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Keyword "settlement of disputes"

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Creation date : 16-04-2024

EU framework on alternative dispute resolution for consumers

Publication type Briefing

Date 01-02-2024

Author TENHUNEN Susanna

Policy area Consumer Protection

Keyword alternative dispute resolution | civil law | civil law | civil proceedings | commercial law | consumer law | consumption | directive (EU) | electronic commerce | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | justice | LAW | marketing | regulation (EU) | settlement of disputes | TRADE | trade dispute | trade policy

Summary Directive (2013/11/EU) on alternative dispute resolution for consumer disputes (the 'ADR Directive') provides an out-of-court solution for consumers to resolve disputes on goods and services purchased from traders established in the single market. Together with Regulation (EU) No 524/2013 on online dispute resolution for consumer disputes (the 'ODR Regulation'), the ADR Directive forms a horizontal EU-level framework for alternative dispute resolution. The significant increase of online sales, in particular during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as contractual challenges exposed by the energy crisis, have highlighted the continued importance of an effective, low-cost and fair way to resolve disputes between consumers and traders. Typically, these disputes concern return of money, reparation of faulty products, or termination of a contract based on unfair terms. Although the ADR mechanisms are deemed a clear improvement for consumers, the digitalisation of the consumer market, the complexity of the procedures and lack of awareness challenge the existing ADR architecture adopted in 2013. Despite successive updates, the ODR platform has reportedly not achieved its objectives. On 17 October 2023, the European Commission therefore proposed to introduce targeted amendments to the ADR Directive and to repeal the ODR Regulation. It also put forward a new recommendation setting quality requirements for online marketplaces and EU trade associations providing dispute resolution systems. In addition to aiming for a modernised ADR framework, these proposals for revision contribute to the Better Regulation simplification and burden reduction targets. During the ninth legislature, the European Parliament has addressed ADR in the context of policies having consumer protection – including access to redress – at their core. These include, among other policies, automated decision-making. In addition, Parliament has dealt with several petitions from citizens relating to the implementation and application of the ADR mechanisms in practice. Preliminary rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) have clarified the interpretation of certain provisions of the ADR Directive and thus facilitated legal certainty.

Briefing [EN](#)

Ukraine's 10-point peace plan and the Kyiv Security Compact – An assessment

Publication type Study

Date 30-10-2023

External author Andriy Tyushka, Tracey German

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword common foreign and security policy | economic geography | establishment of peace | EU relations | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | military intervention | political geography | Russia | settlement of disputes | Ukraine | war

Summary With the aim of bringing Russia's war of aggression to an end and developing a sustainable post-war peace, Ukraine has advanced its vision of peace (as encompassed in President Zelenskyy's 'peace formula') and the paths that lead to this (as outlined in Ukraine's 10-point peace plan). Other actors, including China, Indonesia and the collective African Peace Initiative Mission, have advanced their own peace proposals. This in-depth analysis (IDA) scrutinises the different proposals that have been put forward and their visions for the post-war future of Ukraine and the European security order. It concentrates on the following questions: what are the varying assumptions about the preconditions for peace versus ceasefire? Do the 'peace' proposals in question draw a distinction between ceasefire and peace? There is an important difference between war termination, conflict resolution and peacebuilding – how is this dealt with by the various proposals? Finally, the IDA seeks to assess how feasible the peace proposals are in light of two baseline scenarios for the war's future course – a stalemate (long war of attrition) and Ukraine's victory. It concludes that the question of how to sustain Ukraine's independence and security is central to any discussion of finding an end to the war and a long-term peace, underscoring the centrality of an unambiguous political settlement supported by acceptable, effective guarantors.

Study [EN](#)

[Peace and Security in 2023: Overview of EU action and outlook for the future](#)

Publication type Study

Date 18-07-2023

Author BILQUIN Bruno | CAPRILE ANNA | CLAPP SEBASTIAN | DAMEN Mario | DELIVORIAS Angelos | IMMENKAMP Beatrix | LAZAROU Eleni | PICHON Eric | SHREEVES Rosamund | STANICEK BRANISLAV | SZCZEPANSKI Marcin

Policy area Democracy | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence

Keyword common foreign and security policy | culture and religion | establishment of peace | European construction | European identity | EUROPEAN UNION | freedom of the skies | geopolitics | humanities | international affairs | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | multilateral agreement | peaceful co-existence | SCIENCE | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS

Summary Russia's war on Ukraine has caused the European Union (EU) to intensify its work for peace and security. The Peace and Security Outlook, produced by the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), seeks to analyse and explain the European Union's contribution to the promotion and restoration of peace and security internationally, through its various external policies. This study provides an overview of the issues and current state of play. It looks first at the concept of peace and the changing nature of the geopolitical environment, as European security faces the most tangible military threat since the end of the Cold War. Linking the study to the Normandy Index, which measures threats to peace and democracy worldwide based on the EU Global Strategy, each chapter of the study analyses a specific threat to peace, and presents an overview of EU action to counter the related risks. The areas discussed include proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, democracy support, conflict prevention and mitigation in fragile contexts, the security impacts of climate change, cyber-attacks, disinformation, and terrorism, among other issues'. A parallel paper, published separately, focuses specifically on the state of play of the EU's relations with Iraq. EPRS has drafted this study as a contribution to the Normandy World Peace Forum, taking place in September 2023.

Study [EN](#), [FR](#)

Multimedia [Peace and security in the world](#)

[International Agreements in Progress: Economic Partnership Agreement with Kenya \(East African Community\)](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 03-07-2023

Author PICHON Eric

Policy area Foreign Affairs | International Trade

Keyword Africa | economic geography | economic policy | ECONOMICS | EU relations | European Association of National Productivity Centres | European construction | European organisations | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | import (EU) | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Kenya | settlement of disputes | sustainable development | trade | TRADE

Summary On 19 June 2023, the EU and Kenya concluded negotiations on an economic partnership agreement (EPA). This agreement builds on negotiations for an EPA with the partner states of the East African Community (EAC) – at the time: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda – which were finalised in October 2014. However, the signing of the EU-EAC EPA had been stalled because of discussions within the EAC on the consequences of the EPA for their economies. Except for Kenya, all EAC partner states are least developed countries, and still enjoy duty-free and quota-free access to the EU market. Kenya is the only EAC country to have ratified the agreement, in order not to lose free access to the EU market. The EAC initially envisaged the EU-EAC EPA as a bloc-to-bloc agreement – i.e. the EPA could only enter into force after it had been ratified by all EAC partners. However, the EAC eventually agreed that Kenya enter negotiations to implement a bilateral EPA with the EU. Other EAC countries – including South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which joined the EAC in 2016 and 2022 respectively – can decide to join the agreement. As soon as the EU-Kenya EPA enters into force, it will immediately provide duty-free, quota-free EU market access to all exports from Kenya, combined with partial and gradual opening of the Kenyan market to imports from the EU. The text of the new negotiated agreement includes binding provisions on trade and sustainable development, and a transparent dispute resolution mechanism. Third edition. To view earlier editions of this briefing, please see the EPRS blog.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Question Time: Relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and at the Lachin corridor](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 09-06-2023

Author CAPRILE ANNA

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Human Rights

Keyword Armenia | Azerbaijan | Europe | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | political geography | regional security | Russo-Ukrainian issue | settlement of disputes | territorial dispute | war

Summary Armenia and Azerbaijan have been in conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh for 30 years, during which two bloody episodes of war, in 1992 and in 2020, have alternated with periods of frozen conflict. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has shaken the balance of power in the region. To avert further escalation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the international community has stepped up mediation efforts, with the EU playing a prominent role. During the June session, Question Time with the High Representative, Josep Borrell, will focus on relations between the two - previously the topic for Question Time in October 2022.

At a Glance [EN](#)

[Armenia and Azerbaijan: Between war and peace](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 02-06-2023

Author CAPRILE ANNA | PRZETACZNIK Jakub

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Armenia | Azerbaijan | common security and defence policy | EU civilian mission | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | political geography | regional security | settlement of disputes | territorial dispute | war

Summary Ever since the end of the Cold War, Armenia and Azerbaijan have been in conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, in the longest-running conflict in the post-Soviet space. Two bloody war episodes, in 1992 and in 2020, have alternated with periods of frozen conflict over three decades, amidst the inability of the international community to find a political settlement. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has further altered the power balance in the region, creating a dangerous security vacuum and intensifying the need for renewed international mediation towards a comprehensive political settlement. Violent clashes in September 2022, including an incursion by Azerbaijan into Armenian territory, prompted the EU to step up its presence in the region significantly. A new fully fledged civilian mission in Armenia (EUMA Armenia) was deployed in February 2023. The EU has meanwhile taken on a prominent mediation role in the negotiations. Mediation talks, in various formats, have continued during 2022 and 2023, against a background of regular and increasingly violent clashes, with both sides attempting to improve their negotiating positions at the table. The blockade since December 2022 of the Lachin corridor by pro-Azerbaijani activists, followed by the establishment of a checkpoint by Azerbaijan in April 2023, have put additional pressure on Yerevan (and Stepanakert) to agree on a peace deal on Baku's terms. Under EU mediation, complemented by US talks, the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed on 14 May 2023 to a longer-term negotiation plan for a comprehensive peace agreement. The final statement included their unequivocal commitment to the 1991 Almaty Declaration and their 'respective territorial integrity'. Some experts see the details of the statement as a potential breakthrough in the peace talks, while others warn of the heavy price-tag for the population of Nagorno-Karabakh and the potential political costs for Armenia itself.

Briefing [EN](#)

[2022 report on Kosovo](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 03-05-2023

Author STANICEK BRANISLAV

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword cooperation policy | Europe | European construction | European integration | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | judicial reform | Kosovo | Kosovo question | LAW | organisation of the legal system | regional cooperation | settlement of disputes

Summary Kosovo,* with a population of 1.8 million (93 % ethnic Albanians), unilaterally declared independence from Serbia in 2008. Kosovo's prospect of a European future has been affirmed at EU-Western Balkans summits dating back to 2003. The country has been engaged in EU-mediated political dialogue with Serbia since 2011. On 18 March 2023, representatives of Kosovo and Serbia met in Ohrid, North Macedonia. One of the major commitments they made there was to implement the EU proposal of 27 February 2023. The Parliament's position on the European Commission's 2022 annual report on Kosovo is due to be voted in plenary in May 2023.

