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Author: "Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI"

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Creation date: 05-02-2020
Brexit: The final countdown [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 24-01-2020
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Summary: It is now clear that the United Kingdom will leave the European Union on 31 January 2020. It will do so on the basis of the revised Withdrawal Agreement negotiated between the EU-27 and the UK by Boris Johnson after he became Prime Minister last year. Both sides will then start negotiations on future relations, including on trade, which will run during the transitional period, currently due to end on 31 December 2020. The UK government has said it will set out its hopes for the future partnership after Brexit has happened. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from international think tanks on numerous challenges facing the UK, EU and their future ties after their divorce.

Future of European Security and Defence Policy [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 17-01-2020
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Security and Defence
Summary: The EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) aims to ensure an appropriate role for the Union in peace-keeping operations, conflict prevention and in the strengthening of international security. It is an integral part of the EU’s comprehensive approach towards crisis management, drawing on civilian and military assets. Now its importance is rising because of the increasingly uncertain strategic environment. For years, the EU has been considered as an economic powerhouse but militarily weak, and it is currently debating whether and how to enhance its defence capabilities, notably because of the growing complexity of transatlantic security relations. The new European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, is determined to expand the EU’s international role, calling her Commission ‘geopolitical’. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from international think tanks on the state of the future of the EU’s foreign, security and defence policy.

EU cohesiveness and cohesion [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 10-01-2020
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Regional Development
Summary: The European Union is envisaged as an area of growing stability, security and prosperity, with integration allowing it to boost citizens’ living standards and to enhance its influence globally. Generous cohesion and regional development funds are meant to limit wealth disparities among the various EU regions and countries. However, frequent difficulties in forging common foreign and economic policies, due to national differences, can diminish the EU’s domestic effectiveness and international leverage, while inequalities in income have been widening, especially in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by international think tanks and research institutes on EU cohesiveness and cohesion published over the past year.

2019: A year of challenges and choices [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 20-12-2019
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Summary: The European Parliament elections and formation of a new European Commission with new priorities, together with a general economic slowdown against the backdrop of the US-China trade conflict, to say nothing of Brexit, defined 2019 as a year of tough choices in the context of old and new challenges. Those include efforts to fight climate change, the defence of the rules-based international order, the advance of the digital revolution, the emerging debate over the EU’s strategic sovereignty, and the need to re-define relations with the United Kingdom post-Brexit. This note offers links to recent selected commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the state of the EU in 2019 and its outlook in several important areas.
Enhancing EU competitiveness [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 13-12-2019  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues  
Summary: The European Union has been established as an area of security, stability and prosperity, in which economic competitiveness plays a key role. Although in terms of productivity some EU countries are doing well, compared to, for example, the United States, the EU is lagging behind some other world regions in reaping the fruits of the digital revolution. Analysts also point to the need to continue euro-area governance reforms, completing the Banking Union and pushing ahead with the creation of the Capital Markets Union. A debate continues about whether the EU should support the creation of EU industrial champions, which advocates claim could be well placed to compete internationally in some sectors. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by international think tanks and research institutes on EU competitiveness and related issues. Earlier papers on reforming the euro area are available in a previous issue from the series, published in December 2019.

Climate change [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 05-12-2019  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: Environment  
Summary: Government officials from across the world are currently engaged in the 2019 United Nations Climate Change Conference, also known as COP25, focusing on how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The conference, which runs from 2 to 13 December 2019, was moved at short notice to Madrid in Spain, to avoid the social unrest in Chile. Meanwhile, the new President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, is preparing a set of new climate and environmental initiatives, as part of the European Green Deal. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on climate talks and wider issues relating to climate change.

Euro area deepening and reform [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 03-12-2019  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues  
Summary: Countries sharing the euro have done little to change the functioning of the single currency area since French President Emmanuel Macron called for its major overhaul in 2017. Many analysts and politicians have attributed the lack of significant reforms in this area to Germany’s – and some other countries’ – cautious approach, although also underlining that the currency area is now much stronger and more resilient than in the wake of the financial crisis of 2008. The single currency area’s most immediate challenge is to cope with the economic slow-down, which is partly a consequence of global trade disputes. A smooth transition in leadership at the European Central Bank will also be very important. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on challenges facing the euro area and related issues. Earlier publications on the topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’ published in February 2019.

European borders [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 22-11-2019  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice  
Summary: The European Union helps its Member States to secure their external borders, whilst ensuring an area of free movement without internal borders. Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, inter alia, coordinates and organises joint operations with Member States, provides surveillance and risk analysis, and supports cooperation between law enforcement authorities. The EU also helps Member States to fight crimes such as human trafficking, child abuse and smuggling of illegal goods. The issue of borders is closely linked to EU migration policy, which is being debated with a view to its reform, following the 2015 migration crisis. This note offers links to commentaries and studies by major international think tanks on the issue of borders and some related reports on migration. More papers specifically on migration can be found in earlier items from the same series, published in October and December 2018.
Rule of law [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 15-11-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | EU Law: Legal System and Acts
Summary The European Union is a community of law, with the rule of law being a basic value since the Union's inception. The President-elect of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has confirmed a strong commitment to uphold the rule of law, which remains a shared responsibility for all EU institutions and all Member States. However, developments in several EU Member States – for example Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Malta – have raised concerns over how far this commitment is actually being observed in practice, sparking a lively debate across the EU and action in the EU institutions themselves. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the rule of law debate.

Global and regional trends
Publication type Briefing
Date 25-10-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Summary The European Union's key institutions held a joint annual conference on 14-15 October entitled 'Challenges and Choices for Europe.' The annual event was organised under the auspices of the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS), which is a framework for cooperation between the administrations of the European Parliament, European Commission, Council of the European Union, European External Action Service and other bodies, to work together on medium- and long-term trends facing or relating to the European Union.

Digital challenges for Europe [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 18-10-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Internal Market and Customs Union | Economics and Monetary Issues
Summary The rapid development of digital technologies is posing a challenge to the European Union, spurring initiatives to catch up with the US and China in the area, notably in the context of the digital single market. Among the dilemmas are how to reconcile Europe’s sensitivity towards protecting private data with the need to use them in many algorithms, and ensure that automation and artificial intelligence strengthen rather than weaken labour market participation. This note offers links to a series of some recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on digital challenges. Many earlier papers on the issue can be found in a previous item in the series, published in July 2018. Many reports on cybersecurity are available in a publication from October 2018.

Brexit: Make or break? [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 04-10-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Summary The British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, has presented a draft text to replace the 'Irish backstop', with the aim of reaching agreement with the other 27 EU leaders on the United Kingdom's orderly withdrawal from the EU in the coming weeks. While the UK withdrawal is currently scheduled for 31 October, the UK Parliament has adopted legislation obliging Johnson to seek a delay in that date, if no deal is reached by 19 October. But with British politics in turmoil, it remains unclear if the Prime Minister will comply, or, if he does, whether the EU will agree. Economists warn that the UK's disorderly departure from the EU is likely to have damaging consequences for supply chains in trade and production, the supply of medicines and many other areas. This note offers links to a series of most recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on Brexit.
End of the Draghi era at the ECB [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 27-09-2019
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues

Summary: The European Central Bank will shortly see a 'change of the guard' at a time of stagnating economic growth and fears of recession sparked partly by global trade conflicts. Current ECB President, Mario Draghi's eight-year term in office ends on 1 November, and he is to be replaced by Christine Lagarde, former head of the International Monetary Fund and previously Minister of Finance in France. Some analysts say the the ECB's recent decisions aimed at propping up faltering growth in the euro area will limit Lagarde's room for manoeuvre as regards a possible change in policy direction. On 12 September, the ECB’s Governing Council cut interest rates deeper into negative territory and decided to extend its bond purchases, without giving any indicative end for the programme. This note offers links to a series of some recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on the ECB and related issues.

Climate change [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 20-09-2019
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Environment

Summary: The United Nations’ Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, will convene a special summit on climate change on 23 September, during the annual session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The meeting, entitled ‘Climate Action Summit 2019: A race we can win, a race we must win’, is meant to encourage world leaders to do more to limit emissions of greenhouse gases responsible for global warming. Guterres has said the meeting will seek to challenge states, regions, cities, companies, investors and citizens to step up action in the areas of energy transition, climate finance and carbon pricing, industry transition and nature-based solutions. This note offers links to a series of recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on climate change and ways to mitigate it. Earlier reports on trade can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' published in April 2019.

International trade [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 13-09-2019
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: International Trade

Summary: The escalating trade conflict between the United States (US) and China has dampened economic growth in the European Union and other regions of the world, analysts say, and poses a further question mark over the continuity of the post-Cold War rules-based order. The EU is seeking to position itself as a defender of the multilateral rules-based system in the context of growing economic nationalism. The EU will need to coordinate closely its trade and climate policies, and think clearly about how best to defend its economic interests in the challenging new geopolitical environment facing the incoming European Commission. This note offers links to a series of recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on international trade policy. More reports on trade can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' published in June 2018.

EU challenges at a time of transition [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 06-09-2019
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law

Summary: The European Union faces numerous challenges, both short and long-term, as it prepares to choose the new executive, a European Commission for the next five years, following elections to the European Parliament in May 2019. The most immediate task is for European Commission President-elect, Ursula von der Leyen, to put together a college of Commissioners and secure its approval by the European Parliament. The EU is also engaged in difficult talks on the terms of the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the EU, currently due on 31 October. On the economic front, the EU needs to deal with the fallout of a trade conflict between the United States and China, and to boost its competitiveness, as the two other global powerhouses swiftly pursue the digitalisation of their economies. In the face of political volatility in the US, Europe should also consider enhancing its defence capabilities. Last, but not least, the Union must deliver on its pledge to remain the world’s leader in efforts to fight climate change. This note brings together recent commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on challenges facing the EU. More papers analysing the outcome of the European Elections can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking', published in July.
The European elections and thereafter [What Think Tanks are Thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 12-07-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Summary On 23-26 May, 2019, European Union citizens elected a more fragmented European Parliament than its predecessor, with the two main political groups – the European People’s Party and the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats losing some ground, and the Liberals, now known as Renew Europe, and the Greens/European Free Alliance strengthening their representation. Gains made by Eurosceptic and populist groups proved more limited than had been predicted. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on the European elections and their aftermath.

NATO at 70 [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 12-04-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Security and Defence
Keyword United States | head of State | think tank | NATO | report | common security and defence policy
Summary The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) celebrates its 70th anniversary in April 2019, proud of its survival, durability and strong role in ensuring peace, notably during the Cold War. However, analysts and politicians stress that the military alliance must work hard to keep pace with a changing environment and the new challenges of the 21st century, both geo-strategic and technological. Another major test is the uncertain commitment to NATO of Donald Trump, the current President of the United States. This note offers links to commentaries and studies on NATO and European defence by major international think tanks. Earlier papers on European defence, focused on a planned US withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking', published in February 2019.

Climate change [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 05-04-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Environment
Keyword climate change | right to demonstrate | climate change policy | greenhouse gas | think tank | UN Secretary-General | report | student
Summary The United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, on 28 March urged governments worldwide to come to the UN summit on climate in September 2019 with concrete plans to boost action against global warming. The call followed the publication of the annual report on climate change by the World Meteorological Organization, which warned about the dire consequences of the continued rise of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. In the same month, hundreds of thousands of students and pupils in 120 countries have sought to draw politicians' attention to climate change by walking out of classes to stage repeated street protests. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on climate talks and wider issues relating to climate change. Earlier publications on the issue can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking' published in November 2018.

Innovation in Europe [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 29-03-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword United States | competitiveness | think tank | EU research policy | research and development | innovation | report | China
Summary Innovation in the economy is a priority for the European Union, vital to its competitiveness globally, and for growth and jobs. The EU is implementing a number of policies and programmes that support innovation, through increased investment in research and development, and to better convert research into improved goods and services. Yet, according to many analysts, despite the roll-out of numerous pro-innovation initiatives, the EU is still lagging behind the United States and China both on innovation and in relation to the related digitalisation process. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on innovation in the EU and related issues. More papers on innovation, notably on the digital economy, can be found in a previous item in this series. published in July 2018.
### State of the Union: Spring 2019 [What Think Tanks are thinking]

**Publication type**: Briefing  
**Date**: 22-03-2019  
**Author**: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area**: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law  
**Keyword**: the EU's international role | European election | think tank | report | rule of law | European Union

**Summary**: The run-up to the European Parliament elections on 23-26 May has intensified debate about the state of the European Union, the challenges it faces and the reforms needed, both to strengthen its resilience and to enhance its international role. Many analysts focus on the rise of anti-establishment movements and a perceived divide between the east and west of the Union regarding adherence to EU values and the rule of law. Some others discuss whether the EU should have more competence in areas such as defence, international relations, migration and taxation. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on the state of the Union, proposed reforms and other issues being discussed ahead of the European elections. Studies and commentaries on Brexit can be found in a previous item in the series. Papers on economic challenges faced by the EU and the euro area are available in still another. Some further analyses on the European elections can be found in a ‘What think tanks are thinking’ published in January.

**Briefing** [EN](#)

### Presidential elections in Ukraine [What Think Tanks are thinking]

**Publication type**: Briefing  
**Date**: 15-03-2019  
**Author**: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: national sovereignty | EU relations | Crimea question | think tank | NATO | Ukraine | common foreign and security policy | report | corruption | presidential election

**Summary**: Ukraine will hold presidential elections on 31 March, five years after the Maidan protests resulted in the impeachment of pro-Kremlin President Viktor Yanukovich, setting the country on a course to deepen ties with the West. Russia reacted by launching a hybrid war against Ukraine, which resulted in the illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula in March 2014, and in military aggression in eastern Ukraine. The outcome of the ballot is uncertain, but the new leader is expected to continue the efforts of incumbent President Petro Poroshenko to deepen relations with the European Union and NATO, and continue the country’s reform process, including anti-corruption measures. A record 44 candidates are contesting the election, with actor and political novice Volodymyr Zelenskiy holding the lead in opinion polls, followed by Poroshenko and former prime minister, Yulia Tymoshenko. If no candidate secures an absolute majority in the first round, the top two contenders will face each other in a run-off on 21 April. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the situation in Ukraine.

**Briefing** [EN](#)

### The EU and Middle East and North Africa [What Think Tanks are thinking]

**Publication type**: Briefing  
**Date**: 08-03-2019  
**Author**: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: Arab League | international cooperation | North Africa | think tank | Middle East | report | summit meeting

**Summary**: The European Union held its first ever summit with the Arab League in February, highlighting the growing importance of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in tackling problems such as security, terrorism, migration and energy supply. At their meeting in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, more than 40 leaders from the two blocs discussed issues ranging from ways to fight poverty and reducing irregular migration to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, instability in Libya and wars in Syria and Yemen. The summit's declaration called for stronger economic and political cooperation as well as efforts to support the multilateral, rules-based international order. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports by major international think tanks on the general problems found within the region and some specific countries. More reports on the region can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking' published in October 2017. The issue of Iran will be discussed in one of the forthcoming issues of the series.

**Briefing** [EN](#)

### Venezuela [What Think Tanks are thinking]

**Publication type**: At a Glance  
**Date**: 01-03-2019  
**Author**: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword**: Venezuela | think tank | political crisis | EP resolution | common foreign and security policy | report

**Summary**: The situation in Venezuela appears to be approaching a tipping-point, as President Nicolas Maduro faces growing international and domestic pressure to relinquish power to National Assembly leader and self-proclaimed acting President Juan Guaidó. The latter is recognised by many Western countries as the legitimate interim leader of the oil-rich Latin American country, which has seen its economy undermined by mismanagement and corruption. Maduro, political heir to Hugo Chávez, is backed by China, Russia and the country’s military. He has recently ordered troops to block the opposition’s US-backed attempt to bring in aid to the country, leading to violent clashes. To date, some 3.4 million Venezuelans have left the country to escape the crisis. The European Parliament has already adopted a non-binding resolution that recognised Juan Guaidó as the legitimate interim President of Venezuela. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the situation in Venezuela.

**At a Glance** [EN](#)
The INF Treaty and European defence [What Think Tanks are thinking]

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 22-02-2019  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area** Security and Defence  
**Keyword** United States | missile | withdrawal from an agreement | head of State | think tank | Russia | nuclear non-proliferation | NATO | report | China | common security and defence policy  
**Summary** The United States has announced its withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, sparking fears of a fresh nuclear arms race between Russia, the United States and China. The collapse of the 1987 agreement, which bans land-based missiles with a range of between 500 kilometres and 5,500 kilometres, has further exacerbated existing concerns about European security caused by the uncertain commitment of US President Donald Trump to the NATO military alliance. President Trump’s approach to security, coupled with Russia’s assertive behaviour, have prompted the European Union to put forward initiatives to increase its military capabilities. President Trump started a six-month process of withdrawing from the Treaty in February 2019, blaming the decision on Russian violations. Hopes are not high that an agreement can be negotiated during this period. Furthermore, during the 2019 Munich Security Conference, German Chancellor Angela Merkel called on China to join the INF Treaty, but China has argued that this would place unfair limits on its military, and refused. This note offers links to commentaries and studies on the collapse of the INF Treaty, and on European defence. Earlier papers on defence can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’, published in July 2018.

Briefing  EN

The euro at 20 [What Think Tanks are thinking]

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 15-02-2019  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area** Economics and Monetary Issues  
**Keyword** think tank | euro | euro area | report  
**Summary** The euro marked its 20th anniversary in January 2019, as debates continued about the single currency's track-record and the shape of future reform. When the 11 original members of the euro area irrevocably fixed their exchange rates in 1999, and transferred authority over their monetary policies to the European Central Bank, the currency’s advocates hailed the move as the crowning achievement of European integration. Whilst some economists have blamed the euro area’s one-size-fits-all approach to interest rates for weakening growth and increasing economic divergences between certain countries, others have pointed to the euro's role in underpinning the single market as well as offering resilience to Europe in withstanding the 2008-2009 financial crisis and its aftermath. Opinion polls shows the euro continues to be popular among citizens. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on the euro’s merits, its future and related issues. Earlier publications on the topics can be found in a previous edition of the series published in November 2018, PE 630.268.

