polls are predicting a tightly run race... [Read more](#)

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Cyprus :

Deadlock over negotiations regarding the reunification



Whilst negotiations over a possible reunification of the island of Cyprus were taken up again on 20th November in Switzerland a declaration to the press on 21st November announced a blockage in the talks due to a lack of convergence on both sides... [Read more](#)

Denmark :

New government coalition



On 21st November Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen announced the integration of two new parties into the government coalition from the Liberal Alliance and the Conservatives. However this will now depend on the People's Party's support... [Read more](#)

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Estonia :

New government led by Jüri Ratas



Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid appointed the new government led by Prime Minister Jüri Ratas on 22nd November. It comprises 15 ministers four of whom are women. This new government was sworn in before Parliament (Rigikogu) on 23rd November... [Read more](#)

France :

François Fillon - rightwing and centre candidate in the Presidential election



On 27th November François Fillon won the second round of the primary elections for the rightwing and centre in France, taking 66.5% of the vote ahead of Alain Juppé who won 33.5%. The former Prime Minister will therefore be the rightwing and centre candidate in the French presidential election in April/May 2017... [Read more](#)



Hungary :

Long stay visas for Ukrainians



On 24th November Hungary announced that it was making long stay visas immediately available at no cost to Ukrainians after a meeting between Prime Minister Viktor Orban and his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Groysman... [Read more](#)



Italy :

Final campaign week before the constitutional referendum



The last polls published two weeks ahead of the referendum, before the "electoral silence" deems that a majority of voters - 52%-54% - are against the constitutional reform that aims to simplify the political system and make the country more governable. However one quarter of the Italians have still not decided... [Read more](#)



Lithuania :

The Lithuanian Parliament endorses Saulius Skvernelis as Prime Minister



After having been appointed by Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė, Saulius Skvernelis, the candidate of the Union of Farmers and Greens (LPGU) was approved as Prime Minister by Parliament (Seimas). He now has 15 days to form his government and define his policy that has to be approved by the Seimas... [Read more](#)



Poland :

What kind of relations with the US and its European partners?



On 21st November as part of an interview given on Onet.pl, Polish Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski gave details on the relations his country will have with the US and its European partners. He guaranteed that D. Trump would maintain security cooperation... [Read more](#)



UK :

Brexit - meeting between negotiators in Brussels



British Minister David Davis was in Brussels on 21st November to meet Michel Barnier, the chief negotiator for the European Commission. On 22nd November Mr Davis travelled to Strasbourg and the European Parliament where he was able to speak informally to MEPs, notably Guy Verhofstadt, who is responsible for negotiating Brexit on behalf of the European Parliament... [Read more](#)



First budgetary statement after the 23rd June referendum



On 23rd November Philip Hammond, Chancellor of the Exchequer, presented the British government's economic forecasts to the House of Commons. Although the economy is due to grow by 2.1% in 2016 this is due to slow to 1.4% in 2017. Moreover the hypothesis of a surplus in 2020 has been relinquished... [Read more](#)



Two former Prime Ministers do not rule out a new vote



Former British Prime Minister John Major deems the idea of holding a second referendum on the Brexit "a perfectly credible" idea. His successor to Downing Street, Tony Blair, even believes that preventing the Brexit might be possible "if the people decided so"... [Read more](#)



Kosovo :

First meeting of the Association and Stabilisation Council EU-Kosovo



On 25th November the first Association and Stabilisation Council met in Brussels between the EU and Kosovo to discuss reforms that the country has to introduce as a priority in view of drawing closer to European standards in many areas... [Read more](#)

Ukraine :

EU-Ukraine Summit



On 24th November during the EU-Ukraine Summit the EU confirmed its support to the promotion of an accountable, transparent government in Ukraine. Over 300 million € will be disbursed to counter corruption, to reform the civil service and to support the rule of law... [Read more](#)

Eurostat :

Study on trade of EU goods with Ukraine between 2005 and 2015



On 23rd November during the 18th EU-Ukraine Summit Eurostat published a study on the goods trade between the EU and Ukraine between 2005 et 2015, before the application of the association agreement... [Read more](#)

Studies/Reports :

OECD publishes Healthcare at a Glance: Europe 2016



On 23rd November the OECD together with the European Commission published the OHealthcare at a Glance: Europe 2016. It emerges that the EU's population lives longer but not necessarily in better health. The OECD advocates greater access to healthcare... [Read more](#)

World Bank: low growth in Eastern Europe



On 22nd November the World Bank published its most recent report on Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It forecasts that economic growth will be low in 2016 in Eastern Europe... [Read more](#)

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The OECD publishes its global economic outlook



On 28th November the OECD published its "Global Economic Outlook". The organisation notably calls notably for advantage to be taken of accommodating monetary policies in order to take fiscal initiatives and to revive economic growth... [Read more](#)

Sustainable development: overview of the situation in the EU



On 22nd November Eurostat published a study that reviews Europe's position in terms of the goals included in the "sustainable development programme 2030" adopted by the UN General Assembly... [Read more](#)

Culture :

"Toni Erdmann" winner of the LUX 2016 prize awarded by the European Parliament



On 23rd November during a ceremony organised by the European Parliament in Strasbourg the President Martin Schulz announced that the German, Austrian and Romanian co-production "Toni Erdmann" had won the 2016 LUX Prize... [Read more](#)

We Jazz in Helsinki

From 4th to 11th December the 2016 annual jazz festival, We Jazz, is taking place in Helsinki... [Read more](#)

The Palazzo Braschi is hosting an exhibition on Artemisia Gentileschi



From 30th November to 8th May 2017 the Palazzo Braschi in Rome is hosting an exhibition devoted to 17th century Italian painter Artemisia Gentileschi... [Read more](#)

Saatchi Gallery: from one generation to another



From 30th November to 28th February 2017 the Saatchi Gallery in London is organising an exhibition entitled "Painter's Painters" in celebration of the works by modern painters who have inspired a new generation of artists... [Read more](#)

Prado Museum: Master Mateo and the Santiago de Compostela cathedral



From 29th November to 26th March 2017 the Prado Museum in Madrid is hosting an exhibition on Master Mateo, a 12th century sculptor and architect. For the very first time all of his work and notably that undertaken for the Santiago de Compostela cathedral will be on show... [Read more](#)

Brussels Cinema Days



From 30th November to 4th December the Brussels Cinema Days are taking place at the BOZAR Brussels. The festival is offering the screening of around twenty films and is bringing together around 30 personalities as it pays tribute to European cinema... [Read more](#)

Christmas Markets in Europe



The Christmas Markets have now opened across Europe. From London to Bruges, Strasbourg and Geneva, Nuremberg, Bologna, Warsaw and Salzburg... [Read more](#)

Agenda :



28th November
Brussels
"Foreign Affairs" Council



28th and 29th November
Brussels
"Competitiveness" Council



1st and 2nd December
Brussels
"Transport and Telecommunications" Council



4th December

4
Dec

Austria
Presidential Election (2nd round)
Italy
Constitutional Referendum

5
Dec

5th December
Brussels
"Energy Council"

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