At a Glance [DE](#), [EN](#), [ES](#), [FR](#), [IT](#), [PL](#)

[EU cohesion policy support to 25 years of peace in Northern Ireland](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 28-03-2023

Author D'AMBROGIO Enrico

Policy area Regional Development

Keyword Cohesion Fund | cooperation policy | cross-border cooperation | economic conditions | economic stabilisation | ECONOMICS | EU finance | EU relations | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Northern Ireland | regions of EU Member States | settlement of disputes | withdrawal from the EU

Summary EU integration represents an inspiring example of conflict resolution. Some 30 years of violent sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland was brought to an end in 1998, with the signature of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. At the time, both the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland were Member States of the European Union, having both joined the European Communities on 1 January 1973. The EU's engagement in the Northern Ireland peace process materialised first through support for the International Fund for Ireland. As part of its cohesion policy, the EU then directed significant investment to Northern Ireland through building specific cohesion programmes into the framework of the UK's allocations. From 1995, EU funding was channelled through successive PEACE programmes, supporting peace and reconciliation and promoting economic and social stability in Northern Ireland and the six border counties of Ireland. The European territorial cooperation programme (Interreg) was a further EU cohesion policy tool playing a role in Northern Ireland. Since the UK's withdrawal from the EU on 1 February 2020, the PEACE PLUS programme, the largest ever cross-border cooperation programme on the island of Ireland, has been agreed, and it will continue to support the process towards peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. The European Parliament's support for the EU's financial contribution to the peace process has been constant, and Parliament expressed concern for the continuity and stability of this support after the UK's withdrawal from the EU. MEPs have also called for efforts to increase general awareness, and to raise the profile of the impact and necessity of EU funding in Northern Ireland.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Prospects of reinvigorating the Middle East Peace Process: a possible joint EU-US undertaking?](#)

Publication type Study

Date 02-12-2022

External author Daniel LEVY, Zaha HASSAN, Emmanuel COHEN-HADRIA and Katarzyna SIDŁO

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword America | Asia and Oceania | collective interest | common foreign and security policy | economic geography | EU relations | EU strategy | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | justice | LAW | pacifism | Palestine | Palestine question | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | settlement of disputes | United States

Summary The resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute has been an issue of strategic and common interest for the European Union (EU) and the United States (USA), for which they have both sought to cooperate from the onset. The Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) was initiated through the 1991 Madrid Conference co-sponsored by the Soviet Union and the USA. However, the most recent developments, such as the clashes in Gaza and the acts of violence in the West Bank that began in the summer of 2022, demonstrate that despite the numerous initiatives of international actors, these efforts have failed to end the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. This study recommends that the EU should realise that the current status quo is not sustainable, considering that this situation could be further eradicating its influence over the MEPP and the Israeli and Palestinian actions, as well as undermining its legitimacy on the global scene. Instead of focusing on creating a new standing EU-USA mechanism on the MEPP, the EU should take a new stance of acting more independently while remaining loyal to its principles and approach towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Study [EN](#)

[The European Parliament commemorates John Hume: Speeches at the inauguration of a memorial bust, Strasbourg, 7 June 2022](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 22-06-2022

External author DG, EPRS

Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law

Keyword culture and religion | democracy | documentation | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | establishment of peace | EU institutions and European civil service | Europe | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | honour | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Member of the European Parliament | Northern Ireland | political framework | POLITICS | regions of EU Member States | sculpture | settlement of disputes | social affairs | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | speech

Summary A commemorative bust of John Hume (1937-2020) – awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1998 for his tireless efforts to bring peace to his native Northern Ireland – was unveiled in the European Parliament in Strasbourg on Tuesday 7 June 2022. Having served as an MEP from 1979 to 2004, John Hume understood the European Parliament as a forum in which to raise attention to the problems of Northern Ireland and build European support for resolving the conflict. And it was also – with a measure of seclusion not available to them in Belfast – a place where he and the unionist MEPs from Northern Ireland could work together to improve Northern Ireland's situation. The bust of John Hume, representing him at the age he was first elected to the European Parliament, is by Northern Ireland-born sculptor Elizabeth O'Kane, and has been donated to the Parliament by the Irish government. The bust was unveiled by the Irish Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, and the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola. Before the ceremony, Chris Patten, former European Commissioner, delivered a lecture, in which he paid tribute to John Hume's work as peace-maker and his commitment to democratic values. This Briefing brings together the texts of all three speeches.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Ukraine's application to join the EU \[What Think Tanks are thinking\]](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 16-06-2022

Author CESLUK-GRAJEWSKI Marcin

Policy area EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | Foreign Affairs

Keyword accession to the European Union | economic analysis | economic consequence | economic geography | ECONOMICS | EU candidate countries | EU restrictive measure | Europe | European construction | European security | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | political geography | Russia | settlement of disputes | the EU's international role | Ukraine | war

Summary EU Heads of State or Government will discuss war-torn Ukraine's bid to join the EU when they meet at a regular European Council meeting in Brussels next week. The leaders are expected to discuss Ukraine's request to gain the status of official EU candidate along with French President Emmanuel Macron's plan to create a 'European Political Community', with Ukraine as a member, as news media have reported, quoting draft Council conclusions. The meeting on 23-24 June is unlikely to make any firm decisions on either of the two proposals, the quoted draft conclusions suggest. EU enlargement, which had been on the backburner for some years, returned to the spotlight after Russia attacked Ukraine on 24 February. Having failed to conquer Ukraine quickly, Russia is now concentrating its war effort in the south-eastern provinces of the country. This note gathers links to recent publications and commentaries from many international think tanks on Russia's war on Ukraine. Earlier analyses of the implications of the war can be found in a previous edition of the 'What Think Tanks are Thinking' series.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Russia's war on Ukraine: The religious dimension](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 01-04-2022

Author O'BEARA FEARGHAS

Policy area Culture | Foreign Affairs

Keyword Christian | culture and religion | economic geography | establishment of peace | Europe | freedom of religious beliefs | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | interreligious dialogue | LAW | military intervention | Orthodoxy | political geography | rights and freedoms | Russia | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | Ukraine

Summary Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 drew attention to the close relationship between Vladimir Putin's regime and the Russian Orthodox Church. The latter has strongly backed Putin's war and has long provided theological and ideological justifications for his domestic and international actions. The Church's overtly political approach has contributed to deep divisions within the wider Orthodox world, including a formal split with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and significant tensions with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#), [FR](#)

[Outcome of the meetings of EU leaders on 17-18 February 2022](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 28-02-2022

Author ANGHEL Suzana Elena

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword African Union | cooperation policy | economic geography | EU institutions and European civil service | EU-NATO cooperation | Europe | European construction | European Council | EUROPEAN UNION | extra-European organisations | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | international cooperation | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | military intervention | political geography | Russia | settlement of disputes | summit meeting | Ukraine

Summary On 17-18 February 2022, EU Heads of State or Government met for an informal European Council to discuss the Russia-Ukraine crisis and for a summit with African Union (AU) leaders with the aim to renew the existing partnership.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[Security challenges at the EU's eastern border: which role for CSDP?](#)

Publication type In-Depth Analysis

Date 31-01-2022

External author Tracey GERMAN, Andriy TYUSHKA

Policy area Security and Defence

Keyword Belarus | BUSINESS AND COMPETITION | common security and defence policy | criminal law | crisis management | defence | Eastern Partnership | economic geography | EU civilian mission | Europe | European construction | European defence policy | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | international conflict | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | management | political geography | regional security | Russia | settlement of disputes | threat to national security

Summary This in-depth analysis examines the nature and scope of enduring and emerging threats to the security of the EU and its Member States, and the challenges to its Eastern Partnership policy, from both the EaP's protracted conflicts and instability in Belarus. It assesses the EU's engagement with these conflicts and addresses the potential role of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), including (but not solely) missions and operations. Finally, it explores potential avenues for future co-operation between the EU and its EaP partners on security and defence (including under the PESCO+, EPF, and EDF frameworks).

[In-Depth Analysis](#) [EN](#)

[Libya: Political situation ahead of elections](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 17-12-2021

Author STANICEK BRANISLAV

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Africa | civil war | constitution | economic geography | election monitoring | electoral procedure and voting | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | head of State | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | Libya | parliamentary election | political framework | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | presidential election | settlement of disputes | sources and branches of the law | terrorism | the EU's international role

Summary Since the overthrow of Muammar al-Qaddafi in a 2011 uprising, Libya has been mired in a civil war that has divided the international community and set several internal factions against one another. The ceasefire proclaimed on 23 October 2020 opened a path for a political process wherein an interim government led by Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah was able to lead the country to agreed presidential and parliamentary elections, to be held on 24 December 2021. These elections will be the first since the civil war between the forces of the Government of National Accord and the Libyan National Army began in 2015. The challenge is the growing risks linked to legal processes, security, and the legitimacy of some leading candidates, among them Dbeibah, Khalifa Haftar and Saif al Islam Muammar al-Qaddafi.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

Sustainability provisions in EU free trade agreements: Review of the European Commission action plan

Publication type Briefing

Date 19-11-2021

Author TITIEVSKAIA Jana

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Asia and Oceania | civil society | climate change policy | cooperation policy | economic geography | economic policy | ECONOMICS | EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS | ENVIRONMENT | environmental policy | EU institutions and European civil service | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | free-trade agreement | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | labour law and labour relations | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | POLITICS | politics and public safety | ratification of an agreement | settlement of disputes | social partners | South Korea | sustainable development | third country | TRADE | trade agreement (EU) | transparency in decision-making

Summary Sustainability-related provisions are a key part of international trade negotiations. Since the free trade agreement (FTA) signed with South Korea in 2009, EU trade deals each include dedicated trade and sustainable development (TSD) chapters encompassing issues such as environment, labour rights, climate change and responsible business conduct. In an effort to step up implementation and enforcement of these chapters, in 2018 the Commission published a non-paper setting out a 15-point action plan. In the new trade strategy, the 2021 Trade Policy Review, the Commission signalled the early launch of a review of the action plan and held an exchange of views with the European Parliament in July 2021. Parliament has long been an advocate for stronger enforcement and implementation of TSD commitments. In the three years since the action plan's launch, the Commission – in cooperation with Member States, EU institutions, stakeholders and international organisations – has advanced on many of the proposed actions. For instance, EU funding was mobilised to support civil society engagement and responsible business conduct. Assertive enforcement of TSD commitments materialised in the form of a concluded dispute with South Korea on labour issues. The establishment of the EU chief trade enforcement officer has strengthened the Commission's enforcement capabilities. Provisions on climate change, including a reference to the Paris Agreement, and widened labour provisions are all part of recent trade negotiations. However, the action suggesting extending the scope of civil society input beyond the TSD chapters to trade agreements as a whole has so far mainly only been reflected in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the United Kingdom. Meanwhile, the objective of early ratification of the fundamental International Labour Organization conventions continues to be challenging with many partner countries.