At a Glance  EN

China [What Think Tanks are thinking]

**Publication type** Briefing  
**Date** 08-02-2019  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Summary** China’s increasingly autocratic domestic stance and its assertive foreign policy pose a dilemma for European Union policy-makers as to whether to treat the Asian powerhouse as a partner or a rival, or to take a position somewhere in between. Formally, the EU and China are strategic partners since 2003 - a partnership that was broadened five years ago by the EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation. No EU country wants to be openly confrontational towards China, contrary to the approach of the current United States administration. However, several European governments are wary of Beijing’s economic expansionism and its efforts to take the global lead in digital technologies. Controversy over China’s telecoms giant Huawei has exacerbated those concerns. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on China, its ties with the EU and related issues. More studies on the topics can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’ published in September 2018.

Briefing  EN
The EU’s long-term budget framework [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type At a Glance
Date 01-02-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Budget
Keyword think tank | report | multiannual financial framework
Summary Since May 2018, European Union governments and the European Parliament have been negotiating the next long-term budget for the bloc, the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027, in a bid to secure sufficient resources for new priorities such as security, defence and migration, and to respond in a realistic way to the financial consequences of the UK’s withdrawal from the EU. In November 2018, the Parliament approved its negotiating position, seeking, among other proposals, more funds for youth, research, growth and jobs, as well as security, migration and tackling climate change. Conditions proposed by the European Commission that would make the availability of EU funds dependent on respect for the rule of law and EU values are also being discussed. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries, studies and reports from some of the major international think tanks and research institutes, which discuss the EU’s long-term budget and related reforms. More reports on this topic are available in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’, published in June 2018.

At a Glance EN

Brexit: The latest impasse [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 25-01-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword EU relations | United Kingdom | think tank | withdrawal from the EU | report
Summary On 15 January, the House of Commons overwhelmingly rejected the Withdrawal Agreement which the British Prime Minister, Theresa May, had negotiated with the rest of the European Union, throwing into disarray efforts to ensure the country’s orderly exit from the bloc. However, the Prime Minister then survived a no-confidence vote tabled by the Opposition and later proposed tweaking her deal in a bid to win over rebel Conservative law-makers and the Northern Irish Democratic Unionist Party, on which her government depends for its majority. British and European politicians are weighing various options as to how to proceed. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on Brexit negotiations and related issues. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’, published in December 2018.

Briefing EN

Foreign policy and defence challenges [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 18-01-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword United States | United Kingdom | EU migration policy | think tank | Russia | Ukraine | common foreign and security policy | withdrawal from the EU | EU-NATO cooperation | foreign policy | China
Summary The European Union will face increasingly serious foreign policy and defence challenges in 2019. The current Administration in the United States seems to be abandoning its traditional role of ‘benign protector’ of the rules-based international order. Russia, according to many analysts, continues to try to undermine the democratic process in many Western countries, and China’s foreign policy is becoming more and more assertive, notably in the economic field. Furthermore, migration, Brexit and cybersecurity, as well as a lack of EU unity on certain issues, also feature amongst key challenges. This note offers links to recent selected commentaries, studies and reports from major international think-tanks on EU foreign and defence policies. Links to more reports on President Donald Trump’s policies, Russia, EU-China relations and NATO are available in previous items in this series, published last year.

Briefing EN

European elections [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 11-01-2019
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword European election | President of the Commission | think tank | European Parliament | bibliography
Summary Citizens of the European Union go to the polls in May 2019, in elections to the European Parliament which many analysts say may be the most important ever. Commentators are currently focused on the prospective performance of anti-establishment parties and movements, many of which run on Eurosceptic platforms. The vote will also indicate if the Spitzenkandidaten process, launched by the European political parties five years ago, has become established practice. If followed as in 2014, the candidate from the political force that receives the highest number of seats in the European elections would become the President of the European Commission. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on the forthcoming European elections and related issues.

Briefing EN
2018: Challenges and choices [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 20-12-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: International Trade | Economics and Monetary Issues | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: United States | European security | Economic and Monetary Union | United Kingdom | European election | migration | economic policy | think tank | terrorism | refugee | withdrawal from the EU | international relations
Summary: After 2017 brought optimism for the European Union, 2018 has proved a year of tougher challenges and choices. It was a time of slower growth, with the spectre of a global trade war. Turbulent negotiations on Brexit brought an agreement, but the chances of its approval by the UK House of Commons look unpromising. It was a year of uncertainty for transatlantic ties and for US global leadership. Tensions re-emerged over migration. Progress in overhauling the euro-area was limited. The simmering Russia-Ukrainian conflict erupted again. These and other developments form the backdrop for the European elections in 2019. This note offers links to recent selected commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the state of the EU in 2018 and its outlook in several important areas.

Migration [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 14-12-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword: humanitarian aid | third country | migration | think tank | refugee | Schengen Agreement | international relations | external border of the EU
Summary: On 10 December 2018, at a conference in the Moroccan city of Marrakech, more than 160 United Nations members adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. This is the first multilateral framework providing a global response to migration, and comes at a time of mounting public concern about the issue, in particular in the EU and US. Even though the agreement is non-binding and serves more as a set of best practices for the international community to improve global cooperation on migration, nearly 30 countries, including the US and a number of EU Member States, have decided to oppose it. This note offers links to commentaries and studies on migration by major international think tanks. Earlier papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking', published in October 2018.

Brexit: The endgame? [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 07-12-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword: negotiation of an agreement (EU) | United Kingdom | think tank | withdrawal from the EU
Summary: Prime Minister Theresa May faces an uphill struggle to convince the British House of Commons to back the agreement she has reached with the EU-27 on UK withdrawal from the European Union, in a crucial vote set for 11 December. Although the deal was approved by her Cabinet and all EU leaders, the divorce terms have been criticised by many Members of Parliament, both advocates of a no-deal departure from the Union and those who would like the United Kingdom to remain within the Union or have the closest possible ties with it from outside. In a parallel development, an Advocate General of the Court of Justice of the European Union has issued an opinion that the UK may unilaterally withdraw its notification of intent to leave the EU, although its departure date is currently set for 29 March 2019. The Court is due to issue its ruling on 10 December; in the past, the Court has followed its advocate-generals’ opinions in most cases. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on Brexit negotiations and related issues. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’, published in October 2018.

Global and regional trends [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 30-11-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Research Policy | Forward Planning | Economics and Monetary Issues | Industry
Summary: The European Union’s key institutions held a joint conference on 28-29 November entitled ’Global trends to 2030: Shaping the future in a fast-changing world’. The annual event was organised under the auspices of the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPADS), which is a framework for cooperation between the administrations of the European Parliament, the European Commission, Council of the European Union, European External Action Service and other bodies to work together on medium- and long-term trends facing or relating to the European Union. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on longer term trends – global and regional, with a focus on Europe. Some reports listed here were presented at the conference, some others can be found in the ESPADS repository of strategic studies, named Orbis.

Briefing EN
Inequality [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 23-11-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Social Policy | Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword: poverty | social inequality | India | think tank | distribution of income | European Union | China
Summary: Inequality has diminished on a global scale in the past 30 years, as more than 2 billion people have been lifted out of poverty in countries such as China or India. However, in the United States and, to a lesser extent, western Europe and other developed regions, inequality within individual countries has often increased in recent years after decades of general growth in prosperity. Many analysts attribute this phenomenon both to globalisation and to inadequate policy responses to the pace of technological change. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on economic and social inequality. Reports on gender and racial inequalities will be covered in greater detail in a future edition in the series.

Climate change [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 16-11-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Environment
Keyword: climate change | biodiversity | United States | atmospheric pollution | economic growth | UN Conference | think tank | public health | environmental policy | international relations
Summary: World leaders are preparing for the ‘COP 24’ summit on tackling climate change in Katowice, Poland, in December, which is meant to debate how to implement the 2015 Paris Agreement. Meanwhile, a United Nations report has called for more measures to cut emissions of greenhouse gases: On 8 October, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its latest findings, which indicate that limiting global warming to the 1.5°C increase agreed in Paris would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on climate talks and wider issues relating to climate change. Earlier publications on the issue can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’ published in November 2017.

Challenges for the euro area [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 09-11-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword: Economic and Monetary Union | economic governance (EU) | EU Member State | think tank | euro area | economic reform
Summary: The discussion on how to deepen and improve the functioning of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) continues on several fronts. Issues under discussion include euro-area governance, the role of the European Central Bank (ECB), the fiscal rules, debt-mutualisation, risk-sharing, and the nature of, and political compromises between, French and German perspectives within the system. The dispute between Italy and the European Commission over the former’s budget for 2019 is now a major topic for discussion at Eurogroup meetings, as are Banking Union and the sustainability of economic growth, notably in light of the expected tapering of the ECB’s bond-purchase programme. In a separate development, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker has proposed increasing the international role of the euro, which some analysts say could replace the US dollar in certain international transactions, given the volatility of US economic policies. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on challenges facing the euro area and related issues. Earlier publications on the topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’ published in June 2018.
Cybersecurity [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 26-10-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Security and Defence
Keyword computer crime | disinformation | Internet | European security | Russia | data transmission | data protection
Summary Cybersecurity was back in the spotlight earlier in October, when several Western countries issued a coordinated denunciation of Russia, accusing it of running a global hacking campaign. Moscow denied the allegations. On 4 October, the UK and the Netherlands accused Moscow of sending agents to The Hague to hack into the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, while the United States indicted suspected Russian agents for conspiring to hack computers and steal data to delegitimize international anti-drug organisations. They were also accused of trying to hack into Westinghouse Electric, a nuclear power company. Russia and other countries had earlier been accused of cyber-espionage, proliferation of fake news, and misuse of social media in some election campaigns. Cybersecurity can be defined as the protection of computer systems and mobile devices from theft and damage to their hardware, software or information, as well as from disruption or misdirection of the services they provide. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from major international think-tanks and research institutes on cybersecurity and related issues. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published in April 2018.

Migration [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 19-10-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword labour market | third country | Africa | European security | Sahel | migration | EU migration policy | think tank | refugee | external border of the EU | Frontex
Summary At the European Council meeting on 18 October, European Union Heads of State or Government vowed to step up the fight against illegal migration, by intensifying efforts to crack down on smuggling networks, protect external borders and cooperate with countries of origin and transit. The EU's southern borders remain under pressure from irregular migrants escaping poverty and conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, although the leaders noted that illegal border crossings into the EU have declined by 95% from their peak in October 2015. The leaders also said in their conclusions that a joint task force should be established at Europol's European Migrant Smuggling Centre. The European Commission is to propose a comprehensive set of implementation measures by December, and the leaders urged the European Parliament and Council to examine promptly the red and mobile proposals on the Return Directive, the Asylum Agency and the European Border and Coast Guard. This note offers links to commentaries and studies on migration by major international think tanks. Earlier papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking', published in June 2018.

The EU and Asia [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 12-10-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword third country | Asia | think tank | international relations
Summary The heads of state or government of 51 countries will gather in Brussels on 18 and 19 October for the 12th Europe-Asia summit (ASEM) to discuss closer relations and global challenges. The meeting will focus in particular on trade and investment, connectivity, sustainable development, and climate and security challenges. The EU attaches growing importance to relations with Asian countries as the region's economic and political weight increases and as US trade policy is increasingly unpredictable. This note offers links to selected recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think-tanks on EU-Asian relations, the situation in the region and some of its countries. The publication does not cover issues related to China, which were the topic of one of the previous editions in the series.

Brexit negotiations [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 05-10-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword negotiation of an agreement (EU) | United Kingdom | think tank | withdrawal from the EU
Summary With less than six months to go before the United Kingdom is due to leave the European Union, there is a palpable sense of tension surrounding the Brexit negotiations. At their most recent meeting in Salzburg, Austria, in September, EU leaders in effect rejected British Prime Minister Theresa May's 'Chequers' plan for the UK's future relationship with the EU. The move prompted acrimony among British politicians and jolted the financial markets, fearful of a no-deal Brexit. However, both sides are working hard to make progress in negotiations ahead of the next European Council meeting, on 18 October. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on Brexit negotiations and related issues. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published in June 2018.
China [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 28-09-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword United States | foreign investment | Russia | international trade | international competition | international relations | rule of law | European Union | China
Summary China is a major strategic partner for the European Union, despite divergences on human rights issues, as well as on some economic and foreign policies. At their 20th EU-China summit in July, the two sides agreed to further develop their partnership and to seek to avoid global trade wars, which many analysts fear could be triggered by US President Donald Trump’s protectionist policies. They agreed, in principle, to support reform of the World Trade Organization, which has been snubbed by President Trump. However, China’s increasingly close military ties with Russia cause concern in the EU. Trade, security and connectivity will be important topics of the 12th ASEM (EU-Asia) summit in October, which will gather heads of state or government of 51 European and Asian countries. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on China, its ties with the EU and related issues. More studies on the topics can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published in March 2018. One of the forthcoming publications in this series will be devoted to wider EU-Asia relations.

Russia [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 21-09-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword United States | Chechen question | Syria | Japan | Israel | Ukraine | Western Balkans | international relations | China | energy policy | think tank | international sanctions | Russia | NATO | occupied territory
Summary In September, Russia held its largest military exercise since 1981, the height of the Cold War, deploying 300 000 troops and also inviting Chinese forces to participate. The event highlighted Russia’s growing assertiveness in security and foreign policy, following its annexation of Crimea and military intervention in Syria. The policies of President Vladimir Putin, who was re-elected earlier this year, pose a dilemma for the European Union and the United States, with some observers accusing him of trying to sabotage Western liberal democracy and others saying that he wants to regain the position of global player that the Soviet Union once occupied. This note offers links to commentaries and studies by major international think tanks, which discuss Russia's policies and how to respond to them. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking', published in March 2018. Some more papers on US-Russian relations are available in another edition from the series published in August 2018.

'Fake news' [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 14-09-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword disinformation | Internet | censorship | European election | social media | big data | think tank | political propaganda | extremism
Summary Attempts at influencing or distorting elections in the United States and other countries, including some European Union Member States, have drawn attention to what is commonly referred to as ‘fake news’, or false news posing as factual stories. Although the phenomenon of generating misleading news stories is at least as old as the printing press, the growth of social media has led to a very significant proliferation of this phenomenon. Some outlets use deceitful headlines and content to boost readership, in a search for higher advertising revenue. Other sources, often sponsored by certain state actors, are accused of spreading ‘fake news’ for entirely political ends. In March 2018, the European Commission published the Final Report of the High Level Expert Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation, which proposes ways to combat the phenomenon. In April a Commission communication followed, entitled ‘Tackling online disinformation: a European Approach.’

Briefing EN
The State of the Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 07-09-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword populism | Poland | Germany | President of the Commission | think tank | deepening of the European Union | European Union | Court of Justice of the European Union
Summary The President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, will deliver his last State of the Union address to the European Parliament on Wednesday 12 September, a little more than eight months before the next European elections. In this annual speech in Strasbourg, President Juncker is expected to take stock of the state of play on his ten priorities for the 2014-2019 political cycle and present his remaining initiatives on building a 'more united, stronger and more democratic Union'. Juncker’s 2017 address was marked by cautious optimism: since then, whilst the European economy has continued to recover, several other challenges have proved persistent. This note offers a selection of links to commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the state of the EU and possible reforms. Brexit-related publications can be found in a previous edition of What Think Tanks are thinking from July 2018. Papers on migration are available in an earlier edition in this series, published in June. Those on euro-zone reform appear in a previous publication in June.

Briefing EN

President Trump's trade and international policies

Publication type Briefing
Date 31-08-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area International Trade
Keyword United States | transatlantic relations | tariff policy | bilateral relations | Ukraine | protectionism | European Union | China | technology transfer | Mexico | think tank | Russia | international trade
Summary US President Donald Trump has pushed ahead in recent months with his controversial policies on trade and defence, which critics say could undermine the global rules-based order and create new uncertainties. The European Union's trade spat with the US eased somewhat following a meeting of European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker with Trump in July. However, the NATO summit earlier that month and Trump's subsequent meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin did little to reassure the EU about the stability of transatlantic relations. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by international think tanks on President Trump's policy moves, focusing on relations with Europe, Russia, China and trade. It does not cover reports on Iran, North Korea and the US domestic situation, which will be topics of future issues of What think tanks are thinking.

Briefing EN

Latest on Brexit [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 27-07-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword negotiation of an agreement (EU) | United Kingdom | think tank | withdrawal from the EU
Summary The politically charged negotiations on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union moved forward a little in July, when the British Cabinet put detailed proposals on the table for the future framework of EU-UK relations. The document, which envisages relatively close ties between the EU and UK, in trade and several other areas, after Britain leaves in March 2019, prompted the resignations of two senior ministers David Davis and Boris Johnson, who favour an even harder Brexit. EU officials have said that the new proposals contain some constructive elements, although many questions remain unanswered. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on Brexit negotiations and related issues. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published in May 2018.

Briefing EN

Latest on the digital economy [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 20-07-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Internal Market and Customs Union | Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword computer crime | digital single market | disinformation | political propaganda | digital economy taxation | China | electronic commerce | EC Regulation | collaborative economy | e-Health | think tank | Russia | data protection
Summary The digital revolution, which is reshaping the global economy and societies, offers numerous opportunities, but also poses many challenges, thereby putting governments in a dilemma on how to shape it. While empowering individuals in many ways and spurring impressive inventions, it poses threats of cyber-attacks and privacy abuse. It also raises concern about the future of the labour and social security markets. This note offers links to commentaries and studies on the digital economy by major international think tanks. Earlier papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking', published in May 2017.