Briefing [EN](#)

Review of EU Enforcement Regulation for trade disputes

Publication type Briefing

Date 19-03-2021

Author GRIEGER Gisela

Policy area Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council | International Trade

Keyword common commercial policy | cooperation policy | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | international trade | proposal (EU) | regulation (EU) | settlement of disputes | third country | TRADE | trade dispute | trade policy

Summary On 12 December 2019, the European Commission adopted a proposal to amend Regulation (EU) No 654/2014 concerning the exercise of the EU's rights for the application and enforcement of international trade rules ('the Enforcement Regulation') of 15 May 2014. The Enforcement Regulation enables the EU to suspend or withdraw concessions or other obligations under international trade agreements in order to respond to breaches by third countries of international trade rules that affect the EU's commercial interests. The proposed amendments were aimed at empowering the EU to impose counter-measures in situations where EU trade partners violate international trade rules and block the dispute settlement procedures included in multilateral, regional and bilateral trade agreements, thus preventing the EU from obtaining final binding rulings in its favour. - The Council adopted its negotiating position on 8 April 2020, and the Committee on International Trade (INTA) of the European Parliament adopted its position on 6 July 2020. Trilogue negotiations concluded on 28 October with a provisional agreement, which INTA endorsed on 10 November. Parliament adopted the agreed text on 19 January 2021. Following the Council's approval, the Regulation as amended entered into force on 13 February 2021. Third edition. The 'EU Legislation in Progress' briefings are updated at key stages throughout the legislative procedure.

Briefing [EN](#)

Enforcement Regulation review

Publication type At a Glance

Date 13-01-2021

Author GRIEGER Gisela

Policy area International Trade

Keyword common commercial policy | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | intellectual property | international law | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | international trade | international trade law | LAW | PRODUCTION, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH | proposal (EU) | regulation (EU) | research and intellectual property | settlement of disputes | TRADE | trade agreement (EU) | trade dispute | trade policy | world organisations | World Trade Organisation

Summary The blockage, since December 2019, of the Appellate Body of the Dispute Settlement Body of the World Trade Organization (WTO) creates legal gaps for the enforcement of international trade rules. To bridge these gaps, the European Commission proposed to broaden the scope of Regulation (EU) No 654/2014 concerning the exercise of the EU's rights for the application and enforcement of international trade rules ('the Enforcement Regulation'). The European Parliament is scheduled to vote at first reading during the January plenary session on the text agreed in trilogue with the Council.

At a Glance [DE](#), [EN](#), [ES](#), [FR](#), [IT](#), [PL](#)

EU-US dispute over civil aircraft subsidies

Publication type At a Glance

Date 17-11-2020

Author TITIEVSKAIA Jana

Policy area International Trade

Keyword aeronautical industry | air and space transport | aircraft | America | economic geography | economic policy | ECONOMICS | GEOGRAPHY | INDUSTRY | international dispute | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | international trade | mechanical engineering | political geography | settlement of disputes | State aid | tariff barrier | TRADE | trade dispute | TRANSPORT | United States | world organisations | World Trade Organisation

Summary Since the 1980s onset of intensified sales competition between American and European civil aircraft manufacturers, aircraft trade has been a point of contention in transatlantic trade. Between 1992 and 2004, the Bilateral Agreement on Trade in Large Civil Aircraft regulated the permitted levels of support to aircraft manufacturers. In 2003, Europe's Airbus sold more large civil aircraft than United States-owned Boeing for the first time. The following year, the USA renounced the agreement and launched a World Trade Organization (WTO) case over State aid given to Airbus. The European Union filed a parallel case against US subsidies to Boeing. Following a long-standing dispute, the WTO authorised US imposition of countermeasures worth nearly US\$7.5 billion in 2019. In October 2020, in a mirror case brought by the EU against the US subsidies to Boeing, the EU was authorised to impose retaliatory tariffs. On 9 November, the EU imposed these tariffs, on US\$4 billion worth of US aircraft, food and drink production. In addition to the tariffs, the aviation industry has been hard-hit by the coronavirus crisis. Joe Biden's success in the recent Presidential election strengthens hopes for a negotiated solution to the dispute.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

US 'Peace Plan' for the Middle East

Publication type At a Glance

Date 07-02-2020

Author IMMENKAMP Beatrix

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword America | Asia and Oceania | economic geography | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Israel | Palestine | Palestine question | peaceful co-existence | political geography | settlement of disputes | United States

Summary On 28 January 2020, United States President Donald Trump released his administration's 'vision for Israeli-Palestinian peace'. The White House Plan, coupled with earlier Trump administration moves, marks a distinct departure from past US policy on the Middle East Peace Process. Key elements are illegal under international law, as they advocate the annexation of occupied territory. Israeli leaders have welcomed the plan, seen as meeting Israel's key demands. The leadership of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Hamas have been united in rejecting the proposal, and the PA has since cut ties with Israel and the USA. The plan is meant to serve as the basis for future direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, to stretch over four years. However, the Israeli government has announced plans to implement parts of it unilaterally in the near future.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

Escalating US-Iran conflict: The EU's priorities

Publication type At a Glance

Date 16-01-2020

Author IMMENKAMP Beatrix

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword America | Asia and Oceania | economic geography | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | international dispute | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international sanctions | international security | Iran | Iraq | military intervention | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | settlement of disputes | terrorism | United States

Summary On 3 January 2020, a United States (US) strike outside Baghdad killed Iranian General Qasem Soleimani, the leader of the al-Qods force within the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IGRC), and arguably the second most important man in Iran after Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The assassination was a reaction to an escalation in the growing conflict between the USA and Iran. Iran retaliated on 8 January 2020, by attacking two US bases in Iraq with missiles; luckily – or intentionally – without casualties. Although both the USA and Iran have refrained from any further action, few expect this to mark the end of tensions between the USA and Iran in the region. The EU reaction to the assassination has been to try to de-escalate the situation to prevent all-out war, to focus on stabilising Iraq, and to limit damage to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[Peace and Security in 2019: Evaluating EU efforts to support peace in Colombia](#)

Publication type Study

Date 03-06-2019

Author IOANNIDES Isabelle

Policy area Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights | International Trade | Security and Defence

Keyword America | Colombia | economic geography | economic policy | ECONOMICS | EU aid | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | peacekeeping | political geography | settlement of disputes

Summary This second thematic study in the Peace and Security series focuses on European Union (EU) peace support efforts in Colombia. The series will make an annual evaluation of EU performance in the field of peace and security in a specific geographical region. This study evaluates EU engagement during the 50-year conflict in Colombia, and focuses on peacebuilding since the historic 2016 final agreement between the government and the main armed group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC-EP). This is a country where the EU has mobilised a large spectrum of civilian instruments: bilateral and multilateral diplomacy; humanitarian and development aid; and trade relations. After placing the conflict in its geopolitical context, this evaluation analyses the EU approach to and implementation of support to peace in Colombia, the European Parliament's contribution, risks since the signature of the peace agreement, and ways to mitigate them. A parallel study, published separately, provides an overview of current EU action on peace and security and introduces the 2019 Normandy Index. The studies have been drafted with a view to their presentation at the Normandy World Peace Forum, in June 2019.

Study [EN](#), [ES](#), [FR](#)

[Women's role in peace processes](#)

Publication type Study

Date 15-05-2019

External author Dr. Christina BACHE, London School of Economics and Political Science, IDEAS

Policy area Evaluation of Law and Policy in Practice | Gender Issues, Equality and Diversity

Keyword demography and population | employment | EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS | female work | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | peacekeeping | position of women | settlement of disputes | social affairs | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | war | woman

Summary This study, commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the FEMM Committee, aims to provide insight on the meaningful inclusion of women - where women have decision-making authority - in peace and transition processes. Inclusive peace frameworks not only better reflect the diversity of society, they increase the durability and the quality of peace. Yet, awarding decision-making authority to those waging the war and not to those waging the peace remains a reoccurring theme in most armed conflict situations. The study presents available data on fragility and armed conflict and takes stock of the global arms trade. It examines progress on the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions. It assesses global commitments, European Union application of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, National Action Plans and global peace and security indicators. The study explores women's participation across the peace-making landscape, including peace and transition processes. Moreover, an evaluation of the factors that enhance and constrain women's meaningful participation in peace-making is put forward. The study highlights the impact of war on women and children and draws attention to the engagement of women across the peace-making landscape in two case studies, Rwanda and Syria. Lastly, the study provides recommendations to achieve sustainable peace and transform global power dynamics that currently favour traditional security perspectives.