Briefing EN
Global Trendometer - Essays on medium- and long-term global trends - July 2018

Publication type: Study
Date: 18-07-2018

Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI | Daniele RECHARD | Leopold SCHMERTZING | Jessica Freya WINDLE-WEHRLE | EAMONN NOONAN


Keyword: public contract | disinformation | United States | climate change policy | India | food security | political propaganda | democracy | artificial intelligence | income | labour force | China

Summary: The EU faces challenges from the outside and the inside. Most of those are the symptoms of big underlying trends, and handling them needs foresight. The Global Trendometer tries to provide foresight for decision makers in the EU by analysing the changes in these long-term trends. This publication does not offer answers or make recommendations. It presents summarised information derived from a range of carefully selected sources. This issue of the Global Trendometer analyses long-term trends on India, the labour-share of income, and democracy and artificial intelligence. It also features two-pagers on geoengineering, remittances, food security in China, economic waves, the US after Trump, public procurement and deep fakes.

Study EN

NATO Summit and European defence [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 10-07-2018

Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

Policy area: Security and Defence

Keyword: transatlantic relations | European defence policy | EU Member State | Russia | NATO | military cooperation | EU-NATO cooperation | summit meeting

Summary: NATO heads of state or government will meet in Brussels on 11 and 12 July for a keenly awaited summit. Some analysts and diplomats fear a tense atmosphere, following US President Donald Trump’s tough treatment of European allies at a recent meeting of the G7 group of developed countries, and his imposition of steep tariffs on imports of steel and aluminium from the EU. President Trump is expected to pressure many NATO members to increase their military spending level to the agreed 2 % of GDP guideline, with particular emphasis on Germany. The NATO summit precedes President Trump’s meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on 16 July in Helsinki, where some analysts speculate some rapprochement might take place. President Trump’s unpredictability and his widely criticised attitude towards President Putin is causing unease at home and abroad regarding the potential outcome of this summit. This note offers links to commentaries and studies on NATO and European defence by major international think tanks. Earlier papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’, published in December 2017.

Briefing EN

US-North Korea summit [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 06-07-2018

Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence

Keyword: United States | North Korea | South Korea | nuclear weapon | think tank | creation of nuclear-free zones | military manoeuvres | report | summit meeting

Summary: US President Donald Trump met North Korean leader Kim Jong-un for a historic summit in Singapore on 12 June 2018. They reached a short agreement that emphasised the North's commitment to 'work toward complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula', but provided no details on when Pyongyang would give up nuclear weapons or how that might be verified. Following the summit, the United States announced it had agreed with South Korea to suspend all planning on joint military exercises. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on the summit. More reports on North Korea and related issues can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published just before the summit.

At a Glance EN
International trade and the G7 [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 29-06-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area International Trade
Keyword technology transfer | United States | transatlantic relations | tariff policy | think tank | Russia | international trade | protectionism | summit meeting | European Union
Summary The escalating trade conflict between the United States and other countries and regions, such as China and the European Union, coupled with a capricious outcome of the recent summit of the world’s seven most industrialised economies (G7) have raised a question mark over the US’s continued commitment to the stability of the post-Cold War rules-based international economic and political order. The row, which is already affecting stock and bond markets, started when US President Donald Trump imposed tariffs on steel and aluminium imports this year, under his ‘America First’ policy. Now that China and the EU have applied retaliatory tariffs, President Trump threatens to erect more trade barriers, for example against EU-made cars. This note offers links to a series of recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on the trade conflict, the outcome of the G7 meeting and the future of the international economic order. More reports on international trade can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’ published in March 2018.

Briefing EN

The migration challenge [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 21-06-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword Africa | Sahel | EU migration policy | Turkey | Syria | integration of migrants | think tank | multilateral relations | Schengen Agreement | demographic analysis
Summary Next week, European Union Heads of State or Government will discuss the politically charged issue of reforming the EU’s migration and asylum policies. Divisions among EU members over how to handle migrants were exposed again earlier this month when Italy’s new government tightened its migration policy, while the German ruling coalition faced a potentially destabilising rift over the issue. The EU’s southern borders remain under pressure from irregular migrants escaping poverty and war in the Middle East and Africa. Although the 2016 agreement between the EU and Turkey significantly slowed the influx of migrants into Europe, the problem continues to be used for political gain by nationalist, anti-immigrant and populist movements across the EU. This note offers links to commentaries and studies on migration by major international think tanks. Earlier papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’, published in March 2018.

Briefing EN

EU Multiannual Financial Framework [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type At a Glance
Date 15-06-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Budget | Forward Planning
Keyword United Kingdom | think tank | withdrawal from the EU | report | rule of law | multiannual financial framework | net recipient
Summary The European Commission has made proposals for the new long-term budget and on own resources for the European Union. The Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027 is slightly bigger than the current MFF, in constant prices. The budget proposal takes into account the shortfall on the revenue side caused by the UK’s withdrawal from the EU, on the one hand, and the growing need to finance new priorities, on the other. The Commission proposes to increase funds for such areas as competitiveness, migration and security, and to reduce spending on traditional policies, such as cohesion and agriculture. For the first time, the Commission proposes to make the availability of funds dependent on the respect for the rule of law and EU values in recipient countries. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries, studies and reports from some of the major international think tanks and research institutes, which discuss the EU’s long-term budget and related reforms. More reports on the topics are available in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’, published in March, PE 614.541.

At a Glance EN
Challenges for the euro area [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing  
Date 08-06-2018

Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area Economics and Monetary Issues

Summary In June, the Heads of State or Government of the countries sharing the euro currency will discuss ways to improve the functioning of the euro area. French President Emmanuel Macron has proposed an ambitious reform plan, but Germany, the euro area’s economic powerhouse, is more cautious. Despite continued growth, after years of stagnation, the euro area needs better governance to meet future challenges, economic analysts say. They add that recent political developments in Italy may complicate the drive for reform, as could unstable political situations elsewhere. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on challenges facing the euro area and related issues. Earlier publications on the topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’ published in December 2017.

North Korea’s nuclear summity [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing  
Date 04-06-2018

Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence

Summary The US President, Donald Trump, and North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, are preparing for a high-stakes summit on the latter country’s nuclear programme, following Trump’s decision on 1 June to revive the meeting after having cancelled it the previous week. At the summit, due to take place on 12 June in Singapore, Trump is expected to press for denuclearisation of North Korea in exchange for easing economic sanctions and, possibly some aid. The main sticking point lies on the meaning the two countries attribute to the word ‘denuclearisation’. Pyongyang, after years of isolation, is engaged in an unprecedented series of high-level meetings with South Korea, China and Russia. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on the North Korean nuclear programme. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’, published in September 2017. Credit photo: © jpldesigns / Fotolia

Brexit negotiations [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing  
Date 25-05-2018

Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law

Summary European Union officials have warned the United Kingdom that time is running out if definitive agreement on the country’s withdrawal from the Union is to be reached by this autumn. Meanwhile, British Prime Minister, Theresa May, is struggling to keep her Cabinet and Conservative Party united as the focus of negotiations has shifted to the future customs regime and the accompanying, highly sensitive, issue of the border between Ireland and Northern Ireland. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on Brexit negotiations and related issues. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’, published in January 2018.

US withdrawal from Iran nuclear deal [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type At a Glance  
Date 18-05-2018

Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area Foreign Affairs

Summary President Donald Trump announced on 8 May that the United States was withdrawing from the Iran nuclear agreement, ignoring calls from other signatories to preserve the 2015 deal, which lifted sanctions on Teheran in return for measures scaling back its nuclear ambitions. The decision paves the way for reinstating US sanctions against Iran, which will also affect non-US companies doing business with that country. President Trump justified the move by saying that the deal did not go far enough in removing the threat posed by Iran to the United States and its allies in the Middle East. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on the Iran nuclear deal and the US decision.
The Visegrad Group and the rule of law [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 08-05-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword: Hungary | Ecofin | Poland | Czechia | Community acquis | think tank | Slovakia | rule of law | tax harmonisation
Summary: Political developments in the Visegrád Group countries have raised concern over the commitment of some of their leaders and senior politicians to European Union values, notably the rule of law. The Visegrád Group is an informal alliance of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, all of which joined the EU in 2004. Criticism by EU officials and some other Union governments centres on Hungary and Poland, where governments have implemented a number of controversial reforms, notably of the judiciary. In December 2017, the European Commission triggered the first phase of Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union, which can ultimately deprive a country found guilty of violating EU values of voting rights. In addition, a European Parliament draft report notes a deterioration of the rule of law in Hungary, where Prime Minister Viktor Orbán won a third term in office in the country’s recent general election. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the Visegrád Group, its internal relations and its role within the EU, with the focus on the rule of law debate.

Western Balkans [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 04-05-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: enlargement of the Union | think tank | multilateral relations | Russia | North Macedonia | China | Kosovo
Summary: The European Union’s planned enlargement into the Western Balkans has recently drawn increased attention. In February 2018, the European Commission released its new enlargement strategy, giving a credible accession perspective to the region. The latest impetus came last month, when the Commission proposed opening entry talks with Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Presenting the 2018 Communication on the EU enlargement policy to the European Parliament, Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said that the EU needed to eventually accept new members from the Western Balkans to avoid the risk of a new war in the region. Many EU Member States insist that before enlarging, the EU must implement internal reforms. Future members must meet many tough entry criteria. From the Western Balkans, only Croatia has so far joined the EU, in 2013. Accession talks continue with Montenegro and Serbia. Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are official membership candidates, while Bosnia and Herzegovina remains a potential candidate country, along with Kosovo. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on EU enlargement and Western Balkans. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’, published in October 2017.

Cyber-security [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 27-04-2018
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Security and Defence
Keyword: computer crime | defence policy | European security | transmission network | protection of privacy | digitisation | fight against crime | EU Member State | think tank | Russia | data protection
Summary: Cyber-security can be defined as the protection of computer systems and mobile devices from theft and damage to their hardware, software or information, as well as from disruption or misdirection of the services they provide. Cybercrime and cyber-attacks have become a growing threat to governments, businesses and individuals as digital technologies advance. There have also been allegations of cyber-espionage, proliferation of fake news and misuse of social media in some electoral campaigns. The European Commission updated the European Union’s cyber-security strategy in September 2017, to promote cyber-resilience and joint response across the bloc. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think-tanks and research institutes on cyber-security and relations issues. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’, published in February 2017.

Briefing EN
The Future of Europe [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword: Economic and Monetary Union | United Kingdom | think tank | opinion (EU) | European Commission | withdrawal from the EU | deepening of the European Union

Summary: The tone of the debate on the Future of Europe and possible institutional reforms of the European Union has shifted from gloomy to more optimistic, thanks to a developing economic recovery, the easing of the migration crisis, the failure of anti-EU forces to make decisive gains in some recent elections, and the general progress of the Brexit talks. Still, many analysts and politicians warn against complacency, as anti-establishment political parties continue to gain traction with some voters, as concerns grow over the rule of law in some EU countries, and as the policies of, and relations between, the United States and Russia have become less predictable. There is also no agreement on how to overhaul the euro area to minimise the risk of a repeat of the 2008 crisis and to strengthen economic growth. This debate on the Future of Europe is set to intensify ahead of the 2019 European elections, the installation of the new Presidents of the European Commission and European Council, and the end of the EU’s current long-term budget in 2021. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the state of the EU and possible reforms. Brexit-related publications can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking.’ Earlier papers on the general state of the EU are available in another edition in this series, published in September 2017. More reports on euro zone reforms are also gathered in another in the series, from December 2017.

China [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: United States | India | think tank | multilateral relations | Western Balkans | international trade | corruption | globalisation | China

Summary: The National People’s Congress has recently confirmed Xi Jinping as China’s President, along with several appointments of his allies to top state jobs. It has also approved amendments to China’s Constitution which, in particular, abolish the limit of two five-year terms for the office of President, prompting concerns that the country is moving towards a more autocratic system. These decisions have cemented Xi’s grip on power in a country that plays an increasingly important role in the global economy, as well as in security and foreign affairs. Analysts say that China’s growing assertiveness poses a challenge to the United States, whose policies are becoming increasingly unpredictable, and to other international actors. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks on China, its ties with the EU and related issues. More studies on the topics can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’ published in June, 2017.

Trump, trade and tariffs [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: World Trade Organisation | United States | market economy | aluminium | export (EU) | Japan | bilateral relations | exemption from customs duties | international trade | tariff barrier | China | iron and steel industry

Summary: US President, Donald Trump, has imposed tariffs on steel and aluminium imports, raising fears of a trade war with other countries. He has argued that the levies, of 25 % on steel and 10 % on aluminium, are needed to protect US national security. But many analysts and politicians believe that they are actually meant to protect domestic producers and meet Trump’s pre-election promise to return manufacturing jobs to the US. The European Union is seeking an exemption from the tariffs, which has already been granted, in principle, to Canada and Mexico. If this does not happen, the EU could respond in several ways, including by imposing its own tariffs on US products. This note offers links to a series of recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes in reaction to Trump’s decision. More reports on international trade can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’ published in June 2017.
The long-term EU budget [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 09-03-2018
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Budget | Forward Planning
Keyword financial transparency | climate change policy | think tank | euro area | common agricultural policy | multiannual financial framework

Summary European Union leaders agreed at their informal meeting on 23 February that the EU should spend more after 2020 on curbing illegal migration, on defence and security, and on the Erasmus+ student-exchange programme. The summit marked a preparatory stage in negotiations on the EU's next long-term budget, known as the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), which will span a period of five or seven years, starting in January 2021. There was no agreement on how to plug the hole in the budget resulting from the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU in 2019. Some net-paying countries argued that EU spending should remain at the current level of approximately 1% of EU gross national income, despite new priorities. That could mean cuts in funding available for cohesion and agricultural policies. Another dispute concerned the possibility of linking the receipt of EU funds to respect of EU fundamental values. The Commission is due to make a detailed post-2020 MFF proposal in May 2018. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries, studies and reports from some of the major international think tanks and research institutes, which discuss the EU's long-term budget and related reforms. It updates a previous edition published in January 2018.

Briefing EN
The Platform Economy [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 16-02-2018  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues  
Keyword: digital single market | Internet | collaborative economy | consumer protection | think tank | tourism | artificial intelligence | data protection | literature  
Summary: The digital revolution is reshaping the world, changing people's habits in communication, work, leisure and politics. A major part of this revolution is the expansion of the economy based on digital platforms that match demand and supply for labour without an intermediation of traditional corporations. Platforms also allow people to socialise regardless of geographic distance, find entertainment and travel opportunities easily, and do many other things. Some well-known platforms are Google, Twitter, LinkedIn, Apple, Amazon, Uber and AirBnB. While offering vast opportunities to the economy, platforms are also posing tough challenges, for example, in fostering often-precarious, project-based forms of employment at the expense of stable contracts with social security protection, or putting pressure on traditional news media. This note brings together commentaries and studies by international think tanks and research institutes on the role of digital platforms, notably in labour markets, and related issues.

Briefing  EN

The EU's next long-term budget [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance  
Date: 24-01-2018  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: Budget | Forward Planning  
Keyword: Member States' contribution | dissemination of information | EU expenditure | EU budget | GNP contribution | directory | multiannual financial framework  
Summary: European Union Member States and institutions are preparing to embark on negotiations on the EU's next long-term budget, or Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), that will cover five or seven years, starting in January 2021. The European Commission is considering strengthening the budget for new priority areas, such as defence, security and migration. At the same time, the new MFF will have to bridge the financing gap left by United Kingdom withdrawal from the Union. That could mean that EU funding would have to be increased slightly above the current level of approximately 1 % of EU gross national income, if current spending levels on cohesion and agricultural policies are not reduced. The Commission is due to make a detailed post-2020 MFF proposal in May. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries, studies and reports, from some of the major international think tanks and research institutes, which discuss the EU's long-term budget and related reforms. Some older papers on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' published in January 2017.

At a Glance  EN

The Brexit process [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 12-01-2018  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law  
Keyword: third country | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | United Kingdom | EU Member State | think tank | banking policy | withdrawal from the EU | international relations | Court of Justice of the European Union  
Summary: The EU's Heads of State or Government gave the green light in December 2017 to the second phase of negotiations on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU. They agreed that 'sufficient progress' had been made in talks on issues in the first phase. Those include the UK's financial obligations on leaving the EU, the rights of EU citizens within the UK and of UK citizens within the EU, and how to deal with the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. The next phase of talks will focus on transitional arrangements and the future EU-UK relationship, including in the field of trade. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks and other organisations on EU-UK negotiations and on the implications of Brexit more widely. More studies on these issues can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' from October 2017.

Briefing  EN
The European Union: A year of hope [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 15-12-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword: populism | third country | Economic and Monetary Union | United Kingdom | economic recovery | macroeconomics | federalism | think tank | euro area | withdrawal from the EU | international relations | Ireland

Summary: The self-confidence of the European Union improved markedly during the past year after the 'annus horribilis' of 2016 when the EU faced a 'poly-crisis' of a shaky euro-area economy, the Brexit vote, the election of Donald Trump as US President, migration pressures, growing Russian assertiveness and apparent foreign-policy drift. The euro-area economy has since entered onto a clear recovery path, popular support for the EU has increased in many countries, Eurosceptic political parties have made smaller than expected gains in several elections, Brexit negotiations have made progress and, according to some analysts and politicians, EU foreign and security policy has developed a global strategy backed by moves towards an integrated defence. 'The wind is back in the European sails,' said Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, in September. 2017, the year when the EU marked the 60th anniversary of the European Union's founding Treaty of Rome, generated much creative thinking on how to re-launch or strengthen both the EU-27 and the euro area. This note offers links to selected recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the state of the EU in 2017 and its outlook in several important areas.

European defence [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 08-12-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Security and Defence
Keyword: European security | EU office or agency | European defence policy | think tank | military cooperation | armed forces

Summary: The European Union is moving closer to developing integrated European defence after 23 of its 28 Member States agreed in November on joint military investment in equipment, research and development through Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), an enhanced-cooperation mechanism enshrined in the 2009 Lisbon Treaty. The plan is to jointly develop European military capabilities and make them available for operations separately from, or in complementarity with, NATO. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on European Union defence. Earlier publications on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking' published in May 2017.

Euro-area reform [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 01-12-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword: Germany | economic recovery | economic convergence | EU Member State | think tank | European Monetary Fund | fiscal policy | European integration | Eurogroup (euro area) | euro area | European Central Bank | capital market

Summary: The Heads of State or Government of the countries sharing the euro currency will hold a summit on 15 December 2017 to discuss ways to improve the functioning of the euro area. European Council President Donald Tusk, who also chairs the Euro Summit, has said that the discussion will focus on further steps to complete Banking Union and on setting the direction for deeper euro-area economic integration, with decisions to be taken in June 2018. European Union Member States which are not members of the 19-nation euro bloc, other than the UK, have also been invited to the Euro Summit. Among proposals floated are that the single currency area should have a budget and a finance minister and that the existing euro-area bailout fund, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), should be transformed into a European Monetary Fund. Germany, in particular, is cautious about far-reaching reforms. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on euro area reforms and related issues.
The EU's Eastern Partnership [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 24-11-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: European neighbourhood policy | visa policy | third country | Eastern Partnership | think tank | Russia | Ukraine | occupied territory
Summary: The European Union and its Eastern Partnership neighbours hold their fifth summit on 24 November 2017, to take stock of the eight-year-old cooperation programme and map ways to strengthen political and economic ties. The Eastern Partnership is a regional programme of the European Neighbourhood Policy, aimed at promoting closer cooperation between the European Union, its Member States, and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. It has achieved progress, such as association agreements and visa-free regimes with Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine, albeit limited by the conflicts and political instability in the region. The programme signals the EU’s willingness to reinforce ties with the region, offering incentives to governments and civil society to push ahead with democratic and economic reforms. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports by major international think tanks on the Eastern Partnership and the countries it embraces. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking' published in November 2016.

The EU and Africa [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 17-11-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: third country | migration policy | ACP-EU relationship | Kenya | Western Sahara | international relations | Africa | election | Mediterranean region (EU) | Sahel | Central and Eastern European Countries | think tank | terrorism
Summary: The European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) will hold their fifth summit on 29-30 November 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, with the aim of strengthening political and economic relations between the two continents. The focus of the meeting is on investing in youth, which is a priority for Africa, where 60 % of the population is under the age of 25. Other key topics include security, governance and democracy, human rights, migration and mobility, as well as investment and trade, skills development and job creation. Relations between Africa and the European Union are governed by partially overlapping policy frameworks. The most important ones are the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement from 2000 and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) agreed in 2007. Relations with Northern African countries are governed by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED) launched in 2008 and the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). This note offers links to a series of recent studies from major international think tanks and research institutes on EU-African relations and other issues related to the continent and its countries. More reports on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’ published in October 2017.

COP 23: Climate change talks [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 10-11-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Environment | Global Governance
Keyword: climate change | international security | United States | energy research | UN Conference | withdrawal from an agreement | think tank | environmental policy | international relations
Summary: Representatives of nearly 200 countries started 11 days of talks on 6 November in Bonn, Germany, on how to further implement the 2015 Paris Agreement on tackling climate change. The United Nations’ climate meeting, COP 23, is part of global efforts to cut emissions of greenhouse gases that cause global warming. Those efforts suffered a blow earlier in 2017, when US President Donald Trump announced plans for the United States to pull out of the Paris Agreement. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on the Bonn talks and wider issues relating to climate change. Earlier publications on the Paris Agreement can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are Thinking’ published in February 2016.
Latest thinking on Brexit [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 27-10-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword negotiation of an agreement (EU) | United Kingdom | roaming | think tank | bilateral relations | Northern Ireland | withdrawal from the EU | Ireland | external border of the EU

Summary The European Council meeting on 20 October failed to produce the breakthrough needed for negotiations on the terms of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union to move to their second phase, in which issues such as future trade relations and possible transitional arrangements would be discussed. However, EU Heads of State or Government noted some progress in the negotiations on two of the topics from phase one, namely the rights of EU citizens within the UK and of UK citizens within the EU after Brexit, and how to deal with the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. The European Council also agreed that internal preparatory discussions for phase two could start. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks and other organisations on EU-UK negotiations and on the implications of Brexit more widely. More studies on these issues can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' from September 2017.

Briefing EN

EU enlargement, Western Balkans and Turkey [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 20-10-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs

Summary In his State of the Union speech in September 2017, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker called for keeping a credible European Union membership perspective for Western Balkan countries, while ruling out the possibility of Turkey joining the EU in ‘the foreseeable future’ due to violations to the rule of law and fundamental rights. According to the Commission's assessment, the forecasts for economic growth in the Western Balkans are good, although progress on reform has been slow, the rule of law has been weak, and corruption is persistent. From the Western Balkans, only Croatia has joined the EU, in 2013. Accession talks continue with Montenegro and Serbia. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania are official candidates. Bosnia and Herzegovina formally applied for EU membership in 2016, and remains a potential candidate country, along with Kosovo. Relations between Turkey, an official candidate country, and the EU have been strained for some time due to what many politicians and analysts perceive as President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's increasingly autocratic style. This note offers links to a series of recent studies and comments from major international think tanks and research institutes on EU enlargement, Western Balkans and Turkey. More reports on the EU enlargement process can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' published in March 2017. More reports on Turkey are available in another edition from the series, also published in March.

Briefing EN

EU labour markets [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 16-10-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Social Policy
Keyword labour market | unemployment | EU growth strategy | economic reform | Italy | Spain | impact study | social inequality | social dialogue (EU) | think tank | integration of migrants | Greece | artificial intelligence | posted worker

Summary Economic recovery has reduced the unemployment rate in the euro area and the wider European Union, but there are still significant challenges for EU labour markets. These include increasing inequalities, the effect of the digital revolution and globalisation on jobs, the impact of the posting of workers abroad within the EU, persistently high youth and long-term unemployment, and integration of migrants. The European Commission is pushing ahead with its European Pillar of Social Rights package to strengthen the social dimension of Economic and Monetary Union. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports by major international think tanks and research institutes on the state and possible reforms of EU labour markets as well as social policies. More reports on social policies can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking' published in May 2017.

Briefing EN
The EU, Middle East and North Africa [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 06-10-2017

Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

Policy area: Global Governance | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: European neighbourhood policy | establishment of peace | the EU's international role | Syria | nuclear weapon | multilateral relations | international conflict | Afghanistan | Mediterranean region (EU) | North Africa | think tank | terrorism | civil war | Middle East

Summary: Developments in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) pose a growing challenge for the European Union. Many countries in the region face war, political turmoil and popular anger, due to the impact of poverty in generating instability, migration and, in some cases, terrorism. The EU wants to contribute to stability in MENA through instruments such as the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Union for the Mediterranean, but there are calls for the EU to play an even more active role in the region. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports by major international think tanks on EU-MENA relations and the general problems found within the region and some specific countries.

Briefing EN

EU energy policy [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 29-09-2017

Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

Policy area: Energy
Keyword: climate change | clean technology | EU environmental policy | price of energy | energy efficiency | greenhouse gas | think tank | renewable energy | EU energy policy

Summary: Faced with uncertain energy demand, volatile prices and possible disruptions to supply, the European Union is pushing ahead with efforts to fully integrate its still-fragmented energy market. The aim is to boost economic growth, foster innovation, ensure stable supplies and protect the environment. The planned construction of the Energy Union is taking shape with the ongoing adoption of numerous policy proposals, such as those contained in the 'Clean Energy for All Europeans' package of 2016. Most recently, the European Parliament adopted new rules on the security of gas supply. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries, studies and reports, from some of the major international think tanks and research institutes, which discuss EU energy policies.

Briefing EN

North Korea [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 22-09-2017

Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

Policy area: Security and Defence
Keyword: United States | North Korea | South Korea | military intervention | nuclear weapon | think tank | international sanctions | Russia | dictatorship | China

Summary: North Korea has stepped up its nuclear plans with the underground detonation of a hydrogen bomb and tests of its first suspected Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), moves perceived as a major threat to global security. Speaking at the United Nations General Assembly on 19 September, US President Donald Trump threatened to 'totally destroy' North Korea if the United States is forced to defend itself or its allies against that country. The isolated communist regime of Kim Jong-un has continued its nuclear programme, despite repeated rounds of sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council and diplomatic efforts to diffuse the conflict.

Briefing EN
The State of the Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 15-09-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword populism | citizens' Europe | President of the Commission | federalism | economic policy | think tank | European integration | EU industrial policy

Summary Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, laid out his vision of the European Union in his annual State of the Union address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 13 September 2017. He noted that the overall outlook has changed for the better over the past year, notably thanks to an accelerating economic recovery. 'The wind is back in the European sails,' he declared. Much interest focussed on Juncker’s advocacy of various eurozone and EU institutional reforms. He proposed the designation of a eurozone finance minister, who would preside over the Eurogroup, as well as being a member of the Commission. He supported the development of a European Monetary Fund. However, he opted against the creation of a separate eurozone budget, preferring a dedicated budget line within a general EU budget. He also said there should not be a separate eurozone parliament either. He favoured combining the presidencies of the Commission and the European Council, and he supported the idea a new, additional transnational constituency for the European elections. On the policy front, he advocated a pro-innovation industrial strategy, a reinforced social pillar, an authority to supervise fairness in the single market, better handling of migratory flows, and new trade agreements. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the state of the EU and possible reforms. Brexit-related publications can be found in a previous edition of "What Think Tanks are Thinking." Earlier papers on the general condition of the EU are available in another edition in this series, published in April 2017.

Brexit negotiations [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 08-09-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword single market | European arrest warrant | United Kingdom | customs union | EU Member State | European integration | powers of the institutions (EU) | Ireland | Court of Justice of the European Union | EU institution | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | European defence policy | EU national | think tank | withdrawal from the EU

Summary The first three rounds of negotiations on the terms of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union have generated only modest progress, with the two sides divided on the first-phase issues, namely the size of the UK's financial obligations on leaving the EU, the rights of EU citizens within the UK and of UK citizens within the EU after Brexit, and the specific problem of how to deal with the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks and other organisations on EU-UK negotiations and on the implications of Brexit more widely.

Global Trendometer: Essays on medium- and long-term global trends - Summer 2017

Publication type Study
Date 06-09-2017
Author Anne ALTMAYER | Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI | Daniele RECHARD | Agnieszka WIDUTO | Jessica Freya WINDLE-WEHRLE | EAMONN NOONAN
Keyword demography | water management | sub-Saharan Africa | construction equipment | middle class | multilateral relations | protectionism | raw material | economic analysis | China | redistribution of income | equal treatment | international trade | tax system

Summary With the publication of the "Global Trendometer" the EPRS Global Trends Unit seeks to contribute to the process of identifying and addressing medium- and long-term trends, and their possible implications for policy-making in the European Union. In this latest edition, three essays and seven two-page vignettes on different geopolitical, economic, technological and social issues paint a broad-ranging picture of some developments that may shape Europe’s future.
Ukraine and the EU [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 25-07-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: Eastern Partnership | Crimea question | think tank | bilateral relations | Russia | Ukraine | occupied territory | international conflict | euroscepticism
Summary: Relations between the European Union and Ukraine have been improving since the Maidan protests ousted President Viktor Yanukovych in 2014, leading to the election of pro-Western Petro Poroshenko as head of state. At their meeting on 12-13 July, EU and Ukrainian leaders welcomed the completion of the ratification of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and the recent entry into force of visa liberalisation for Ukrainian citizens. However, Ukraine's security situation remains precarious following Russia's annexation of Crimea and the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, in which Russia's role is unclear. The EU is also urging Ukraine to fight corruption with more determination. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks on the situation in Ukraine and its relations with the EU.

Briefing EN

Euro area recovery and reform [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 14-07-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword: Economic and Monetary Union | budget deficit | financial market | economic recovery | EU Member State | think tank | single monetary policy | risk management | euro area | capital market
Summary: The euro area's economic recovery has gained pace as investor confidence has strengthened. The election of the reform-minded Emmanuel Macron as French President in May reignited the debate on overhauling the euro area's economic governance. This note offers links to recent commentaries and studies on the economic situation of the euro area and reform proposals.

Briefing EN

Russia and security [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 07-07-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword: European security | gas pipeline | think tank | Iceland | Russia | NATO | Central and Eastern Europe | Belarus
Summary: Relations between the European Union and Russia remain strained after, late in June, the EU extended its sanctions against the country until 31 January 2018, citing a lack of progress in the implementation of the Minsk agreements aimed at ending the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Russia's annexation of Crimea and its conflict with Ukraine have challenged the post-Cold War security order in Europe. Russia's other assertive foreign policy moves, such as its role in the Syrian war and steps to extend its sphere of influence in Europe, also worry many Western security analysts. This note offers links to commentaries, studies by major international think tanks, which discuss Russia's policies and how to respond to them.

Briefing EN

Migration into the EU [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 30-06-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword: Libya | the EU's international role | skilled worker | refugee | gender equality | Germany | Mediterranean region (EU) | Australia | Turkey | EU migration policy | population ageing | integration of migrants | think tank | return migration
Summary: At the European Council meeting of 23 June 2017, European Union Heads of State or Government agreed to strengthen efforts to reduce irregular migration flows on the central Mediterranean route, notably by speeding up training, equipping the Libyan coast guard and improving cooperation with countries of migration origin. However, the European Council made limited progress on reforming the Common European Asylum System, with the migration debate clouded by refusal of some central and eastern European countries to accept refugees under the existing quotas. This note offers links to recent commentaries and studies on migration from major international think-tanks and research institutes.

Briefing EN

05-02-2020

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Start of Brexit negotiations [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 23-06-2017  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law  
Keyword: migration policy | United Kingdom | think tank | bilateral relations | Scotland | Northern Ireland | withdrawal from the EU | Ireland | economic analysis  
Summary: Formal negotiations on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union under Article 50 TEU got under way on 19 June, as both sides agreed in principle how to organise the talks and underlined their mutual goodwill. The talks began nearly a year after the UK referendum (on 23 June 2016) resulted in the vote to leave the EU, and less than two weeks after a general election that left the ruling Conservative Party without a majority in the House of Commons. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks on the UK’s plans to leave the EU and the wider implications of Brexit.

The EU and China [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 16-06-2017  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: Foreign Affairs  
Keyword: governance | United States | United Kingdom | bilateral relations | China | Africa | market economy | climate change policy | economic interdependence | think tank | Russia | withdrawal from the EU | international trade  
Summary: The European Union and China made limited progress towards improving bilateral ties at their summit in early June, and they remain at odds over a number of controversial trade issues. However, analysts say the EU and China look poised to strengthen cooperation on fighting climate change, especially after the new US President, Donald Trump, withdrew from the Paris deal on cutting greenhouse gas emissions. China is also eager to push ahead with its Belt and Road Initiative – a strategic plan to boost transport, trade, connectivity and cooperation between China and Europe. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on relations between China and the EU, as well as on other issues related to the country.

The EU and terrorism [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 02-06-2017  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice  
Keyword: European security | EU Member State | political propaganda | extremism | Internet | think tank | terrorism | tourism | data transmission | return migration | cryptography | Middle East | religious fundamentalism  
Summary: Terrorist attacks in major cities – notably in Paris, Nice, Brussels, Berlin and, most recently, Manchester – have shocked Europeans, highlighting the security challenges for open democracies that result, inter alia, from conflicts in the Middle East and Africa and religious radicalisation at home. In response, the European Union is pushing ahead with its Security Union concept to boost cooperation among Member States and use synergies in combatting terrorism. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks on terrorism in Europe and the EU's response to it.

The digital economy in the EU [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 19-05-2017  
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
Policy area: Internal Market and Customs Union  
Keyword: computer crime | digital single market | European security | telecommunications policy | data collection | digital divide | open data | economic reform | data processing | economic growth | updating of skills | think tank | digital technology  
Summary: The digital revolution is reshaping the European Union's economy, from financial services and telecoms to creative industries and the way workers are employed. While posing certain threats, such as cyber-attacks, new technologies offer vast opportunities, provided that people acquire the right skill-sets to underpin their use. Seeking to tap the full potential of digitalisation, the European Commission is pushing ahead with its Digital Single Market Strategy. On 10 May, it presented a mid-term review of this strategy, calling for swift approval of proposals already presented and outlining further actions on online platforms, the data economy and cybersecurity. This note offers links to recent studies and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on problems and opportunities relating to digitalisation.
NATO and EU defence [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 12-05-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Security and Defence
Keyword strategic nuclear weapon | United States | presidential régime | European defence policy | defence budget | think tank | Russia | NATO | case study | armed forces | EU-NATO cooperation
Summary The US President, Donald Trump, will meet with the other leaders of the NATO member states at a summit in Brussels on 25 May 2017. Among issues on the table are the new US Administration's commitment to Europe's security, and the levels of military spending in Europe, which Washington considers too low. President Trump’s early statements created doubts in Europe about the future of transatlantic relations, but he and his officials have since reassured both NATO and the European Union that such ties will remain very important. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports by major international think tanks, on NATO, its relations with the EU and the wider issue of European security. More papers on the topics can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’, published in December 2016, PE 589.766.