Study [EN](#)

[EU-Armenia people-to-people contacts](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 29-03-2019

Author PERCHOC Philippe

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Armenia | civil society | Eastern Partnership | economic policy | ECONOMICS | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | EU aid | EU visa policy | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | Framework Programme for Research and Development | freedom of assembly | fundamental rights | GEOGRAPHY | human rights | international law | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | organisation of teaching | OSCE | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | PRODUCTION, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH | research and intellectual property | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes | student mobility | world organisations

Summary EU-Armenia relations have recently been strengthened through the two parties' comprehensive and enhanced partnership agreement (CEPA), applied provisionally since June 2018. This instrument, along with additional frameworks – an association agreement, the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership – promotes enhanced people-to-people contacts between the EU and Armenia.

At a Glance [EN](#)

[EU-Azerbaijan people-to-people contacts](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 19-03-2019

Author PERCHOC Philippe

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Armenia | Azerbaijan | civil society | corruption | criminal law | Eastern Partnership | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | EU visa policy | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | fundamental rights | GEOGRAPHY | human rights | international law | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | non-governmental organisation | non-governmental organisations | organisation of teaching | political geography | political prisoner | POLITICS | politics and public safety | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes | student mobility

Summary The European Union and Azerbaijan are negotiating a comprehensive agreement in order to reinforce their partnership. Even if Azerbaijan is geographically the most distant Eastern Partnership country, the EU remains its main trading partner. In 2019, the EU and Azerbaijan will celebrate the 20th anniversary since their partnership and cooperation agreement (PCA) entered into force in 1999. In recent years, EU support for civil society in Azerbaijan has been made more difficult by a new legal framework against foreign-funded NGOs.

At a Glance [EN](#)

[Expedited settlement of commercial disputes](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 05-12-2018

Author MANKO Rafał

Policy area EU Law: Legal System and Acts

Keyword civil procedure | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | justice | LAW | settlement of disputes | TRADE | trade dispute

Summary The value of cross-border civil litigation is estimated at €7.7 billion annually. However, enforcing cross-border commercial contracts in national courts is cumbersome due to often protracted civil proceedings and divergences in national procedural rules. The Legal Affairs Committee suggests to remedy this by creating a European expedited civil procedure, and possibly even establishing a European commercial court. The committee's legislative-initiative report is due to be debated during the December plenary session.

At a Glance [DE](#), [EN](#), [ES](#), [FR](#), [IT](#), [PL](#)

[COLLECTIVE REDRESS IN THE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION](#)

Publication type Study

Date 03-10-2018

External author Rafael AMARO, Associate Professor at the University Paris-Descartes, France
Maria José AZAR-BAUD, Associate Professor at Paris-Sud University, France
Sabine CORNELOUP, Professor at the University Paris II Panthéon-Assas, France
Bénédicte FAUVARQUE-COSSON, Professor at the University Paris II Panthéon-Assas, France
Fabienne JAULT-SESEKE, Professor at the University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, France

Policy area Private international law and judicial cooperation in civil matters

Keyword alternative dispute resolution | collective interest | communications | economic geography | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | EU Member State | GEOGRAPHY | harmonisation of standards | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | justice | LAW | legal action | PRODUCTION, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH | public consultation | right of action | settlement of disputes | technology and technical regulations | TRADE | trade dispute

Summary This study, commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the Committee on Legal Affairs, aims to assess the current state of play of collective redress at national and European levels, evaluate the opportunity of a European intervention in the matter and provide the European Parliament with concrete recommendations. Both the assessment and the recommendations have been drafted keeping in mind the essential issue raised by collective redress: access to justice. This principle, which is essential in a Union enforcing the rule of law, is currently challenged by the existing divergences. As such the creation of harmonised collective redress mechanism is becoming an increasingly pressing matter.

Study [EN](#)

Executive summary [DE](#), [FR](#)

[The Institutional Consequences of a 'Bespoke' Agreement with the UK based on a 'Distant' Cooperation Model](#)

Publication type Study

Date 04-07-2018

External author Franklin DEHOUSSE, Professor of International Economic Law, University of Liège

Policy area EU Law: Legal System and Acts | Internal Market and Customs Union | International Trade | Private international law and judicial cooperation in civil matters

Keyword bilateral relations | cooperation policy | economic geography | EU Member State | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | executive power and public service | GEOGRAPHY | governance | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | judicial cooperation | market access | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | political geography | POLITICS | settlement of disputes | third country | TRADE | trade agreement (EU) | trade policy | United Kingdom | withdrawal from the EU

Summary TThis in-depth analysis, commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the AFCO Committee, examines the impact for the European Union's legal system and institutions of a "bespoke" agreement based on a "distant" cooperation model (with the EU/Ukraine and the EU/Canada agreements as main illustrations). The analysis of these agreements' main characteristics reveals that even "distant" cooperation already has quite impressive consequences. These should be better taken into consideration in the present Brexit negotiation.

[Study](#) [EN](#)

[Policy Departments' Monthly Highlights - July 2018](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 02-07-2018

Policy area Budgetary Control | Culture | Economics and Monetary Issues | Education | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence

Keyword activity report | Asia and Oceania | documentation | economic geography | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | employment | EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS | EU institutions and European civil service | EU programme | Europe | European construction | European Parliament | EUROPEAN UNION | FINANCE | financial legislation | free movement of capital | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Ireland | Japan | job creation | Northern Ireland | political geography | PRODUCTION, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH | regions of EU Member States | research and intellectual property | settlement of disputes | think tank | United Kingdom | withdrawal from the EU

Summary The Monthly Highlights publication provides an overview, at a glance, of the on-going work of the policy departments, including a selection of the latest and forthcoming publications, and a list of future events.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[Multilateral court for the settlement of investment disputes](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 24-11-2017

Author TUOMINEN ULLA-MARI

Policy area International Trade

Keyword common commercial policy | direct investment | economic analysis | ECONOMICS | FINANCE | financing and investment | foreign investment | impact study | international affairs | international convention | international court | international investment | international negotiations | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | LAW | multilateral relations | organisation of the legal system | settlement of disputes | TRADE | trade dispute | trade policy

Summary This note seeks to provide an initial analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the European Commission's Impact Assessment (IA) accompanying the above recommendation, submitted on 13 September 2017 and referred to Parliament's Committee on International Trade. The recommendation aims to pave the way for the creation of a framework for the resolution of international investment disputes. The IA notes that foreign investors and host countries have settled their investment disputes through the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS, ad hoc arbitration) since the 1950s. In recent years, concerns have been voiced about the ISDS, in particular in the context of the negotiation processes of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) (EU-USA) and of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) (EU-Canada). Based on the results of the public consultation carried out in 2014, the European Commission presented a plan in May 2015 to reform the investment resolution system. It comprises, as a first step, an institutionalised court system (Investment Court System, ICS) for future EU trade and investment agreements and, as a second step, the establishment of an 'international investment Court'. According to the IA report, 'since 2016 the Commission has actively engaged with a large number of partner countries both at a technical and political level to further the reform of the ISDS system and to build a consensus for the initiative of a permanent multilateral investment Court' (IA, p. 6). In its resolutions of 8 July 2015 on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and of 6 April 2011 on the future European international investment policy, Parliament noted the need to reform the investment dispute settlement mechanism. In its resolution of 5 July 2016 on the future strategy for trade and investment, it supported the aim of creating a 'multilateral solution to investment disputes'.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

The EU's new approach to funding peace and security

Publication type Briefing

Date 22-11-2017

Author IMMENKAMP Beatrix

Policy area Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Security and Defence

Keyword amendment of a law | conflict prevention | cooperation policy | development aid | establishment of peace | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | foreign policy | international cooperation | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international security | military cooperation | ordinary legislative procedure | parliamentary proceedings | peacekeeping | POLITICS | proposal (EU) | regulation (EU) | settlement of disputes

Summary The link between security, peace and development is recognised by both security and development communities. However, the practical implications of this nexus still pose challenges – especially in the light of a rapidly evolving security environment. While the EU's assistance for peace and security comes in different forms – for instance through budgetary support or under common security and defence policy – the existing rules of financing under the EU budget exclude activities aimed at enhancing cooperation with the defence sector and the military in third countries. The proposed amendment to Regulation (EU) No 230/2014 of 11 March 2014 establishing the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) aims to remedy this situation by creating the conditions to allow EU budgetary support for capacitybuilding programmes in third countries aimed at training and mentoring, the provision of non-lethal equipment and assistance with infrastructure improvements, and help with strengthening the capacity of military actors in order to contribute to the achievement of peaceful and inclusive societies and sustainable development. Fifth edition. The 'EU Legislation in Progress' briefings are updated at key stages throughout the legislative procedure. Please note this document has been designed for on-line viewing.

Briefing [EN](#)

The settlement of disputes arising from the United Kingdom's Withdrawal from the European Union

Publication type Study

Date 17-11-2017

External author Antonio Francisco FERNÁNDEZ TOMÁS

Policy area Democracy | EU Democracy, Institutional and Parliamentary Law | EU Law: Legal System and Acts | Human Rights | Transposition and Implementation of Law

Keyword Asia and Oceania | association agreement (EU) | cooperation policy | court of arbitration | Court of Justice of the European Union | economic geography | EU institutions and European civil service | EU Member State | Europe | European construction | European Economic Area | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | GEOGRAPHY | international arbitration | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | international trade | LAW | opinion of the Court of Justice (EU) | organisation of the legal system | political geography | powers of the institutions (EU) | settlement of disputes | third country | TRADE | Türkiye | United Kingdom | withdrawal from the EU | world organisations | World Trade Organisation

Summary This study, commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the AFCO Committee, analyses the various jurisdiction options, under EU law and under public international law, in settling disputes arising from the Withdrawal Agreement of the UK from the EU and in the context of the Future Relationship Agreement with the UK. It examines in particular the continued involvement of the CJEU in the new context of the EU-UK relations and, based on CJEU case-law and previous international agreements, presents the various governance possibilities for these agreements.