Briefing EN

EU social policies [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 05-05-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Social Policy | Employment
Keyword European social policy | minimum pay | social-security benefit | subsistence level income | working conditions | EU employment policy | bibliography
Summary On 26 April, the European Commission presented a European Pillar of Social Rights, which is a package of legislative proposals and recommendations aimed at enhancing work-life balance, fostering equal opportunities and better access to the labour market, as well as improving working conditions. Under the proposal, for example, new fathers would receive 10 days of paid parental leave, and parents of young children would be entitled to flexible working arrangements. The plan, generally welcomed by trade unions but criticised by employers' organisations, forms part of a wider Commission drive to strengthen the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union. This can be seen in the context of declining trust for the EU by citizens, in the wake of the 2008-2009 financial crisis. This note offers a selection of recent studies, reports and commentaries by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes on EU social policies. More studies on the subject can be found in a previous edition of ‘What Think Tanks are thinking’, PE 585.206.

Briefing EN

ECB policies [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 28-04-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Economics and Monetary Issues | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword dissemination of information | think tank | single monetary policy | banking policy | euro area | directory | European Central Bank
Summary The European Central Bank is pushing ahead with its monetary stimulus programme, which was launched more than two years ago to counter deflationary pressures in the euro zone economy, and to strengthen then fragile economic growth. Some economists and politicians say the time is becoming ripe for the ECB to taper the scheme, which involves monthly purchases of government and corporate bonds worth some 60 billion euro, as the deflationary threat is disappearing and economic activity picks up. The ECB has assumed greater supervisory responsibilities under euro-area governance reforms aimed at preventing any repeat of the 2008-09 financial crisis. Its role could be reviewed during the expected next wave of reforms that would deepen cooperation among the currency area’s members. This note offers a selection of recent studies, reports and commentaries by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes on ECB policy.

Briefing EN

Brexit negotiations [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 21-04-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword negotiation of an agreement (EU) | United Kingdom | political situation | withdrawal from the EU | bibliography
Summary The British Prime Minister, Theresa May, has called an early general election for 8 June 2017, arguing that victory for her party would ‘strengthen her hand’ in negotiations on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union. In March, her government launched the formal procedure for leaving the Union, by triggering Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union. The European Council is expected to adopt guidelines for the negotiations on 29 April. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks on the UK's plans to leave the EU.

Briefing EN
The European Union at 60 [What Think Tanks are Thinking]

Publication type At a Glance
Date 07-04-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword European treaties | dissemination of information | commemoration | EU Member State | think tank | EU situation | European integration | common foreign and security policy | directory | EU institution | European Union
Summary Heads of State or Government of the EU-27 marked the 60th anniversary of the European Union's founding Treaty of Rome on 25 March 2017, with pledges to seek closer unity, improve internal and external security, boost economic growth and employment, reduce social inequalities and bolster the bloc's global role. Their Rome Declaration outlines principles to help re-launch the Union after its recent economic and migration crises, last year's Brexit vote, and the shock effect of Donald Trump's election as US President. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the state of the EU and possible reforms.

International trade [What Think Tanks are Thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 31-03-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area International Trade
Keyword World Trade Organisation | third country | United States | United Kingdom | Japan | think tank | international trade | withdrawal from the EU | trade agreement | protectionism | globalisation | China
Summary The election of Donald Trump, who favours a bilateral over multilateral approach to international economic relations, as U.S. President may herald the end of an era of progressive liberalisation in global trade since the Second World War. At their meeting in March, finance ministers of the G20 group of major economies dropped their decade-long call to resist protectionism in international trade from their usual statement, under pressure from the new U.S. Treasury Secretary, Steven Mnuchin. More changes in international trade may also result from the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union, which will redefine their mutual trade relations and those with third countries. This note offers links to a series of recent studies and commentaries from major international think tanks and research institutes on current issues in global trade.

Turkey and the EU [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 24-03-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword political opposition | Turkey | Syria | think tank | bilateral relations | Russia | migrant | repression | refugee | coup d'état | accession to the European Union
Summary Relations between Turkey and the European Union have been strained for some time, and most recently, Ankara became embroiled in a diplomatic spat with Germany and the Netherlands, following decisions in both countries to prevent Turkish ministers from addressing rallies of expatriate Turks. On 16 April, the Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will hold a referendum to expand presidential powers. Mr Erdogan has said that Turkey, an EU candidate country, may review its relations with the Union after the coming vote. Government officials have also threatened to ditch last year's agreement between the EU and Turkey that has helped to stem the flow of migrants into Europe. In November, 2016, the European Parliament passed a resolution, calling for Turkey's EU entry talks to be suspended until Ankara ended its 'disproportionate' and repressive response to a failed coup in July that year. This note offers links to a series of recent studies and comments from major international think tanks and research institutes on Turkey and its relations with the EU.
The Western Balkans and the EU [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 17-03-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword pre-accession aid | Croatia | Turkey | think tank | immigration | Western Balkans | accession to the European Union | corruption | underground economy | North Macedonia | Malta | Kosovo
Summary European Union heads of state and government reiterated support for the European perspective of the Western Balkans at their meeting on 9 March; and underlined that the situation in the region was fragile due to internal and external challenges. Despite relatively good economic growth prospects, the Western Balkans’ reform progress has been slow, rule of law weak, and corruption persistent. Many Western and local politicians are also concerned about the increasingly prominent role of external players in the region, mainly Russia, but also China, Turkey and the Gulf states.

From the Western Balkans, only Croatia has so far joined the EU, in 2013. Accession talks continue with Montenegro and Serbia. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania are official candidates, with Albania hoping to formally open negotiations soon. Bosnia and Herzegovina formally applied for EU membership in 2016, but along with Kosovo, it has a potential candidate status at present.

This note offers links to a series of recent studies from major international think tanks and research institutes on problems faced by the Western Balkans.

Briefing EN

Euro-area reforms: Challenges and policies [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 10-03-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword United States | Economic and Monetary Union | United Kingdom | institutional reform | think tank | financial policy | euro area | withdrawal from the EU | insurance law | gender equality
Summary Reforms to the system of governance of the euro area, launched in the wake of the 2008-09 financial crisis, have included, inter alia, the creation of authorities to better supervise the financial markets, improved mechanisms to coordinate fiscal policies, and procedures to correct economic imbalances. While the drive to overhaul the euro-zone’s economic rulebook has slackened as the improving growth outlook has eased threats to the overall stability of the area, deeper integration of the euro area still features high among EU reform proposals presented by European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in a white paper earlier this month. This notes offers links to commentaries, studies and reports on the topic from major international think tanks and research institutes on euro areas reform.

Briefing EN

Gender equality: EU challenges and policies [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 03-03-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity
Keyword wage determination | EU Member State | think tank | gender mainstreaming | gender equality
Summary Equality between women and men is one of the European Union's founding values. Under the "Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019" policy plan, the EU seeks to increase female labour-market participation, reduce the gender pay gap, promote equality between women and men in decision-making, fight gender-based violence, and promote gender equality across the world. However, despite all efforts, such as adopting legislation on equal treatment, gender inequality remains a serious problem in Europe. This note offers links to commentaries and reports published in recent years by major international think tanks on issues relating to gender inequality in the EU and other related topics.

Briefing EN

Challenges for the EU [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 24-02-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | Global Governance | Economics and Monetary Issues | Human Rights
Keyword populism | United States | think tank | European integration | euro area | international relations | euroscepticism
Summary The European Union faces challenges, such as in relation to migration and stagnant economic growth, which test its ability to offer solutions to its citizens. Some politicians and analysts have called for a reform of the EU to shore up popular support for European integration 60 years after the signing of the Treaty of Rome, which led to the creation of what is now the Union. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the state of the EU and possible reforms. Earlier papers on the State of the Union can be found in a September edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking.' Other issues in the series offer links to reports on euro area reform and the impact of Brexit on the EU. They were published in September 2016 and in February 2017 respectively.

Briefing EN
Latest thinking on Brexit [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 17-02-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword European treaties | European Union membership | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | United Kingdom | intra-EU relations | withdrawal from the EU
Summary The United Kingdom is preparing to meet the deadline it has set itself of end-March 2017 for launching the formal procedure to leave the European Union. Following a UK Supreme Court ruling, triggering Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty now requires that the UK Parliament pass legislation on the matter, a process which is now under way. Prime Minister Theresa May's speech at Lancaster House on Brexit on 17 January and the UK government's subsequent White Paper were seen by analysts as anticipating a complicated set of negotiations between the UK and the EU, with the UK in effect prioritising control of migration over its continued membership of the single market. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks on the UK's plans to leave the EU. More studies on issues raised by the vote can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' in October 2016.

The EU and migration [What Think Tank are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 10-02-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword Libya | border control | bilateral agreement | EU Member State | refugee | external border of the EU | human rights | Turkey | EU migration policy | think tank | Mediterranean third countries | integration of migrants | terrorism
Summary At their meeting in Malta on 3 February, 2017, EU heads of states and government endorsed further objectives to ease the migratory challenge, with a view to stemming irregular migration flows through the central Mediterranean route. The plan foresees 'immediate operational measures' focused on training and supporting the Libyan coastguard in an effort to interrupt people-smuggling and to increase the number of search and rescue missions. As regards returns, the EU wants to ensure adequate reception conditions for migrants in Libya, with help from UNHCR and the International Organisation for Migration. This note offers links to recent commentaries and studies on migration from major international think-tanks and research institutes. Earlier papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published in September 2016.

Cyber-security [What Think Tank are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 03-02-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Security and Defence
Keyword threat to national security | computer crime | Internet | election | energy site | transmission network | think tank | terrorism | Russia | data protection | industrial espionage
Summary Allegations of interference in the US electoral campaign in 2016 through cyber espionage and leaks have put the spotlight on cyber-security and cybercrime, not only for ensuring financial or strategic advantages, but increasingly as means of pursuing political aims. As digital technologies grow in importance, the clear view among analysts is that cyber-crime is becoming a major threat to governments, businesses and societies as a whole. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think tanks and research institutes on cyber-security and related issues.

US President Donald Trump [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type Briefing
Date 25-01-2017
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Global Governance | Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword international security | United States | head of State | international trade | international relations
Summary Donald Trump has begun his four-year term as the US President by moving to deliver on some of his campaign promises, such on Obamacare, the Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Agreement and the North American Free Trade Agreement. Analysts and politicians agree that the Trump presidency will have wide-ranging implications for trade, international relations and security. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks and other research centres on Trump's presidency. Earlier analyse can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking.'
EU budget reform [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 20-01-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Budget | Forward Planning
Keyword: United Kingdom | EU Member State | Framework Programme for Research and Development | refugee | economic reform | multiannual financial framework | economic governance (EU) | think tank | VAT resource | EU budget | withdrawal from the EU | euro area | common agricultural policy
Summary: A long-running discussion on reforming the European Union's budget gained momentum when the High-Level Group on Own Resources, led by former Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti, presented its report in January 2017. The report proposes simpler methods for funding the EU, to make it less reliant on direct contributions from Member States, and recommends that spending be focused on areas where the highest European added value can be achieved, now, for example migration and security emergencies. The report, entitled 'Future financing of the EU', lists and examines several options for new own resources, such as a reformed VAT-linked resource, an EU corporate tax, a financial transaction tax or taxes linked to efforts to fight climate change. It also proposes to explore other revenue sources stemming directly from the EU policies and programmes. The report will be taken into consideration by the European Commission and EU Member States when they work on the EU's next long-term budget after 2020. This note offers links to reports and commentaries from some major international think tanks and research institutes on the EU budget. Some papers also discuss whether the euro area should have its own, dedicated budget.

Capital Markets Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 13-01-2017
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword: bond | economic union | information | think tank | insurance company | financial stability | investment | capital market
Summary: Since the 2008 financial crunch and the ensuing recession, the European Union has been overhauling its regulation of financial markets to try to avoid any repetition of the crisis and to shore up economic growth. The current European Commission has prioritised the creation of Capital Markets Union, which would encourage companies to invest and create jobs by making it easier for them to raise funds on stock and bond markets. The Commission's Action Plan on Building a Capital Markets Union includes 33 actions and related measures, which aim to put in place the building-blocks of an integrated capital market within the EU by 2019. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries, studies and reports, from some of the major international think tanks and research institutes, which discuss the Capital Markets Union and related reforms. Some older papers on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think tanks are Thinking.'

2016: A Year of Shifts and Shocks [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: Briefing
Date: 22-12-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Global Governance
Summary: 2016 may rank as an 'annus horibilis' for the European Union – a year when it confronted several simultaneous crises, or a 'polyvortex' as the President of the European Commission characterised the situation, including the United Kingdom's decision to leave the EU, deadly terrorist attacks, migration pressures, growing Russian assertiveness, eurozone uncertainty and the shock-effect of Donald Trump's election as U.S. President. This note offers links to selected recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks on those biggest challenges Europe has faced in 2016.

The EU and the fight against terrorism [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 16-12-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword: European security | fight against crime | EU Member State | Syria | think tank | terrorism | civilian victim | armed forces | religious fundamentalism
Summary: Following the deadly terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015 and in Brussels and Nice this year, the European Union is moving ahead with its Security Union concept to help strengthen internal security cooperation, combat terrorism and prevent youth radicalisation. As part of anti-terrorist efforts, the European Parliament and the Council are finalising work on Directives on Combating Terrorism and on Firearms. The European Commission is to make final proposals under the terrorist financing Action Plan, including on the criminalisation of money laundering. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks on terrorism in Europe and the EU's response to it. More studies on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What think tanks are thinking.'
EU Defence [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 09-12-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Security and Defence
Keyword European security | European defence policy | cooperation policy | common security and defence policy
Summary Europe's increasingly unstable neighbourhood, Britain's plans to leave the European Union and a search for potentially successful areas of cooperation amid several crises have all renewed momentum for increased EU defence cooperation. Plans for stronger military ties among EU Member States, already envisaged in the recent EU Global Strategy, have received a boost, according to some analysts, from the election of Donald Trump as US President, with an unclear security agenda. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports by major international think tanks, on prospects of increased defence cooperation in the EU and on the general security situation on the continent.

More papers on threats to security in Europe from Russia's policies can be found in an October edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking'. Some more studies on the EU Global Strategy are available on another item from the series.

EU energy policy [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 05-12-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Energy
Summary On 30 November, the European Commission unveiled its 'Clean Energy for All Europeans' legislative package, which it hopes will mark a major step towards creating an Energy Union that ensures a functioning internal market in gas and electricity, addresses security of supply issues, promotes renewable energy sources, encourages energy efficiency and sharply reduces greenhouse gas emissions. The Commission expects these various measures to mobilise up to 177 billion euro of public and private investment per year from 2021, generate up to one percent increase in economic output over the next decade and create 900,000 new jobs. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries, studies and reports, from some of the major international think tanks and research institutes, which discuss EU energy policies. More papers on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think tanks are Thinking.'

The EU's Eastern Partnership [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 25-11-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword European neighbourhood policy | third country | Eastern Partnership | free-trade agreement | think tank | association agreement (EU)
Summary The Eastern Partnership was launched in 2009 as a regional programme of the European Neighbourhood Policy to promote integration and cooperation between the European Union, its Member States and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. It has achieved limited progress, partly due to conflicts and political instability in the region. Nevertheless, it has sent a signal of the EU’s willingness to strengthen ties with the region, offering incentives to governments and civil society to push ahead with democratic and economic reforms. Three of the six former Soviet republics involved – Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – have concluded Association Agreements and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreements with the EU. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports by major international think tanks on the Eastern Partnership. More reports on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking'.

The coming Trump Presidency [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 18-11-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Global Governance | Foreign Affairs
Summary The Republican candidate, Donald Trump, won the US presidential election on 8 November, unexpectedly defeating the Democratic nominee, former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, after a bitter campaign during which the business tycoon, with little political experience, made a number of controversial promises to radically change the government's policies on migration, health care, climate change, international trade and NATO. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks and other research centres in response to the US election outcome. Analyses published before the ballot can be found in a previous edition of 'What think tanks are thinking.'
US elections [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 04-11-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Global Governance | Democracy
Summary The United States choses its next president on 8 November, with implications for international relations, security, trade and fight against climate change. The vote follows an acrimonious campaign, which analysts say points to a deeply divided nation on issues such as the US international role, immigration, social protection, taxation as well as trade and industrial policies. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks and other research centres on the US elections.

Brexit: Implications and outlook [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 21-10-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | Forward Planning
Summary Uncertainty about the future relations between the European Union and the United Kingdom has contributed to turbulence on financial markets and in European politics, following the country's vote by referendum on 23 June to leave the EU. The new British Prime Minister, Teresa May, detailed some of her plans in a speech at the Conservative Party conference in October 2016, indicating that the UK would invoke the Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union by March 2017, a move needed for a member state to leave the Union. There is still lack of clarity on crucial aspects of the UK's departure, such as whether it wishes to remain part of the EU's single market or customs union, what the impact may be on EU's and the UK's economies and how the country's Parliament may be involved in process of leaving the EU. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks and other research centres in response to the UK referendum. More studies on issues raised by the vote can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' in July 2016.

Russia and security in Europe [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 14-10-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence
Keyword European security | sanction (EU) | Syria | think tank | bilateral relations | Russia | Ukraine | occupied territory | armed forces | economic sanctions
Summary Russia's assertive foreign policy, its annexation of Crimea and conflict with Ukraine have challenged the post-Cold War security order in Europe, highlighting the need for NATO and the European Union to bolster defence strategies, according to many analysts and politicians. The EU, along with the United States, has imposed sanctions against Moscow, which look unlikely to be lifted any time soon, especially as Russia's recent support for bombardment of civilians in the war-torn Syria has outraged many countries, and progress on implementing the Minsk Agreements on Eastern Ukraine has stalled. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports by major international think tanks, which discuss Russia's policies and how to respond to them. More papers on security in Europe can be found in a July 2016 edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking'. More links to papers on Russia's policies are available in an October 2015 edition of the series.

The EU's global role [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 07-10-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Global Governance | Security and Defence
Keyword European security | the EU's international role | United Kingdom | EU Member State | EU Military Committee | common security and defence policy | economic interdependence | North Africa | think tank | democratisation | withdrawal from the EU | Middle East | High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Summary As foreseen in the European Union's updated global strategy, the Union aims to play a stronger role in international affairs and conflict resolution, to reinforce a rules-based global order in an increasingly complex world and to better coordinate internal and external actions to bolster security and defence. The document, entitled "Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe", was presented in June by Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission. It seeks to make the Union more "credible, responsive and joined-up." Faced with growing instability in its neighbourhood and internal crises, the strategy envisages boosting EU efforts on defence, cyber-security, counter-terrorism, energy security and strategic communications. This note offers links to recent commentaries and studies from major international think tanks on the EU's global strategy and related issues. More papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published in May.
**Global Trendometer**

**Publication type**: Study  
**Date**: 06-10-2016  
**Author**: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI | Daniele RECHARD | Leopold SCHMERTZING | Jessica Freya WINDLE-WEHRLE | EAMONN NOONAN


**Keyword**: United States | digitisation | Asia | mobile communication | China | water resources | Internet | water policy | economic growth | social inequality | Russia | industrial manufacturing | digital technology | Middle East | long-term forecast

**Summary**: With the publication of this inaugural edition of the "Global Trendometer," the EPRS Global Trends Unit seeks to contribute to the process of identifying and addressing medium- and long-term trends, and their possible implications for policy-making in the European Union. Three essays and eight two-page vignettes on different geopolitical, economic, technological and social issues paint a broad-ranging picture of developments that may shape Europe’s future.

**Study** EN

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**The EU and migration [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type**: At a Glance  
**Date**: 30-09-2016  
**Author**: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

**Policy area**: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice

**Keyword**: citizens' Europe | Lebanon | right of asylum | exchange of information | refugee | Western Balkans | Germany | Aegean Islands | Central and Eastern European Countries | EU migration policy | think tank | terrorism | Schengen Agreement | adaptation to climate change

**Summary**: The migration crisis has eased since the agreement in March between the European Union and Turkey closed one major route through which people had been trying to reach Europe. A long-term solution to a better management of migration flows still appears elusive, as the Turkey deal could still unravel and other migration routes become more widely used. EU member states are also divided over the issue of 'redistributing' migrants among themselves. A debate continues among policy-makers on how to overhaul the current asylum rules and create a 'Dublin IV' while the EU ponders reaching an agreement with other countries similar to the one it has negotiated with Turkey. This note offers links to recent commentaries and studies on migration from major international think tanks and research institutes. More papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published in May.

**At a Glance** EN

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**The EU and Western Balkans [What Think Tanks are Thinking]**

**Publication type**: At a Glance  
**Date**: 26-09-2016  
**Author**: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

**Policy area**: Foreign Affairs

**Keyword**: Ionian Sea | Adriatic Sea | EU Member State | think tank | bilateral relations | Western Balkans | Bosnia and Herzegovina | accession to the European Union | North Macedonia

**Summary**: The European Union has given countries of the Western Balkans the perspective of membership and offers financial and political incentives for reform. From the region, only Croatia has so far joined the EU, in 2013. Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania are official candidate countries. Entry negotiations have started with Montenegro and Serbia, in 2012 and 2015 respectively. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are potential candidate countries. The European Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker, has said he does not expect any country to join the EU during his term in office, which ends in 2019, as many analysts and politicians believe the Union must overcome its internal problems before expanding further. The EU also wants to give the countries time for progress in their reforms, related to the 1993 'Copenhagen' membership criteria, which would make their political and economic systems compatible with EU standards. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports on the topic from major international think tanks on EU links with the Western Balkans, and the political and economic situation of the countries in the region. More publications on EU enlargement can be found in a previous edition of "What Think Tanks are Thinking."

**At a Glance** EN
EU environmental policies [What Think Tanks are Thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 20-09-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Environment
Keyword: EU environmental policy | environmental protection | think tank | sustainable development

Summary: Environmental protection is a comprehensive and well-established policy in the European Union. The environmental standards set by the Union are among the strictest in the world and the development of a sustainable economy is treated as a priority. Despite efforts to water down standards or renationalise policy, EU legislation has established more than 130 environmental targets and objectives to be met between 2010 and 2050. The EU is the world leader in efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions responsible for climate change. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports on the topic from major international think tanks on EU environmental policies. More publications on the EU role in securing an agreement in Paris last year on handling climate change can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking.'

The State of the Union [What Think Tanks are Thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 08-09-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | Global Governance | Human Rights
Keyword: United Kingdom | referendum | citizens' Europe | European election | President of the Commission | federalism | economic policy | think tank | extremism | European integration | withdrawal from the EU

Summary: Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, delivers his annual State of the Union speech to the European Parliament on 14 September 2016, at a time when the EU faces several crises that are testing its ability to offer solutions to citizens. Britain's recent vote to leave the EU, the migration crisis, continued economic stagnation, the rise of populism and xenophobia, and Russia's assertive foreign policy are all major challenges prompting serious debate about future policy options. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports on the topic from major international think tanks on the state of the EU and possible reforms. Publications on euro area reforms can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking.' More papers the future of the EU-UK relations are available in another recent edition of this series.

Euro area reforms [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 02-09-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword: convergence criteria | macroeconomics | economic policy | think tank | International Monetary Fund | euro | euro area | economic reform

Summary: The euro area and the European Union have been overhauling their economic governance systems since the 2008-09 financial crisis and the subsequent economic slump. Reforms have included the creation of authorities to better supervise the financial markets, improved mechanisms to coordinate fiscal policies, and new procedures to correct economic imbalances. Important steps have been taken to create a Banking Union. But as immediate threats to the stability of the euro area have subsided, the pace of reform has slowed according to many analysts. One of the last significant policy contributions to the debate on how to run the euro zone was the 'Five Presidents' report', entitled 'Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union', published more than a year ago. This notes offers links to commentaries, studies and reports on the topic from major international think tanks and research institutes on euro areas reform. Earlier publications on the subject can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking.'

The EU, the Middle East and North Africa [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 28-07-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Global Governance | Foreign Affairs

Summary: The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is of strategic importance for the European Union because of its proximity, historic links, energy resources, trade routes and ability to export instability that results from wars, political volatility and poverty in the region. The EU wants to contribute to stability in MENA through such instruments as the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Barcelona Process and the Union for the Mediterranean. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports by major international think tanks EU-MENA relations, general problems of the region and some of its countries. More reports on the region can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are Thinking' on the EU's southern neighbourhood.
Brexit and the future of the European Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 22-07-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword: United Kingdom | citizens' Europe | climate change policy | energy policy | international agreement | area of freedom, security and justice | think tank | democracy | Scotland | withdrawal from the EU | euroscepticism | China
Summary: The United Kingdom's vote on 23 June to leave the European Union has stirred lively debate on the implications of Brexit for the institutions, policies and global role of the European Union. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports by major international think tanks on the future of the EU without Britain. More studies on issues raised by the vote can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' from July 7, 2016.

At a Glance EN

The EU and innovation [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 15-07-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Research Policy | Industry
Keyword: European neighbourhood policy | digital single market | transatlantic relations | information technology | energy policy | think tank | transport policy | research and development | EU industrial policy | environmental policy | innovation | diffusion of innovations
Summary: The European Union has long sought ways to foster innovation, starting with support for research and industrial policies in the 1970s, through action plans in the 1990s and the Lisbon Strategy of 2000, to the Europe 2020 strategy of 2010, now updated by the 10 priorities of European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. According to a recent study, innovation policy has evolved to be understood as an umbrella notion, which encompasses research, industrial and education policies, as well as policies key for the innovation process, such as funding, taxation, regulation, standards and intellectual property rights. Efforts to boost innovation are also part of many EU programmes, such as the Digital Single Market. This note offers links to recent studies and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on problems faced by Europe in supporting innovation.

At a Glance EN

Brexit: What next for Britain and Europe? [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 07-07-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Forward Planning
Keyword: European Union membership | economic consequence | United Kingdom | EU situation | NATO | bibliography
Summary: The United Kingdom's vote on 23 June to leave the European Union has sent shockwaves through political institutions and financial markets worldwide, prompting intense debate among analysts, politicians and citizens about the long-term implications of an event already dubbed as the most important in the recent history of the EU. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports published by major international think tanks in reaction to the UK referendum. More studies on issues raised by the vote can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' from June 2016.

At a Glance EN

European security and the NATO summit [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 01-07-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Security and Defence
Keyword: European security | NATO | summit meeting | bibliography | common security and defence policy
Summary: Challenges to security in Europe will take centre stage at the NATO summit in Warsaw on 8-9 July when its heads of state and government will discuss issues ranging from Russia's conflict with Ukraine and its growing military assertiveness to turmoil across the Middle East and North Africa, and the future of the military alliance. This note highlights a selection of commentaries, studies and reports by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes on European security and defence published in the run-up to the NATO summit. More reports on the subject can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking' from November 2015. Please click here for the full publication in PDF format.

Briefing EN
The UK referendum [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 27-06-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword: European Union membership | United Kingdom | referendum | EU situation | bibliography
Summary: On Thursday 23 June, the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union in a referendum, leaving citizens, politicians and investors uncertain about the future of EU-UK relations and about the move's long-term implications for the country concerned, the European Union as a whole and the wider world. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks on issues raised by the British referendum. More studies on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What think tanks are thinking' from February 2016.

Employment policies in the EU [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 17-06-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Social Policy
Keyword: poverty | labour market | European social policy | dissemination of information | fight against unemployment | directory | social security | EU employment policy
Summary: Policies to boost employment and support the poorest in society have come centre stage of the political debate after the great recession raised unemployment and poverty rates, eroded social security and pension systems. As labour markets are being reformed, they are also being transformed by technological change, with automation and digitalisation creating new business models. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks on employment and social welfare policies in the EU. More studies on the subject are available in an earlier edition of 'What think tanks are thinking'.

Terrorism in Europe [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 10-06-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Global Governance
Keyword: European security | dissemination of information | EU Member State | area of freedom, security and justice | terrorism | directory | common security and defence policy
Summary: The terrorist attacks in Paris last year and in Brussels this March have reinforced calls on European Union member states to strengthen their cooperation on internal security and intensified the debate on the EU's role in fighting terrorism. Among measures being, or about to be, introduced are more thorough checks of people travelling abroad, better control of firearms, the collecting of more data on airline passengers, and improved operational cooperation. The European Parliament is preparing for negotiations with EU member states on a proposed Directive on Combating Terrorism and the Commission is pushing ahead with its Security Union concept. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks on terrorism in Europe and the EU's response to it. More studies on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What think tanks are thinking'.

The EU's global strategy [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 27-05-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Global Governance | Security and Defence
Keyword: external competence (EU) | the EU's international role | dissemination of information | interinstitutional cooperation (EU) | common foreign and security policy | directory | globalisation
Summary: The European Council decided last year that the EU needs a new, comprehensive global strategy to face the growing challenges of globalisation, shifts in economic and political power and expanding zones of conflict and instability. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, is to present such a strategy during the European Council meeting in June 2016. Phenomena such as the digital revolution, climate change, competition for resources, growing inequality and aging populations will require smart policies and tough decisions if the EU is to avoid a decline of its global leverage. Some useful analysis of the challenges and choices facing the Union were presented in a 2015 report by the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS), an inter-institutional project, entitled 'Global Trends to 2030: Can the EU meet the challenges ahead?'. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks on the EU's global strategy and related issues.

At a Glance EN
The migration crisis [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 17-05-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Global Governance | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Human Rights
Keyword: migration control | dissemination of information | EU migration policy | Turkey | refugee | directory | agreement (EU)
Summary: A March agreement between the European Union and Turkey seems to have eased the pressure from previously largely uncontrolled mass migration to the EU via the Turkish shores. However, the accord runs the risk of unravelling due to disagreements on key points, for example on offering Turks visa-free travel to the EU or on modifying anti-terrorist laws in Turkey. Under the deal, Turkey agreed to take back migrants who cross to Greece illegally and who didn't apply for asylum or whose asylum claim was found inadmissible. This note offers links to a series of recent commentaries and studies on migration from major international think tanks and research institutes. More papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published in March. Recent studies on the Schengen area can be found in another edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking'.

At a Glance: EN

The Visegrád group [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 29-04-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: European cooperation | Institutional and Parliamentary Law | Visegrad countries | intra-EU relations | directory
Keyword: Europe Democracy | Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Summary: The Visegrád Group, also called the Visegrad Four (or V4) brings together the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. The informal alliance was created in the early 1990s to discuss their approach to European integration and to hasten the process. After joining the EU in 2004, the group has been focusing on advancing cultural, economic, energy and military cooperation. The V4 leaders and ministers meet regularly, often seeking to forge a common position on issues debated in the EU fora, most recently for example on migration or terrorism. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the Visegrad group, its internal relations and its role within the EU.

At a Glance: EN

Monetary easing by the ECB [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 26-04-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword: dissemination of information | single monetary policy | euro area | directory | European Central Bank
Summary: The European Central Bank has been easing its monetary policy to counter deflationary forces in the euro-zone economy and to reinforce its fragile growth. On 10 March, the ECB announced another stimulus package, cutting interest rates, expanding its asset purchase programme in size and scope, and introducing measures to make it more attractive for banks to lend. According to many analysts, the ECB's 'unorthodox' actions, which follow the footsteps of the US Federal Reserve and the Bank of Japan, have helped to thwart deflation and to boost corporate activity. But critics say the ECB is going too far in its monetary stimulus and that its negative-rate policy could be harmful for some banks. This note offers a selection of recent studies, reports and commentaries by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes on ECB policy. More studies on the subject can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking'.

At a Glance: EN

EU-Turkey relations [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 19-04-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: dissemination of information | political situation | EU migration policy | Turkey | Kurdistan question | refugee | directory | political rights | agreement (EU)
Summary: Relations between the European Union and Turkey gained new momentum last month with an agreement aimed at addressing the migration crisis. One element of the deal is that Turkey shall take back migrants who cross to Greece illegally. The EU would accept Syrian refugees directly from Turkey and compensate it with financial aid, early visa-free travel and further progress in accession talks. The intention of the agreement is to ease pressure on the borderless Schengen area. Yet some critics say the EU should not be forging closer ties with Turkey at a time when its regime seems to be becoming increasingly authoritarian in the areas of freedom of expression and assembly. The European Commission's recent report on Turkey, discussed by the European Parliament on 13 April, calls on Turkey to lift restrictions on media freedom and to stop political interference with the judiciary. This note offers links to recent commentaries and reports from major international think tanks on relations between the EU and Turkey, as well as on political developments in that country. More studies on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking'.

At a Glance: EN
Japan and the EU [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 04-04-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: negotiation of an agreement (EU) | dissemination of information | political situation | government policy | Japan | trade agreement (EU) | common foreign and security policy | directory
Summary: After more than two decades of economic stagnation, Japan is pushing ahead with a 'three arrow' reform package aimed at reviving growth through fiscal stimulus, monetary easing and structural changes, a strategy known as 'Abenomics', after the name of Liberal Democrat Prime Minister Shinzō Abe. The reforms are being pursued against a challenging background of high government debt, an ageing population and a fragile external security environment, with, for example, North Korea pushing ahead with its nuclear arms programme. As advanced industrialised democracies, the EU and Japan have many common interests and values. The scope of the overall relationship has broadened in recent years, along the lines foreseen in the 2001 Action Plan. The EU and Japan are currently working towards a new Framework Agreement and a Free Trade Agreement. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on relations between Japan and the EU, as well as on economic and political developments in that country.

At a Glance: EN

European banks [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 17-03-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword: financial solvency | law of banking | risk management | banking system | euro area | banking supervision | financial requirements | bibliography
Summary: European banks have come under the spotlight once again, as the unusual volatility of their share prices has raised question-marks about their health in a changing regulatory environment and about the sustainability of the euro area's economic recovery more generally. Euro-area banks have had to adapt to new resolution rules, which fully took effect this year as part of EU efforts to create a Banking Union, having previously had to meet stricter capital requirements. Apart from having to operate in the context of a global economic slowdown, banks have also been affected by the European Central Bank's negative interest rates policy. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on problems faced by European banks and recent efforts to reform the sector.

At a Glance: EN

China and Europe [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 11-03-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Global Governance | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: EU relations | foreign policy | world economy | China | bibliography
Summary: China has recently taken centre-stage in many global debates, as the volatility of its stock market and currency have posed a question mark over the health of its economy, which has implications for international and European economic growth. The growing importance of China was highlighted last year, for example, by its increasingly active foreign policy and the inclusion of the Yuan in the International Monetary Fund's currency basket. The European Union faces strategic choices in its often complex relationship with China - such as whether to grant the country market economy status or to proceed to a bilateral trade agreement, and how far to emphasise human rights when many EU Member States are competing for Chinese inward investment. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on relations between China and the EU, as well as on economic and political developments in that country with global implications. More studies on the topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking'.

At a Glance: EN

Europe’s migration crisis [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 04-03-2016
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Global Governance
Keyword: dissemination of information | EU migration policy | Turkey | migratory movement | refugee | Schengen Agreement | directory | external border of the EU
Summary: The current migration crisis threatens to turn into a humanitarian one, with the build-up of thousands of migrants and refugees close to Greece's northern border, as other countries shut their borders to stop the flow of people fleeing war and poverty in Syria, North of Africa and elsewhere. The European Council is preparing for a special meeting with Turkey on migration, with the crisis posing significant challenges for the integrity of the Schengen free-travel area. This note offers links to a series of recent commentaries and studies on migration from major international think tanks and research institutes. More papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking', published last December. Recent studies on the Schengen area can be found in another edition of 'What Think Tanks are thinking'.