Study [EN](#)

Workshop: Sectarianism in the Middle East

Publication type In-Depth Analysis

Date 14-07-2017

External author Dr Toby MATTHIESEN, St Antony's College, Oxford University, Dr Simon MABON, Lancaster University ; Dr Renad MANSOUR, Chatham House, Dr Raphael LEFÈVRE, Oxford University

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Human Rights | Security and Defence

Keyword Arab world | Asia and Oceania | civil war | common foreign and security policy | contemporary history | economic geography | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | executive power and public service | GEOGRAPHY | geopolitics | governance | humanities | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Iran | Iraq | LAW | political framework | political geography | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | regional security | religious conflict | religious discrimination | rights and freedoms | rule of law | Saudi Arabia | SCIENCE | settlement of disputes | state-building | Syria | the EU's international role

Summary Sectarian conflict and polarisation has become a key feature of Middle East politics in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings of 2011. This workshop looked at some of the key drivers of this, such as the troubled legacy of foreign intervention, state failure, regional rivalries between Saudi Arabia, Iran and others, ruling strategies of authoritarian regimes as well as the spread of identity and sect-based political movements. With in-depth analysis of the two key arenas of sectarian conflict in the contemporary Middle East, Syria and Iraq, and a paper on the consequences of state collapse, this publication looks also tries to make recommendations how the EU could help reduce sectarian tensions.

In-Depth Analysis [EN](#)

[The Berlin Process and the Trieste summit 2017](#)

Publication type [At a Glance](#)

Date 11-07-2017

Author LILYANOVA Velina

Policy area [Foreign Affairs](#)

Keyword [civil society](#) | [economic geography](#) | [economic integration](#) | [economic policy](#) | [ECONOMICS](#) | [ENERGY](#) | [energy policy](#) | [energy policy](#) | [enlargement of the Union](#) | [European construction](#) | [EUROPEAN UNION](#) | [GEOGRAPHY](#) | [international affairs](#) | [international agreement](#) | [INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS](#) | [international security](#) | [organisation of transport](#) | [POLITICS](#) | [politics and public safety](#) | [settlement of disputes](#) | [social affairs](#) | [SOCIAL QUESTIONS](#) | [structural adjustment](#) | [summit meeting](#) | [TRANSPORT](#) | [transport network](#) | [Western Balkans](#) | [youth policy](#)

Summary On 12 July 2017, Italy will host the fourth Western Balkan summit of the Berlin Process in Trieste, a city that symbolically links the EU and the Western Balkans. Several EU Member States and the region's six countries will review current progress and discuss a broad agenda in an attempt to go further with regional cooperation, increase coherence and deepen economic integration.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[Understanding the OECD tax plan to address 'base erosion and profit shifting' – BEPS](#)

Publication type [Briefing](#)

Date 29-06-2017

Author REMEUR Cécile

Policy area [Economics and Monetary Issues](#) | [Financial and Banking Issues](#) | [Taxation](#)

Keyword [BUSINESS AND COMPETITION](#) | [business organisation](#) | [company structure](#) | [European tax cooperation](#) | [FINANCE](#) | [international affairs](#) | [INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS](#) | [international relations](#) | [INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS](#) | [international security](#) | [OECD](#) | [settlement of disputes](#) | [tax authorities](#) | [tax avoidance](#) | [tax collection](#) | [tax incentive](#) | [tax law](#) | [taxable income](#) | [taxation](#) | [world organisations](#)

Summary Action to fight corporate tax avoidance has been deemed necessary in the OECD forum, with further impetus from the G20/OECD 'Base erosion and profit shifting' action plan (known as BEPS), initiated in 2013. The BEPS action plan has 15 actions, covering elements used in corporate tax-avoidance practices and aggressive tax-planning schemes and was endorsed in 2015. The 15 BEPS final reports are generally seen as a step in the fight against corporate tax avoidance. The action against BEPS is designed to be flexible, as a consequence of its adoption by consensus. Recommendations made in BEPS reports range from minimum standards to guidelines, and also putting in place an instrument to modify the provisions of tax treaties related to BEPS practices. Implementation is under way, and the follow-up and future of work to tackle BEPS is organised so as to provide a more inclusive framework able to involve more countries and build on cooperation between international organisations. Putting BEPS actions in place is progressing, in particular with the finalisation of the multilateral instrument aimed at implementing treaty changes envisaged in the BEPS actions. Similarly, progress is being made with regard to the implementation of the BEPS four minimum standards, and documents are being developed to support the implementation of measures addressing BEPS in lower capacity developing countries. A table noting the different fora and their participants is annexed to the briefing. This briefing updates an earlier edition, PE 580.911, of April 2016 (except the part on 'EU policy: How BEPS actions are translated' which is the subject of a forthcoming briefing).

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

[Nuclear Proliferation in North East Asia](#)

Publication type [Study](#)

Date 23-03-2017

External author Benjamin HAUTECOUVERTURE (Fondation pour la Recherche Strategique - FRS, Paris, France)

Policy area [Foreign Affairs](#) | [Security and Defence](#)

Keyword [America](#) | [arms policy](#) | [Asia and Oceania](#) | [ballistic missile](#) | [China](#) | [cooperation policy](#) | [defence](#) | [economic geography](#) | [electrical and nuclear industries](#) | [ENERGY](#) | [European construction](#) | [EUROPEAN UNION](#) | [foreign policy](#) | [GEOGRAPHY](#) | [international affairs](#) | [INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS](#) | [international sanctions](#) | [international security](#) | [military cooperation](#) | [North Korea](#) | [nuclear non-proliferation](#) | [nuclear test](#) | [nuclear weapon](#) | [political geography](#) | [regional security](#) | [settlement of disputes](#) | [South Korea](#) | [the EU's international role](#) | [United States](#)

Summary The nuclear dimension of the crisis in the Korean peninsula has been compounded since the end of the Cold war, particularly since the North Korean regime announced its withdrawal from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in January 2003. The nuclear and ballistic programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) have dangerously improved since the beginning of the decade and seem to have accelerated since 2014 in spite of the continuous strengthening of the international sanctions regime against Pyongyang's Weapons of Mass Destruction programmes. Accordingly, tensions have risen dramatically in the Korean peninsula. In the current context, the resumption of the six-party talks – deadlocked since the spring of 2007 - remains very hypothetical. It is clearly dependent on a change of attitude on Pyongyang's part, something hardly predictable. Even if 'strategic patience' towards North Korea has been challenged for some time, it may be that there is no better alternative to this policy. Comprehensively conceived, it should be understood as a strong policy of containment of the North Korean nuclear crisis in order to make possible the return of Pyongyang to negotiations. As a subsidiary issue, it could be asked whether the EU could play a renewed role as regards to nuclear and ballistic proliferation in North East Asia.

[Study](#) [EN](#)

Syria: Stalled Peace Process and Blocked Humanitarian Access

Publication type [Briefing](#)

Date 24-11-2016

Author JONGBERG Kirsten | LERCH Marika | TROSZCZYNSKA VAN GENDEREN Wanda

Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Global Governance

Keyword armed forces | Asia and Oceania | civil war | common foreign and security policy | cooperation policy | culture and religion | defence | economic geography | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | humanitarian aid | international human rights law | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Islam | LAW | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | religious fundamentalism | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | Syria | the EU's international role | UN Security Council | United Nations | war damage | war victim

Summary Amid stalled peace talks and a worsening humanitarian situation, the EU is working alongside the UN Special Envoy for Syria to engage key regional and international players and broker a return to the negotiating table. In parallel, an EU emergency humanitarian initiative for Aleppo has been launched to attempt to break the deadlock over humanitarian access and deliver aid to some of the 275 000 people in Aleppo and 13.5 million people across the country who are in desperate need of assistance.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

Does the EU Have the Right Instruments to Finance Assistance in Protracted Crises and the Needs of Upper Middle Income Countries?

Publication type [Study](#)

Date 14-11-2016

External author Matthieu BURNAY (University of Leuven, Belgium), Matthias DENECKERE (European Centre for Development Policy Management, Maastricht, the Netherlands), Kolja RAUBE (University of Leuven, Belgium) and Volker HAUCK (European Centre for Development Policy Management, Maastricht, the Netherlands)

Policy area Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Global Governance | Human Rights

Keyword aid system | common foreign and security policy | cooperation policy | development policy | economic conditions | economic development | economic policy | ECONOMICS | EDF | EU finance | EU financial instrument | European construction | European neighbourhood policy | EUROPEAN UNION | humanitarian aid | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | pre-accession aid | settlement of disputes

Summary This study pays critical attention to two specific issue areas, which the financing instruments ought to be concerned with: First, the EU has developed tools and instruments to react to and prevent 'protracted crises'. The results of this study show that the current set of instruments forms a good basis to the challenges associated with protracted crisis. In fact, no new instrument is needed to specifically address protracted crises. However, the operationalisation of instruments should be optimised. There is a clear need to find more sophisticated approaches that can establish a more holistic response to the various dimensions of protracted crises throughout the conflict cycle. In light of this, substantial improvements should be made to the responsiveness, flexibility, coherence and complementarity of the EU response in support of resilience. A critical point is that better incentives should be provided for long-term instruments to flexibly engage in protracted crises, including through support to peacebuilding, conflict prevention, post-crisis reconstruction and resilience. Second, the study focuses on the specific case of Upper Middle Income Countries (UMICs). The study acknowledges the importance and relevance of the 'differentiated approach' while also identifying some of the many problems which concern UMICs: first, the study shows that the Partnership Instrument has so far mainly targeted EU Strategic Partners, while thematic and regional programmes of the DCI hardly fill in the gap left following the graduation of some countries from bilateral aid programmes. The analysis also notes that exceptions which have been granted to some UMICs are strongly problematic. The analysis, however, also points to the fact that the question remains whether these exceptions will be extended to the period 2017-2020. While there is a clear need for a better coherence and coordination, the study argues that there is currently no need for the creation of a new instrument which would exclusively target UMICs.