At a Glance: EN
Paris Agreement on Climate Change [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 26-02-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Environment
Keyword France | dissemination of information | climate change policy | UN Conference | Ile-de-France | international agreement | UN Framework Convention on Climate Change | directory
Summary After more than 20 years of negotiations, nearly 200 countries reached a landmark agreement in December 2015 on tackling climate change and its impacts. The European Union, with its ambitious climate policy, had been a strong advocate on a deal to cut emissions of greenhouse gases that cause global warming. The Paris agreement, conducted under the auspices of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, envisages a long-term goal of keeping the increase in global average temperature to "well below" 2°C above pre-industrial levels, pursuing efforts to limit the rise to 1.5°C. This would significantly reduce risks and the impacts of climate change. Many analysts have hailed the agreement as historic, but critics say it came too late and is too limited in scope. This note brings together commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes published in reaction to the Paris agreement.

The United Kingdom and the European Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type Briefing
Date 18-02-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law
Keyword European Union membership | dissemination of information | United Kingdom | referendum | directory
Summary European Union leaders meet on 18-19 February to discuss Prime Minister David Cameron's renegotiation of the United Kingdom's EU membership, ahead of an in-or-out referendum on the outcome. This note provides links to recent commentaries, studies, reports and books from major think tanks on Britain's relations with the EU and renegotiation of the terms of the country's membership.

The Schengen Area [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 15-02-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword border control | internal border of the EU | EU migration policy | free movement of persons | external border of the EU | bibliography
Summary The unprecedented migration crisis has put severe pressure on the Schengen area of 26 European countries which have abolished passport and any other type of control at their common borders. As member states reinstate border checks, some politicians predict that the Schengen area may break apart unless a solution is quickly found to manage the flow of migrants fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East, Asia and Africa. Of 28 EU member states, 22 participate in the Schengen area. Of the six members that do not, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania are legally obliged and wish to join the area, while Ireland and Britain maintain opt-outs. This note offers links to recent studies and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on the state of future of the Schengen area. More papers on the migration crisis can be found in a previous edition of 'What think tanks are thinking'.

Common Foreign and Security Policy [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 29-01-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Global Governance | Security and Defence
Keyword European External Action Service | EU relations | dissemination of information | common foreign and security policy | directory
Summary The EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) has developed significantly since the 1990s with the aim of enabling the Union to speak and act as one in world affairs. The 2009 Lisbon Treaty strengthened the potential of the policy by creating the post of EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, backed by the European External Action Service (EEAS). Although the EU's foreign policy has been hailed for a number of successes, such as a deal between Serbia and Kosovo or a nuclear agreement with Iran, it is still often perceived as underdeveloped by analysts, who say that Member States pursue their own priorities and that there needs to be greater coordination between the CFSP and other EU external policies, such as on development and trade. This note offers links to recent studies on EU foreign policy from major international think tanks and research institutes. Relations with Turkey, China, Africa, EU eastern neighbours, EU southern neighbours, candidates for EU membership and NATO have been covered in previous editions of 'What Think Tanks are thinking'.

At a Glance EN
The EU and the digital economy [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 22-01-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Forward Planning | Internal Market and Customs Union | Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword single market | electronic commerce | Internet | impact of information technology | technological change | electronic government | copyright | bibliography
Summary The European Union is presented with many opportunities and challenges from the rapid development of the digital economy, with its fast growth of data flows, domination of U.S. firms, concern of privacy and new business models in many sectors. The creation of the Digital Single Market is a central policy plank for the European Commission, which wants to improve access to digital goods and services and create the conditions for digital networks and services to prosper. The European Parliament adopted its resolution on the Digital Single Market on 19 January. The EU's immediate task is concluding a new data transfer agreement with the United States. Other challenges include upgrading the copyright law, deciding on net neutrality and addressing competition concerns. This note offers links to recent studies and reports from major international think tanks and research institutes on the digital economy. More papers on the subject can be found in a previous edition of 'What think tanks are thinking' devoted to the Digital Single Market. Please click here for the full publication in PDF format

EU enlargement [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 15-01-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | Forward Planning | Foreign Affairs
Keyword Montenegro | enlargement of the Union | Serbia | Albania | Turkey | Bosnia and Herzegovina | North Macedonia | bibliography | Kosovo
Summary The pace of the European Union's enlargement has slowed following its historic expansion in 2004-07 to take in 10 countries from Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Cyprus and Malta. From among EU hopefuls which have been given membership prospects - Turkey and Western Balkan countries - only Croatia joined the EU in 2013. Accession negotiations continue with Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. Iceland has dropped its membership bid. European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker has said he does not expect any new country to join the EU during his term in office, which ends in 2019, a statement confirmed in the European Commission's most recent enlargement strategy. The EU hails enlargement as one of its most successful policies as it enforces reforms in candidate countries and expands the zone of democracy and stability in Europe. But many analysts and politicians say that before expanding further, the EU must overcome its numerous, internal problems as well as give time to potential entrants to prepare themselves for membership, notably in areas such as respect for fundamental rights and anti-corruption policies. This note offers links to a series of recent studies from major international think tanks and research institutes on the enlargement process and the challenges faced by countries aspiring to EU membership.

The EU and Africa [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 08-01-2016
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs
Keyword Africa | dissemination of information | ACP-EU relationship | development aid | Cotonou Agreement | common foreign and security policy | directory
Summary Relations between Africa and the European Union are governed by partially overlapping policy frameworks. The most important ones are the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement from 2000 and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) agreed in 2007. These agreements include political, economic and development dimensions. Relations with Northern African countries are governed by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED) launched in 2008. The EU aims to promote peace and security in Africa and engages with the African Union (AU) in various policy dialogues, including on democracy and human rights. The EU is the biggest aid donor to Africa. Its development cooperation with Africa is channelled through different financial instruments, of which the European Development Fund is the most important. The EU has also concluded negotiations for Economic Partnership Agreements with several African regions. The EU has also been engaged in peace-keeping operations on the continent. This note offers links to a series of recent studies on Africa-EU relations and related issues from major international think tanks and research institutes. It focuses mostly on sub-Saharan Africa, as EU relations with Northern Africa and EU development policy were covered in previous editions 'What think tanks are thinking', published in July and September respectively.
Completing Economic and Monetary Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 18-12-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Economics and Monetary Issues | Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword: Economic and Monetary Union | dissemination of information | banking policy | euro area | directory | interinstitutional relations (EU)
Summary: Member states using the euro and the EU institutions are engaged in reforms of the euro area's system of governance to improve its economic performance and avoid any repeat of the sovereign debt crisis and severe recession that followed the 2008-09 global financial crisis. Reforms have so far included the creation of authorities to better supervise the financial markets, improved mechanisms to coordinate fiscal policies, and new procedures to correct economic imbalances, and launched a Banking Union. The discussion builds on the 'Five Presidents' report', entitled 'Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union', which is a set of proposals presented in June by European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, European Central Bank President Mario Draghi, European Council President Donald Tusk, European Parliament President Martin Schulz, and Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the Eurogroup President. Among other measures, the report calls for the creation of national competitiveness boards and an independent European Fiscal Board, improving the European Semester and completing the Banking Union. It mentions the possibility of setting up a euro-area treasury in a more distant future. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports on the topic from major international think tanks and research institutes published since the release of the Five Presidents' report.

Migration [What Think tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 11-12-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Global Governance
Keyword: migration control | dissemination of information | EU migration policy | migratory movement | refugee | directory | external border of the EU
Summary: European governments and societies are under pressure from an unprecedented migration crisis, which threatens to undo the EU's free-travel Schengen area, as member states reinstate border checks to try to cope with refugees fleeing war, oppression and poverty in Syria and other parts of the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Divisions have been emerging EU member-state governments emerge as they search for solutions to slow the tide of migration, register and relocate arrived asylum-seekers as well as plan an overhaul of the common European asylum system, which is deemed as inadequate by many analysts. This note offers links to a series of recent commentaries and studies on migration from major international think tanks and research institutes. More papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of 'What think tanks are thinking', published in early September.

EU response to the Paris terrorist attacks [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 04-12-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Security and Defence
Keyword: European security | France | dissemination of information | fight against crime | area of freedom, security and justice | terrorism | common foreign and security policy | directory
Summary: European Union member states are enhancing security arrangements in the wake of the Islamic State attacks that killed 130 people in Paris on 13 November. The carnage has deeply shocked Europeans and their governments, reinforcing calls to strengthen the EU's counter-terrorism strategy, prevent radicalisation of the young generation, and find solutions to conflicts in Syria and elsewhere. On 20 November, EU interior ministers agreed to increase checks on its citizens travelling abroad, tighten the circulation of illicit arms, and collect more data on airline passengers, according to their Council conclusions. They also agreed to revise the Schengen border code to make systematic checks of people's identity possible at internal borders. On 2 December, the European Commission adopted a package of measures to step up the fight against terrorism and the illegal trafficking of firearms and explosives, including a proposal for a Directive on Terrorism. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries and analyses by major international think tanks and research institutes which analyse the implications of the Paris attacks and ways to prevent similar atrocities in the future.
**Climate summit in Paris [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 26-11-2015  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area** Environment | Global Governance  
**Keyword** France | dissemination of information | EU policy | climate change policy | UN Conference | International agreement | directory | environmental cooperation | environmental impact  
**Summary** Leaders and representatives from nearly 200 countries will meet in Paris from 30 November to 11 December in an attempt to reach a global agreement to tackle climate change and its impacts. The main aim of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, known as COP 21, is to achieve an outcome that would limit greenhouse gas emissions, drive a low-carbon transformation of the global economy, build resilience to the impacts of climate change, and assist climate action in developing countries. The EU's climate policy is among the most ambitious in the world. The EU is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, while improving energy efficiency by 27% and increasing the share of renewable energy sources to 27% of final consumption. This 'At a glance' note brings together recent commentaries, analyses and studies by major international think tanks on climate policies and efforts to reach a climate agreement in Paris.

**At a Glance** EN

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**NATO, EU and security in Europe [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 09-11-2015  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area** Security and Defence  
**Keyword** Russian conflict with Ukraine and turbulence in the Middle East have reawakened concern about Europe's security, fuelling a debate about its defence capabilities, the role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and its relations with the European Union. NATO and the EU, sharing values, strategic interests, and a majority of members, cooperate on issues of common interest and work together in crisis management. The principles of the cooperation were set out in the December 2002 NATO-EU Declaration and the Berlin plus agreements, which allow the EU to use some of NATO's military assets in its peacekeeping operations. This note highlights a selection of recent studies and reports by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes on EU-NATO relations and, more generally on the role of NATO.

**At a Glance** EN

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**Banking Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 30-10-2015  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area** Economics and Monetary Issues  
**Keyword** euro zone governance reform and the European banking system in general.  
**Summary** On 11 November, the European Commission will hold an orientation debate on next steps to complete the EU's Banking Union -- the European Union's single rulebook on the functioning of banks, their supervision, restructuring and liquidation, and the protection of their customers and stakeholders. The Banking Union was created in response to euro zone debt crisis, to shore up the often fragile banks, boost confidence in the financial system, and break the vicious circle between bank and sovereign debt. Some critics say it does not go far enough as, for example, there is no pan-EU deposit guarantee fund. This note highlights a selection of recent studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on the banking union, with hyperlinks to the texts concerned. It also includes some recent papers on euro zone governance reform and the European banking system in general.

**At a Glance** EN

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**Syria [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 16-10-2015  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** dissemination of information | Syria | terrorism | civil war | refugee | common foreign and security policy | directory | religious fundamentalism | international conflict  
**Summary** The civil war in Syria has developed into the world's worst ongoing humanitarian and security disaster. An estimated 250,000 people have been killed during four and a half years of hostilities, and over 11 million people have been forced out of their homes. The war has contributed to the expansion of the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) controlled by a jihadi, extremist militant group. With an estimated 4 million Syrians having left the country, the conflict has also fuelled a refugee crisis in neighbouring countries including Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Egypt, as well as Europe. The ongoing fighting has exposed the inability of the international community to resolve the conflict. According to many analysts, the civil war has now turned into a full-blown proxy war involving regional and global powers, as highlighted most recently by Russia's open military intervention. The European Union is a staunch supporter of a political solution to the conflict. This note provides links to recent commentaries, analyses and studies from major international think tanks on the Syrian conflict. Please click here for the full publication in PDF format.

**At a Glance** EN
Putin's Russia [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 09-10-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: international security | Russia | common foreign and security policy | foreign policy | military occupation | bibliography | economic situation | economic sanctions

Summary: Russia's assertive foreign policy, annexation of Crimea, conflict with Ukraine and, recently, military operation in Syria are further challenging the assumptions of the post-Cold War world order. Meanwhile, on the domestic front, President Vladimir Putin's government is seen to be increasingly repressive. The sanctions against Moscow imposed by the United States and the European Union have hit the Russian economy hard, but do not appear to have weakened President Putin's resolve to pursue policies which are highly criticised in the West. The EU, US and other countries are looking for the best options of dealing with Russia while trying to determine what drives President Putin's actions. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports by major international think tanks, which discuss Russia's policies and how to respond to them.

Education in the European Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 02-10-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Education
Keyword: education policy | vocational training | bibliography

Summary: In the European Union, education policy is the responsibility of Member States, but EU institutions play an important supporting role. Erasmus+ is the fund for EU initiatives in education and vocational training, such as mobility of individuals, the development of partnerships and alliances, and policy innovations. Acknowledging the importance of education for social and economic development, member-state governments have set targets for 2020 in a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020). These concern early childhood education, under-achievement in reading, mathematics and science, early school leavers, completion rates of higher education, and student mobility. This note offers a selection of recent studies by some of the major think tanks and research institutes analysing the state of education in the EU and reforms needed to improve it.

Reform of the United Nations [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 28-09-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Global Governance
Keyword: institutional reform | UNO | bibliography

Summary: As the United Nations celebrates its 70th anniversary and its General Assembly holds its annual September sessions, the need to overhaul the organisation is widely recognised, but the differing national interests of its most powerful members hinder any major reform. Proposals concern most UN activities, from the composition and decision-making in its Security Council to peace support, human rights and development. As supporters of the multilateral approach to foreign policy, the European Union and its member states back reforms that would make the UN stronger and more efficient, although they disagree on how to pursue possible changes in the Security Council. This note offers a selection of recent studies by some of the major think tanks and research institutes which discuss the state of the UN and plans to reform it.

Welfare systems and labour markets [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 21-09-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Social Policy | Employment
Keyword: poverty | labour market | dissemination of EU information | fight against unemployment | directory | social security | social integration | welfare

Summary: The welfare systems and labour markets of EU member states have been under severe stress during the recent recession which has seen high unemployment and increased poverty rates. In response, many countries have launched structural reforms in these areas in an attempt to promote economic growth and reduce the persistently high unemployment as well as to lower the pressure on public finances from ageing populations. Social protection and inclusion is a priority for the European Union. In its 2020 strategy, the European Commission sets targets to lift at least 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion and to increase employment of the population aged 20-64 to 75%. This note offers a selection of recent studies by some of the major think tanks and research institutes analysing the state of welfare system and labour markets in the EU as well as reforms needed to overhaul them.
EU development policy [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 11-09-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Development and Humanitarian Aid
Keyword: development policy | the EU's international role | ACP-EU relationship | dissemination of EU information | development aid | common foreign and security policy | directory
Summary: During his annual ‘State of the Union’ speech on 9 September in Strasbourg, the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, called for a bolstering of European development policy. He urged member states to increase their development aid spending and announced the creation of a 1.8 billion euro trust fund for Africa. The European Union’s development policy is a key instrument in its relations with the outside world, with the objective of eradicating poverty in a context of sustainable development. However, the Union and many of its member states are reducing, rather than increasing, their development aid budgets in real terms, at a time of financial pressure. This note provides background to this discussion, by bringing together a selection of recent analyses and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on development policy and related issues, with hyperlinks to the texts concerned.

Migration [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 04-09-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Global Governance | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Human Rights
Keyword: political asylum | Mediterranean Sea | EU migration policy | dissemination of EU information | migratory movement | refugee | directory
Summary: The European Union is facing a migration crisis as hundreds of thousands of refugees try to reach Europe, fleeing war, oppression and poverty in Syria and other parts of the Middle East as well as Africa and Asia. The unprecedented scale of migration and a rising death toll of people during their journeys is forcing EU governments and institutions to respond. The Luxembourg presidency of the Council has convened justice and home affairs ministers for an emergency Council meeting on 14 September to discuss the EU response to migratory pressures and demands for international protection. Effective handling of migration is a priority for the European Commission, at a time when the Dublin Regulation governing the EU’s approach to asylum is under severe pressure. This note offers links to a series of recent commentaries and studies on migration in the EU from major international think tanks and research institutes. More papers on the same topic can be found in a previous edition of ‘What think tanks are thinking’ published in April.

EU policy on climate change [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 07-08-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Environment
Keyword: the EU's international role | climate change policy | energy efficiency | UN Conference | dissemination of EU information | renewable energy | global warming | directory
Summary: Tackling climate change caused by greenhouse gas emission is high on the European Union’s agenda as negotiations on a global climate deal enter their final phase ahead of the December international conference COP21 in Paris. The EU’s policy on climate change is among the most ambitious in the world. It aims to limit global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial average temperature levels. To achieve this, the EU is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% below 1990 levels by 2020, while improving energy efficiency by 20% and increasing the share of renewable energy sources to 20% of final consumption. This ‘At a glance’ note gathers recent studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on EU climate policies and efforts to reach a climate agreement in Paris.