[Study](#) [EN](#)

The Conflict in Yemen: Latest Developments

Publication type [In-Depth Analysis](#)

Date 24-10-2016

Author JONGBERG Kirsten

Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence

Keyword arms trade | Asia and Oceania | civil war | common foreign and security policy | cooperation policy | defence | economic geography | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | export restriction | GEOGRAPHY | humanitarian aid | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | Iran | LAW | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | regional security | religious conflict | rights and freedoms | Saudi Arabia | settlement of disputes | the EU's international role | TRADE | Yemen

Summary The Yemen conflict has deteriorated since 2015 despite repeated rounds of peace negotiations. The most recent round of UN-led Talks ended in August 2016 with no agreement. The conflict is in danger of escalating beyond Yemen's borders with frequent Houthi incursions into Saudi Arabia, foreign ships being targeted by missiles from Houthi-controlled areas near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait – a major international trade route – and Saudi Arabia and Iran siding with opposite sides in the conflict. The latest 72-hour cease-fire starting 20 October was not renewed when it ended on 22 October. The cease-fire did, however, allow humanitarian aid agencies to step in to start to provide assistance to some of the 21.2 million people across the country who are in need of humanitarian aid. UN OCHA has estimated it needs USD 1.63 billion for its Yemen humanitarian response plan, but it has only received pledges for 47 % of that amount so far. The EU has recently announced a further EUR 40 million for the fund, taking the total EU pledge to EUR 120 million. The European Parliament has called for an EU arms embargo on Saudi Arabia, which is responsible for the majority of the destruction of civilian infrastructure.

[In-Depth Analysis](#) [EN](#)

The Western Balkans' Berlin process: A new impulse for regional cooperation

Publication type Briefing

Date 04-07-2016

Author LILYANOVA Velina

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword civil society | culture and religion | economic geography | economic integration | economic policy | ECONOMICS | education | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | educational exchange | ENERGY | energy grid | energy policy | EU finance | EU financing | European construction | European integration | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | POLITICS | politics and public safety | pre-accession aid | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | summit meeting | TRANSPORT | transport infrastructure | transport policy | Western Balkans | youth exchange scheme

Summary The six Western Balkan countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia – are united by the common goal of joining the EU. However, they still face divisions, both infrastructural and political, and are confronted, among other things, by a dire economic situation and bilateral disputes and instability. In 2014, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker announced a five-year halt on enlargement. This distancing of the membership prospects, coupled with the realisation that achieving long-term stability and transforming the region could best be secured through economic growth and increased regional cooperation, led to the so-called 'Berlin process'. Consisting of yearly high-level meetings between the six Western Balkan governments and several EU Member States between 2014 and 2018, this process aims to reaffirm the region's EU perspective by improving cooperation and economic stability within it. Connectivity is an important aspect of this process, with investment in infrastructure being seen as a means for creating jobs, business opportunities and other benefits. Creating high-level political connections, reconciling societies by stimulating youth exchange and education projects, and resolving outstanding bilateral disputes, while ensuring civil society participation in the whole process, are other significant aspects of this initiative. The Berlin process enjoys the support of the region and the EU alike, as an initiative bringing a new perspective and impetus to the enlargement process. It has brought a positive momentum for regional cooperation, notably through its projects which are expected to have an economic and social impact that will complement the EU membership ambitions of the individual countries.

Briefing [EN](#)

Public expectations and EU policies - Promotion of democracy and peace in the world

Publication type Briefing

Date 30-06-2016

Author DOBREVA Alina | SGUEO Gianluca | ZAMFIR Ionel

Policy area Democracy

Keyword conflict prevention | cooperation policy | democracy | development aid | EDF | election monitoring | electoral procedure and voting | EU budget | EU competence | EU finance | EU financing | European construction | European neighbourhood policy | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | human rights | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | opinion poll | political framework | POLITICS | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | terms for aid | the EU's international role

Summary According to a new Eurobarometer survey, two thirds of European Union citizens would like to see even stronger EU involvement in the promotion of democracy and peace in the world. Democracy and peace are the fundamental values on which the EU is based and the guiding principles for its external action. The EU has at its disposal a vast array of tools to promote democracy and peace in the world, including its own diplomatic body, development aid and trade conditionality that it can leverage to this purpose. The EU finances a variety of actions that directly or indirectly promote democracy, such as support for governance, elections, civil society and free media, while a specific instrument is dedicated to peace and stability.

Briefing [EN](#)

Public expectations and EU policies - Security and defence policy

Publication type Briefing

Date 30-06-2016

Author DOBREVA Alina | GROSEK Kristina | PAWLAK Patryk

Policy area Security and Defence

Keyword common security and defence policy | conflict prevention | EU budget | EU finance | EU financing | EU situation | European construction | European security | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | legal basis | mutual assistance | opinion poll | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | the EU's international role

Summary Decisions on security and defence policy are, most of the time, taken by the EU-28's national governments and usually without public scrutiny. Yet, almost two thirds of EU citizens would like the EU to intervene in this policy area more than it does at present. Since the introduction of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in the Treaty of Maastricht, the EU has made substantial progress in assuming its role as a regional security provider. Although significantly strengthened by the Treaty of Lisbon, this policy area continues to be hampered by the Member States' lack of will to make better use of the existing legal framework, and by inadequate funding mechanisms.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Nagorno-Karabakh: Unstable frozen conflict](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 21-06-2016

Author PERCHOC Philippe

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Armenia | Azerbaijan | economic geography | Europe | European construction | European neighbourhood policy | EUROPEAN UNION | foreign policy | GEOGRAPHY | geopolitics | humanities | international issue | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | political geography | regional security | Russia | SCIENCE | settlement of disputes | the EU's international role | war of independence

Summary For more than 20 years, this frozen conflict has opposed Azerbaijan on the one side and the self-proclaimed Nagorno-Karabakh authorities and Armenia on the other side. The Nagorno-Karabakh enclave in Azerbaijan, mainly populated by Armenians, declared its independence in September 1991. The non-recognition by Azerbaijan of this proclamation prompted a full-scale military conflict resulting in the de facto autonomy of Nagorno-Karabakh and the occupation of seven Azerbaijani districts after the 1994 ceasefire. The conflict has remained highly unstable since then because it is part of a complex regional 'game' between Turkey and Russia. The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by France, the United States and Russia, remains the main forum in which to settle the conflict. Nevertheless, it has failed up to now to find a global peace agreement. Periodically, the situation on the ground becomes alarming, as it did in April 2016 when the conflict restarted, with dozens of people killed on both sides. Since 1994, the EU is mainly implicated in the process through the participation of France in the Minsk Group. The EU's offers of association agreements to both Armenia and Azerbaijan have not made any progress so far. The EU's leverage in the conflict has therefore been limited.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

[Syria: Turning commitments into action](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 13-06-2016

Author PAWLAK Patryk

Policy area Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs

Keyword aid to refugees | Asia and Oceania | civil war | civilian victim | cooperation policy | culture and religion | economic geography | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | forced migration | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | migration | military intervention | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | religious fundamentalism | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | Syria | terrorism | the EU's international role | UN resolution | war crime

Summary What started as local anti-government protests in the city of Daraa in 2011 quickly evolved into a popular uprising. The conflict has since cost the lives of 470 000 people and resulted in the displacement of almost 11 million. This is no longer a revolution but an internationalised conflict hijacked by big-power politics, and Syrians and their neighbouring countries are paying the price.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[Building resilience in the EU's east: Transition as challenge](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 10-05-2016

Author PERCHOC Philippe

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Armenia | asymmetric warfare | Azerbaijan | Belarus | Eastern Partnership | economic geography | ENERGY | energy policy | Europe | European construction | European neighbourhood policy | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | Georgia | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Moldova | political geography | Russia | self-sufficiency in energy | settlement of disputes | territorial dispute | the EU's international role | Ukraine

Summary The EU's Eastern Neighbourhood is struggling with territorial conflicts and an unsteady transition to stable, independent democracies. EU strategy in the east should reflect this multi-faceted challenge.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[Iraq-Iran relations following the nuclear deal](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 09-05-2016

Author IMMENKAMP Beatrix

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword America | Asia and Oceania | culture and religion | economic conditions | economic geography | economic situation | ECONOMICS | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Iran | Iraq | Islam | Middle East | nuclear non-proliferation | political geography | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | religious sect | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | terrorism | trade | TRADE | trade volume | United States

Summary Critics of the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran have warned that Iran would use any financial benefits to further strengthen its influence in the region, by supporting its allies, which include important Shia militias in Iraq. While the nuclear deal has yet to translate into major economic and financial benefits for Iran, any requests for extra resources to support foreign allies will also have to compete with the Iranian government's many other – domestic – priorities. Moreover, the potential long-term effects of the nuclear deal on the funding of Iran's allies in Iraq will depend on many other factors, including the domestic situation in Iraq and Iran and developments in Syria. It is certain, however, that Iran will continue to pursue its strategic economic interests in Iraq.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

EYE 2016 – Europe – global player for peace?