The EU's Southern Neighbourhood [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 31-07-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: International Trade | Foreign Affairs
Keyword: European neighbourhood policy | regional cooperation | EU migration policy | Mediterranean third countries | dissemination of EU information | directory
Summary: The European Union’s relations with Mediterranean countries form part of a broader European Neighbourhood Policy. This creates a framework for bilateral and regional cooperation with Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia. A key element, agreed in 2011 following the ‘Arab Spring’ uprisings in the region, is the ‘more for more’ approach, which envisages closer relations in terms of financial assistance, travel and trade for those countries that pursue democratic and economic reforms. According to many analysts, the effectiveness of the policy has been challenged by political instability in many countries of the region and the growth of illegal migration to Europe. This ‘At a glance’ note highlights a selection of recent studies by major international think tanks on the EU’s Southern Neighbourhood Policy, with papers on migration grouped as a separate category.
European Union trade policy [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 13-07-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: International Trade
Keyword: common commercial policy | World Trade Organisation | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | United States | dissemination of EU information | foreign trade | trade agreement (EU) | trade relations | directory
Summary: International trade is an area where the European Union has an unquestionable global clout. It is the world's biggest trading bloc while trade policy is an exclusive power of the EU. The EU faces numerous challenges in the trade area, notably talks on the Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership (TTIP), an agreement with the United States, the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA), an accord currently being negotiated by 24 members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and, in general reviving the Doha Round of world trade negotiations. On 8 July, the European Parliament approved its recommendations on TTIP to EU trade negotiators. This note offers links to recent studies and reports from major international think tanks on EU trade policies, divided into a section devoted to TTIP, the most pending current trade issue and other trade matters.

At a Glance EN

EU-China relations [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 03-07-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Foreign Affairs
Keyword: investment policy | EU relations | dissemination of EU information | trade relations | directory | China
Summary: At their 17th summit in Brussels on 29 June, China and the European Union agreed to strengthen relations by seeking to boost mutual investment and increasing efforts to reach a global climate deal later this year. On his first visit to the EU institutions, Premier Li Keqiang also promised that China would contribute to the EU's new infrastructure fund. The EU and China are major trading partners, but their relations have been complicated by China's track-record on human rights as well as issues related to competition and currency policies. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the relations between China and the EU.

At a Glance EN

Unemployment in the EU [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type: At a Glance
Date: 26-06-2015
Author: Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area: Social Policy | Employment
Keyword: labour market | unemployment | dissemination of EU information | job creation | fight against unemployment | directory | EU employment policy
Summary: Unemployment in the euro zone and the whole European Union has been inching down for many months, adding to signs of economic recovery, but remains well above levels recorded before the start of the financial crisis in 2008. The seasonally-adjusted euro area unemployment rate was 11.1 percent in April 2015 down from 11.7 percent in the same month last year. The EU-28 rate was 9.7 percent in April 2015, compared with 10.3 percent in April 2014. There are significant differences among member states in the jobless rate, which was 4.7 percent in Germany in April 2015 and 25.4 percent in Greece. The slow decline in current unemployment levels and the fact that, even before the crisis, unemployment was much higher in the EU than in many other regions of the world are attributed by some economists to certain labour market issues. High joblessness, especially among young people, is now considered a major social and economic problem, prompting calls for reform. Boosting what is the still sluggish economic growth and increasing the number of jobs are a key priority for European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. This note highlights a selection of commentaries and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on labour market issues, with hyperlinks to the texts concerned.

At a Glance EN
The ECB’s ‘unorthodox’ monetary policy [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type At a Glance
Date 19-06-2015
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Financial and Banking Issues
Keyword bond | dissemination of EU information | single monetary policy | coordination of EMU policies | euro area | directory | European Central Bank
Summary In March 2015, the European Central Bank (ECB) launched its quantitative easing (QE) programme, the so-called Public Sector Purchase Programme, under which the ECB buys financial assets from euro-area banks, corporations or governments. This 60 billion euro per month scheme is aimed at putting downward pressure on bond yields, warding off deflationary risks, and generally, stimulating the economy by lowering the interest rate carried by various financial instruments. According to many analysts, the ECB’s action has helped to contain deflation and lowered the borrowing costs of euro zone countries previously encountering sovereign debt problems. The ECB’s critics say its unorthodox actions, which followed similar operations by the US Federal Reserve, the Bank of England and the Bank of Japan, could still stoke inflation over the mid-term. The European Court of Justice ruled on 17 July that the crisis-fighting plan of the ECB to buy government bonds in potentially unlimited quantities was legal. This note offers a selection of recent studies, reports and commentaries by some of the major think tanks and research institutes analysing the question of QE and other ECB policies.

EU-Turkey relations [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type At a Glance
Date 15-06-2015
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Democracy | Foreign Affairs
Keyword EU relations | political situation | Turkey | dissemination of EU information | directory | parliamentary election | accession to the European Union
Summary Turkey’s ruling AKP party won the 7 June parliamentary election, but lost its majority in the house, opening the way for talks on a coalition government and plunging the country into uncertainty. The vote ended more than a decade of single-party rule in the EU candidate country and dealt a blow to President Tayyip Erdogan’s ambitions for a more powerful executive role. It is expected to have many implications, including on EU-Turkey relations. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on recent developments in Turkey, and the relations between the EU and Turkey. Please click here for the full publication in PDF format.

EU reform of corporate tax rules [What Think Tanks are Thinking]

Publication type At a Glance
Date 01-06-2015
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword corporation tax | tax evasion | dissemination of EU information | European tax cooperation | exchange of information | tax law | tax avoidance | directory | tax harmonisation
Summary The European Commission held an orientation debate on 27 May on updating corporate taxation rules to make them fairer, more transparent, more growth-friendly and better shielded against abuse. The discussion will feed into an Action Plan, to be presented in June, which is expected to reopen the discussion on a Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base in the EU. On March 18, the Commission presented its Tax Transparency Package, which strengthens the exchange of information between Member States on their tax rulings. European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker has made the fight against tax avoidance and evasion a top priority, as reports that large corporations use aggressive cross-border accounting practices to lower their tax obligations have sparkedit controversy. This note highlights a selection of blog posts, commentaries and studies by major international think tanks and research institutes on reforms of EU taxation rules, with hyperlinks to the texts concerned.

Eastern Partnership after five years [What Think Tanks are thinking]

Publication type At a Glance
Date 26-05-2015
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Foreign Affairs
Keyword European neighbourhood policy | Latvia | dissemination of EU information | territorial law | Russia | Moldova | Ukraine | Caucasus countries | directory | summit meeting | Belarus
Summary The European Union reaffirmed on 22 May its commitment to developing closer political and economic relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine under its Eastern Partnership programme. At a summit in Riga, Latvia, participants said in a declaration they would work together to strengthen democracy, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Facing continued confrontation between Russia and Ukraine, the EU confirmed its support to the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of all its partners. A selection of commentaries and analyses by major international think tanks on Eastern Partnership and its future are listed below, with hyperlinks to the texts concerned.
The EU's prominent antitrust cases [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 08-05-2015
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Economics and Monetary Issues | Consumer Protection
Keyword EU competition policy | dominant position | control of restrictive practices | dissemination of EU information | directory
Summary The European Commission is pursuing a number of high-profile investigations in the competition area, highlighting the determination of the new team at the European Union's executive to be a tough enforcer of antitrust laws. Last month, the Commission sent a Statement of Objections to Google, alleging the company has abused its dominant position in the markets for general internet search services. In another Statement of Objections sent out in April, it alleges that some of Gazprom's business practices in Central and Eastern European gas markets constitute an abuse of the Russian company's dominant market position. This note offers links to commentaries, studies and reports from major international think tanks on the Google and Gazprom cases, as well as on general challenges facing EU competition policies.
At a Glance EN

Digital single market in Europe [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 05-05-2015
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Internal Market and Customs Union | Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword single market | electronic commerce | bibliography
Summary On 6 May, the European Commission will unveil its strategy for creating a digital single market, one of the top priorities of President Jean-Claude Juncker. It aims to stimulate economic growth and create jobs by giving consumers and businesses easier access to digital goods and services. The Commission's blueprint, presented on 25 March, envisages facilitating e-commerce, tackling geo-blocking, modernising copyright law and simplifying VAT arrangements. Other goals include improving the environment for digital networks and services, and creating a "European Digital Economy and Society". This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports on the topic from major international think tanks and research institutes.
At a Glance EN

The EU's migration challenge [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 24-04-2015
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice
Keyword EU migration policy | admission of aliens | illegal migration | external border of the EU | bibliography
Summary At a special European Council meeting convened on 23 April after up to 900 migrants drowned in the Mediterranean trying to reach Europe from Africa, EU heads of state and government agreed to increase funding for immigration and asylum policies and strengthen EU presence at sea to prevent further loss of life. The leaders said in a statement that the EU member states would fight trafficking of immigrants and reinforce internal solidarity in tackling the problem. Think tanks have long urged the bloc to be bolder in tackling the problem. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports on the topic from major international think tanks and research institutes. Some background material from the European Parliamentary Research Service is available here.
At a Glance EN

European economic governance [What Think Tanks are thinking]
Publication type At a Glance
Date 31-03-2015
Author Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI
Policy area Economics and Monetary Issues
Keyword publication | dissemination of EU information | coordination of EMU policies | interinstitutional cooperation (EU) | euro area | directory
Summary The 2008-09 financial crisis and the ensuing recession have prompted the euro area and the European Union to start overhauling their economic governance system. They established three authorities to better supervise the financial markets, improved mechanisms to oversee and coordinate fiscal policies, created procedures to correct economic imbalances, and launched a Banking Union. The euro-area countries created rescue funds for countries in economic trouble. The reform process continues and is high on the EU agenda for the first half of 2015. The European Council in December 2014 called for further steps to improve economic governance, tasking the President of the European Commission, helped by the President of Euro Summit, President of the Eurogroup and the President of the European Central Bank to draft a report on further steps. The four Presidents published an analytical note in February, suggesting that economic governance needs further, profound changes or the euro zone may face continued high unemployment and low growth. The note posed questions to EU heads of state and government about future reforms. A full report is to be published in June. The European Parliament is currently finishing work on the report on economic governance (Berès report). In his speech to an informal European Council meeting in February, EP President Martin Schulz called for a full involvement of the Parliament, on equal footing with other institutions, in the ongoing analysis of the needed reforms. The think tank community is currently holding a lively debate on euro governance and a wider discussion on the way the EU should be run. This note offers links to recent commentaries, studies and reports on the topic from major international think tanks and research institutes.
At a Glance EN
**Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type**  At a Glance  
**Date**  20-03-2015  
**Author**  Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area**  Security and Defence  
**Keyword**  European Council | publication | President of the Commission | European defence policy | dissemination of EU information | directory | common security and defence policy  
**Summary**  The recent interview by Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, in which he advocated ‘a joint EU army’ as a means to strengthen European foreign policy and ‘allow Europe to take on responsibility in the world’ has revived an on-going debate in think-tank and academic circles about how to maximise the effectiveness of existing national and Europe-wide efforts in the field of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The European Council adopted an extensive set of conclusions on the subject in December 2013. This note highlights a selection of recent studies, reports and commentaries by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes that analyse issues surrounding the development of CSDP.

**Juncker's investment plan [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type**  At a Glance  
**Date**  13-03-2015  
**Author**  Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area**  Economics and Monetary Issues | Financial and Banking Issues  
**Keyword**  economic growth | President of the Commission | job creation | fund (EU) | investment promotion | directory | interinstitutional relations (EU)  
**Summary**  The European Union is moving closer to creating a new investment fund, a flagship idea of European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker aimed at bolstering economic growth and creating jobs. On 10 March, EU finance ministers gave an initial go-ahead for the planned financial facility, called the European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI), by agreeing their position for negotiations on the proposal with the European Parliament (EP). The Parliament discussed the EFSI plan on 12 March in Strasbourg, and is expected to ask for a bigger role in supervising the fund, it said in a statement. The EP is to vote on its report on the fund on 24 June or at the July plenary session at the latest, allowing for negotiations with EU governments to move full steam ahead. According to the Commission’s proposal, the fund is to use 21 billion euros of EU seed money to mobilise 315-billion-euros investment in co-operation with private investors for infrastructural and other projects. This note offers links to a selection of commentaries, studies and reports by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes, which analyse the merits of the proposal.

**Energy Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type**  At a Glance  
**Date**  05-03-2015  
**Author**  Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI  
**Policy area**  Energy  
**Keyword**  energy grid | security of supply | energy supply | gas pipeline | Russia | trans-European network | deepening of the European Union | bibliography  
**Summary**  The European Commission launched a blueprint on 25 February for an Energy Union that would ensure the free flow of gas and electricity across the European Union, diversify energy supply and move the bloc towards a low carbon economy in what is hoped to be a major shake-up aimed to create growth, job and enhance security. Presenting its Energy Union Strategy, one of ten priority projects of President Jean-Claude Juncker, the Commission said it wanted to improve energy infrastructure to better share supplies and integrate renewables, end regulated pricing, increase the number of liquefied natural gas terminals and enforce existing law on competition. Energy efficiency in buildings and transport, as well as smart grids, should help keep energy demand from outpacing supplies. Research and innovation should make Europe a world leader in clean energy technologies. EU heads of state and government are due to discuss the energy union at their meeting on 19-20 March. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries, studies and reports, authored by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes, which discuss the prospects for, and ways to create, a single energy market within the European Union.
**Capital Markets Union [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 27-02-2015  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

**Policy area** Financial and Banking Issues  
**Keyword** financial market | investment promotion | euro area | capital market | bibliography | corporate finance

**Summary** On 18 February, the European Commission unveiled further details of its proposed Capital Markets Union (CMU), its flagship plan to strengthen the economy of the euro area and the European Union by making it easier for companies to raise money on stock and bond markets. Publishing a Green Paper, the Commission launched a public consultation on its project to forge a truly single market for capital. It aims, among other things, at standardising prospectuses that companies publish to issue stocks and bonds, making it easier for investors to get credit information on small companies asking for cash, and facilitating securitisation, that is, pooling together various types of debt to create a new class of high-quality asset-backed financial instruments. This note highlights a selection of recent studies, reports and commentaries by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes that analyse the question of the CMU.

At a Glance  

**EU Counter-terrorism strategy [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 19-02-2015  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

**Policy area** Security and Defence  
**Keyword** European security | terrorism | Islam | common foreign and security policy | religious fundamentalism | bibliography

**Summary** The attack in Paris on the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in January 2015, and the ensuing wave of violence in which 17 people were killed, together with subsequent events in Belgium and Denmark, has prompted a debate in the European Union on strengthening its counter-terrorism strategy. On 12 February, EU heads of state and government discussed new initiatives that would aim, among other goals, at preventing Europeans from going to fight alongside jihadist militants in Syria and Iraq, and their returning to carry out attacks in Europe. At their informal meeting, the EU leaders called for stricter checks on people entering the Schengen area, better information-sharing and the rapid adoption of the Passenger Name Records (PNR) system. This note offers links to a selection of recent commentaries and analyses by major international think-tanks and research institutes which analyse the internal security threat posed by terrorism and ways to contain it.

At a Glance  

**EU-Russia relations [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 16-02-2015  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

**Policy area** Foreign Affairs  
**Keyword** European security | United States | EU relations | Russia | Ukraine | border war | common foreign and security policy | geopolitics | bibliography

**Summary** Relations between the European Union and Russia are at their worst since the end of the Cold War, mainly due to Moscow’s annexation of Crimea and support for rebels in eastern Ukraine. Most think tanks analysing EU-Russia relations and the situation in Eastern Europe are deeply worried about security in Europe and the potential economic impact of the crisis. They largely agree that hopes to establish a strategic partnership between the EU and Russia have faded. The conflict in Ukraine is seen as taking relations back to the Cold War era, posing the threat of a financial crisis in Russia and exacerbating the economic situation in the EU. This ‘At a glance’ note offers links to a selection of commentaries and analyses by major international think tanks, as well as related publications.

At a Glance  

**Economic growth in the euro area [What Think Tanks are thinking]**

**Publication type** At a Glance  
**Date** 06-02-2015  
**Author** Marcin CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI

**Policy area** Economics and Monetary Issues  
**Keyword** economic forecasting | research body | economic growth | euro area | economic analysis | bibliography | economic situation

**Summary** The European Commission upgraded its growth forecast for the euro area on 5 February, saying that cheaper oil, a weaker euro and more expansionary policy of the European Central Bank should stimulate economic expansion. Presenting its winter forecast, the Commission said it expected the euro area’s gross domestic product (GDP) to grow by 1.3 per cent and 1.9 per cent in 2015 and 2016 respectively, up from its previous forecasts of 1.1 per cent and 1.7 percent. In the whole European Union, growth is expected at 1.7 per cent and 2.1 per cent in this and next year respectively. Researchers and analysts in outside think tanks paint many different pictures when they assess the economic situation and prospects for future of the euro area. Their various diagnoses of the currency area’s economic sluggishness include overregulation, insufficient investment in innovation, ageing populations, excessive austerity, inadequate action by the European Central Bank, flaws in the euro area’s governance and fiscal irresponsibility of certain governments. This ‘At a glance’ note offers links to a selection of commentaries, studies and reports by some of the major international think tanks and research institutes that analyse prospects for growth in Europe and related issues.

At a Glance
Greece and the euro area: what next after the Greek election? [What Think Tanks are thinking]

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Summary Greece’s new government, led by the election-winning, anti-austerity Syriza party is trying to convince euro area partners to offer the country more debt relief that would allow it to ease austerity and bolster economic growth. The charm offensive in European capitals of Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and his Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis has so far produced mixed results, leading to fresh turmoil on financial markets. This note, part of the 'What Think Tanks are thinking' series, presents links to a selection of recent comments, reports and studies on Greece and the euro area from major international think tanks and other research institutes.

At a Glance EN