Publication type At a Glance

Date 28-04-2016

Author LAZAROU Eleni

Policy area Security and Defence

Keyword common foreign and security policy | common security and defence policy | cooperation policy | democratisation | development aid | EU institutions and European civil service | European construction | European External Action Service | European security | EUROPEAN UNION | executive power and public service | honour | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | pacifism | peacekeeping | POLITICS | politics and public safety | promotion of the European idea | settlement of disputes | social affairs | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | the EU's international role

Summary The promotion of peace, human rights, security and stability is a fundamental pillar of the EU's engagement with the world. The pursuit of these goals at global level is carried out through the EU's external policies and has been reinforced by the Lisbon Treaty, which created the EU's own diplomatic body and strengthened the position of High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy, thus enabling the current 28 Member States greater opportunity to speak with one voice. This note has been prepared for the European Youth Event, taking place in Strasbourg in May 2016. Please click here for the full publication in PDF format

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

The Frozen Conflicts of the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood and Their Impact on the Respect of Human Rights

Publication type Study

Date 08-04-2016

External author Andras RACZ (Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Finland)

Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Democracy | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights | Security and Defence

Keyword access to the courts | autonomous movement | Azerbaijan | civil society | Council of Europe | economic geography | ethnic group | Europe | European construction | European neighbourhood policy | European organisations | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | Georgia | human rights | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | justice | LAW | legal profession | Moldova | occupied territory | organisation of the legal system | OSCE | political geography | political violence | POLITICS | politics and public safety | regional security | rights and freedoms | Russia | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | territorial dispute | the EU's international role | Ukraine | world organisations

Summary The present study provides a detailed overview of the actual human rights situation in the frozen conflict regions of EU's Eastern neighbourhood, namely in Crimea, Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh. The focus of the analysis is on the access to the justice system, as well as on the abilities of the de jure or de facto authorities to administer justice. Particular attention is paid to Crimea because the rapidly worsening human rights situation there affects far more people than the population of the other four frozen conflicts combined. International community actions, as well as the role of civil society in protecting human rights are also analysed.

[Study](#) [EN](#)

Serbia and Kosovo: Normalisation of relations

Publication type At a Glance

Date 09-03-2016

Author LILYANOVA Velina

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword accession negotiations | autonomous movement | economic geography | ethnic discrimination | ethnic group | EU institutions and European civil service | EU Member State | Europe | European construction | European External Action Service | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Kosovo | Kosovo question | LAW | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | recognition of a state | rights and freedoms | Serbia | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | stabilisation and association agreement | Yugoslavia

Summary Resolving their deep-seated rivalries has been one of the conditions placed on Serbia and Kosovo for achieving their shared goal of EU entry. Since 2011, an EU-mediated dialogue has sought to strike a balance between their past conflicts and present aspirations. Although tensions persist, the goal is to translate the deals signed by both sides into reality, and to keep their dialogue going.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[FYR Macedonia: A 'conditional' recommendation](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 02-03-2016

Author LILYANOVA Velina

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword accession to the European Union | civil society | corruption | criminal law | democratisation | economic geography | economic structure | ECONOMICS | Europe | European construction | European integration | EUROPEAN UNION | executive power and public service | GEOGRAPHY | Greece | human rights | independence of the judiciary | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | North Macedonia | organisation of the legal system | political crisis | political framework | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | rights and freedoms | rule of law | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | socioeconomic conditions | transition economy

Summary The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is facing its 'most severe political crisis since 2001' and is preparing for snap elections on 5 June 2016. The Commission made its seventh recommendation for the beginning of accession talks, 'conditional' on the implementation of a 2015 EU-brokered political agreement between the main parties, expected to ensure free and fair elections.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[Security in Afghanistan: Unfinished business](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 25-02-2016

Author PAWLAK Patryk

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence

Keyword Afghanistan | Asia and Oceania | border control | cooperation agreement (EU) | cooperation policy | development aid | electoral procedure and voting | EU police mission | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | military cooperation | parliamentary election | political framework | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | regional security | rule of law | settlement of disputes | terrorism

Summary Even though the NATO-led military operation against the Taliban ceased in 2014, security in Afghanistan is still elusive. A divided government, weak security forces and poor economic performance make the fight against insurgency, terrorism and criminal networks more complicated. To help Afghanistan further consolidate the progress achieved to date and support its growth, the EU is focused on reinforcing democracy, fostering the rule of law and respect for human rights, and encouraging development. The future of Afghanistan is due to be discussed at the NATO Summit in Warsaw on 7-8 July and the Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan on 4-5 October in Brussels.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[Ukraine: What to watch for in 2016](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 12-02-2016

Author BENTZEN Naja

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword association agreement (EU) | communications | cooperation policy | disinformation | economic conditions | economic geography | economic situation | ECONOMICS | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | electoral procedure and voting | ENERGY | energy policy | energy supply | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | financial aid | foreign policy | gas pipeline | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | military occupation | organisation of transport | political geography | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | referendum | Russia | settlement of disputes | TRANSPORT | Ukraine

Summary With the entry into force of the EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) as part of the Association Agreement (AA) on 1 January 2016, Ukraine has taken a significant step forward on its long road to European integration. However, 2016 will entail a new series of tests for the country.

While Kyiv is under continued pressure to fulfil the February 2015 Minsk II ceasefire agreement, the interruption of electricity supply to Crimea — occupied by Russia since March 2014 — has added fuel to bilateral tensions over the peninsula, which could intensify in 2016. Ukraine's default on its US\$3 billion debt to Russia, and Moscow's response will further strain bilateral ties.

The growing fragility of the pro-European government coalition could increase the likelihood of early parliamentary elections and impede the on-going reform process. At the same time, the national security situation — precarious overall as it is — could be further undermined by cyber-attacks.

In addition, a number of external developments, for example, the split within the EU vis-à-vis the Russia-backed 'Nord Stream 2' gas pipeline and the forthcoming Dutch referendum on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, planned for April 2016, will require attention.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

[Peace agreement in South Sudan: Ambitious but hard to deliver](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 02-02-2016

Author PICHON Eric

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Africa | arms trade | Central African Republic | civil war | common foreign and security policy | defence | Democratic Republic of the Congo | economic geography | establishment of peace | Ethiopia | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | extra-European organisations | foreign policy | GEOGRAPHY | government violence | human rights | independence of the judiciary | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Kenya | LAW | organisation of the legal system | political geography | political prisoner | political violence | POLITICS | politics and public safety | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes | South Sudan | Sudan | Uganda

Summary In August 2015, under considerable international pressure, a peace agreement was signed in South Sudan: it aimed to end the violent civil war that had broken out two years earlier. The conflict was caused by a number of entangled factors that can be boiled down to a struggle for power and oil in a devastated country. Soon after gaining independence in 2011, the rivalry between the two main leaders, Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, that had been subdued, erupted again.

In July 2013, President Kiir dismissed Vice-President Machar. The following December, ethnic conflict erupted within the army, tragically spreading to the civilian population and leading to a humanitarian catastrophe. The 2015 peace agreement is an important benchmark towards peace and reconciliation, as it addresses the main issues: establishment of an inclusive government; demilitarisation and reinsertion in civilian life of a large number of well-equipped militias; proper mechanisms for transitional justice and reparation; immediate measures to facilitate humanitarian access; and a consistent programme to redress the economy. Nevertheless, progress towards implementation of the peace deal is slow: key structures such as the transitional government and the 'hybrid' court have not yet been put in place. Building confidence between the current head of state and his main opponent is a challenging task for international mediators.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

[Ukraine and the Minsk II agreement: On a frozen path to peace?](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 27-01-2016

Author BENTZEN Naja

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword autonomous movement | border war | civil war | common foreign and security policy | constitutional revision | cooperation policy | decentralisation | economic geography | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | executive power and public service | foreign policy | GEOGRAPHY | humanitarian aid | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | occupied territory | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | prisoner of war | Russia | settlement of disputes | sources and branches of the law | Ukraine

Summary While Kyiv took an important step towards Europe with the entry into force of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area on 1 January 2016, Ukraine's path to peace with neighbouring Russia remains complicated. The implementation of the fragile Minsk II ceasefire agreement — negotiated by the leaders of France, Germany, Ukraine and Russia in February 2015 — has been extended into 2016.

Several unresolved issues will continue to pose challenges to the fulfilment of Minsk II in 2016. The death toll has now surpassed 9 000, and Russia continues to supply the rebels with ammunition, weaponry and fighters. In addition, Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko is still imprisoned in Russia over murder charges. At the same time, the practical consequences of the conflict are tangible in the rebel-held areas, where a humanitarian crisis is unfolding.

While the self-proclaimed republics in Donetsk and Luhansk had agreed to postpone local elections until February 2016 — a move that was welcomed by Kyiv, Moscow and Brussels — the next developments hinge on a political settlement. However, some analysts hope that recent Russian high-level appointments could give new impetus to negotiations.

This briefing brings up to date that of 16 July 2015, 'Ukraine: Follow-up of Minsk II – A fragile ceasefire'.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

[2015: Serbia opens its first negotiation chapters](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 26-01-2016

Author LILYANOVA Velina

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword accession negotiations | communications | constitutional revision | economic geography | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | foreign policy | freedom of communication | GEOGRAPHY | independence of the judiciary | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | judicial reform | Kosovo | LAW | organisation of the legal system | pluralism in the media | political geography | rights and freedoms | Serbia | settlement of disputes | sources and branches of the law

Summary At the end of 2015 Serbia made a step forward towards EU accession. Two years after the start of the accession talks with the EU, after having successfully completed the screening of the EU acquis and reached key new agreements with Kosovo, it opened its first negotiation chapters with the EU.

[At a Glance](#) [DE](#), [EN](#), [ES](#), [FR](#), [IT](#), [PL](#)

[Kosovo: 'First formal step' towards EU accession](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 26-01-2016

Author LILYANOVA Velina

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword accession to the European Union | administrative reform | constitutional revision | corruption | criminal law | economic geography | EU visa policy | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | executive power and public service | foreign policy | GEOGRAPHY | independence of the judiciary | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Kosovo | LAW | organisation of the legal system | political framework | political geography | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | recognition of a state | rule of law | Serbia | settlement of disputes | sources and branches of the law | stabilisation and association agreement

Summary The Commission's latest progress report notes that, in 2015, Kosovo was still at an 'early stage' of preparedness for EU membership. However, in October 2015 it signed a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU, which reaffirmed its EU perspective.

At a Glance [DE](#), [EN](#), [ES](#), [FR](#), [IT](#), [PL](#)

[Iran in Syria: Deal-maker or deal-breaker?](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 15-01-2016

Author PAWLAK Patryk

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword arms trade | Asia and Oceania | cooperation policy | defence | dictatorship | economic geography | economic policy | economic support | ECONOMICS | GEOGRAPHY | humanitarian aid | illicit trade | international affairs | international conflict | international negotiations | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international sanctions | international security | international security | Iran | mercenary | political framework | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | religious group | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | Syria | terrorism | TRADE | trade policy

Summary Since the outbreak of the conflict in Syria, Iran has been a steadfast supporter of Bashar al-Assad's regime, and ensuring its survival is Iran's primary objective. This is unsurprising, given that Tehran needs a friendly regime in Damascus to protect its strategic interests in the region. At the same time, there is an expectation of more constructive engagement from Iran following the signature of the nuclear deal with E3/EU+3 countries.

At a Glance [EN](#)

[Russia in Syria: Playing for high stakes](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 15-01-2016

Author RUSSELL Martin

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword aid to refugees | America | Asia and Oceania | cooperation policy | culture and religion | defence | economic geography | Europe | forces abroad | GEOGRAPHY | government violence | immigration | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Islamic State | migration | military base | military equipment | military intervention | military personnel | political framework | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | religious fundamentalism | Russia | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | Syria | terrorism | United States | war

Summary Russia, a staunch ally of Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad, has launched a wave of airstrikes in defence of its significant economic, military and geopolitical interests in the country. While the Syria campaign has helped Russia to project itself as a global player, it also presents significant risks.

At a Glance [EN](#)

[United States and Syria: Strained credibility](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 15-01-2016

Author CIRLIG Carmen-Cristina

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword aid to refugees | America | Asia and Oceania | cooperation policy | culture and religion | defence | economic geography | Europe | GEOGRAPHY | humanitarian aid | immigration | interference | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Iraq | Islamic State | migration | military equipment | military intervention | military personnel | military training | political framework | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | religious fundamentalism | Russia | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | Syria | terrorism | United States | war

Summary The United States' strategy in Syria has evolved over the five years of the conflict. Currently, the US aim is for a political solution to the civil war, seen as a precondition for the defeat of the ISIL/Da'esh terrorist group. Despite significant US military and diplomatic action, the effectiveness of the US strategy towards Syria and its implementation is widely criticised.

At a Glance [EN](#)

Water in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Publication type Briefing

Date 13-01-2016

Author LAZAROU Eleni

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Asia and Oceania | construction and town planning | economic geography | ENVIRONMENT | environmental policy | GEOGRAPHY | geopolitics | human rights | humanities | hydrology | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Israel | LAW | natural and applied sciences | natural environment | Palestine | Palestine question | rights and freedoms | SCIENCE | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | water consumption | water requirements | water resources | water supply

Summary The Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza is one of the fastest growing in the world and its demand for water is increasing. Access and distribution of water in these territories has been an issue within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since 1967. In 1995, the Oslo II Accord adopted a quantitative approach to the water issue, detailing the quantities to be allocated to Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, but did not sufficiently take into account the natural, political and socio-economic developments that have affected water supply and demand in the region since. Economic disparities, lack of substantial and sufficient infrastructure and of effective water resources management, compounded by pollution and climate change have led to disproportionate allocation of water and to substantial depletion and contamination of water resources. Water consumption by Israelis and Palestinians reflects stark inequalities. Due to the allocations of trans-boundary water resources agreed upon under Oslo II, Israel currently controls approximately 80% of water reserves in the West Bank. Military conflict in Gaza in the summer of 2014 left over a million residents without access to water. The international community and the EU have expressed concern over the limited access to water in the West Bank and Gaza, and have become active on the issue of water management. Reports from the European Commission (EuropeAid) highlight that technical and humanitarian assistance on water issues has to go hand in hand with progress on the political front, in order for effectiveness to be maximised and for long-term results to be achieved.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

The Colombian peace process

Publication type At a Glance

Date 11-01-2016

Author GOMEZ RAMIREZ Enrique

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword America | civil war | Colombia | economic geography | establishment of peace | EU finance | EU financing | EU relations | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | political geography | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | settlement of disputes

Summary After several failed attempts, the current peace negotiations with the FARC, initiated in 2012 by Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos are expected to put an end to the conflict, as an agreement was reached in late 2015 on the most difficult issue – victims reparation and justice. The final agreement is planned to be signed on 23 March 2016, however the implementation phase after that could prove difficult, with significant challenges to be overcome.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

The Dayton Peace Agreement - 20 years on

Publication type At a Glance

Date 08-12-2015

Author LILYANOVA Velina

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword accession to the European Union | Bosnia and Herzegovina | constitutional revision | contemporary history | economic geography | establishment of peace | ethnic conflict | ethnic discrimination | EU institutions and European civil service | EU relations | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | humanities | institutional structure | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | judicial reform | LAW | organisation of the legal system | political geography | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | rights and freedoms | SCIENCE | settlement of disputes | sources and branches of the law

Summary In 1995, securing stability was the priority in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), and the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) helped put an end to a long conflict. Twenty years later, it still defines the political and institutional framework of the country. The prospect of EU integration, however, raises the question of whether Dayton can serve as the basis to that end or if it needs to be revised.

[At a Glance](#) [DE](#), [EN](#), [ES](#), [FR](#), [IT](#), [PL](#)

[Outcome of the informal 12 November 2015 European Council on migration in Valletta: Post-European Council Briefing](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 20-11-2015

Author DRACHENBERG Ralf

Policy area Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council | Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Development and Humanitarian Aid

Keyword application of EU law | Asia and Oceania | common foreign and security policy | economic geography | economic policy | ECONOMICS | EU aid | EU finance | EU institutions and European civil service | EU migration policy | Europe | European construction | European Council | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | external border of the EU | Frontex | fund (EU) | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | migration | migratory movement | political geography | Schengen Agreement | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | summit meeting | Türkiye

Summary The informal European Council on migration of 12 November 2015 in Valletta assessed the state of implementation of previously agreed measures. It followed the Valletta Summit held with African Leaders on 11/12 November 2015. The Valletta Summit resulted in a Political Declaration and an Action Plan to manage migratory flows, focusing on dealing with the root causes of migration by developing greater cooperation between EU and African partners.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

[The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe \(OSCE\) – 40 years after Helsinki](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 05-11-2015

Author PERCHOC Philippe

Policy area Security and Defence

Keyword cold war | competence of the institution | contemporary history | East-West relations | humanities | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | OSCE | peaceful co-existence | POLITICS | politics and public safety | SCIENCE | settlement of disputes | world organisations

Summary 2015 marks the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki final act, signed in 1975. A turning point in the Cold War, the Helsinki process created a forum involving all the actors of European security: European states, the United States, Canada and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The formation of the Conference on the Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) came about during the Détente of 1962-1979. The CSCE transformed the zero-sum game of the Cold War into a positive-sum game between European states and became a forum for discussion between the two superpowers and European countries. The main outcome of the Helsinki process is less the Final Act itself than the original process of negotiations between all the participating states. After the fall of the USSR, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) became an organisation focusing mainly on soft security (elections, peace processes, and protection of minorities). However the instability of the security situation in Europe and its neighbourhood may invigorate the pertinence of what has been known as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) since 1995. The OSCE set up Confidence and Security-building measures (CSBM) that are key to conflict resolution today in Europe (Ukraine, Transnistria and South Caucasus).

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

[The Western Balkans and EU Enlargement: Lessons learned, ways forward and prospects ahead](#)

Publication type In-Depth Analysis

Date 05-11-2015

External author Dr Marko KMEZIĆ, Centre for Southeast European Studies, University of Graz, Austria

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword accession to the European Union | Albania | Bosnia and Herzegovina | corruption | criminal law | Croatia | democratisation | economic geography | economic policy | economic structure | ECONOMICS | Europe | European construction | European integration | EUROPEAN UNION | executive power and public service | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Kosovo | LAW | Montenegro | North Macedonia | political framework | political geography | political reform | POLITICS | politics and public safety | regional security | rule of law | Serbia | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | socioeconomic conditions | structural adjustment | transition economy

Summary Twelve years after the Thessaloniki promise that the future of the Balkans is within the European Union, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, fYRoM, Montenegro, and Serbia remain excluded with no foreseeable accession date in sight. Despite initial success, the current approach to enlargement has reached its limits, as it seems to be slowing down the integration process rather than accelerating it. In the meantime, in addition to the democratic and economic setbacks in the region, renewed tensions are threatening to undermine fragile regional stability. Moreover, the EU's unfinished business in the Balkans opens the door to various political, economic and security alternatives. This is precisely why the main message of this study is that the current autopilot mode of enlargement cannot continue.

[In-Depth Analysis](#) [EN](#)

[Ukraine's will to liberalise: Tested on many fronts](#)

Publication type In-Depth Analysis

Date 04-11-2015

Author DE MICCO Pasquale

Policy area Economics and Monetary Issues | Foreign Affairs | International Trade

Keyword association agreement (EU) | autonomous movement | cooperation policy | economic conditions | economic geography | economic reform | economic sanctions | economic situation | economic structure | ECONOMICS | EU finance | EU financing | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | financial aid | foreign policy | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | political geography | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | Russia | settlement of disputes | TRADE | trade relations | Ukraine

Summary Faced with a deteriorating economy, unstable internal security and the financial repercussions of military efforts in the east, Ukraine is striving to create a business-friendly climate. To this end, the country is preparing for the enforcement by 1 January 2016 of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) created under the Association Agreement with the EU.

The war and a decline in industrial output have led Ukraine's foreign trade to contract. Imports have been hit by the country's shrinking GDP, and exports are also declining. In the case of exports to Russia, several embargos and the unpredictability of the Russian market have compounded the toll. On the other hand, exports to the EU have demonstrated a surprising resilience, thanks largely to the positive performance of agriculture. While the EU has granted the country autonomous trade measures, these may not be responsible for the recent strength of Ukraine's agricultural exports; instead, traders' new market orientation may be the cause.

Russia's opposition to the implementation of the DCFTA has been muted since trilateral trade negotiations with the EU and Ukraine were launched. A mutually acceptable solution may be found – or not – by the end of 2015.

Ultimately, any real improvement in Ukraine's economy will depend on the termination of military activities in the east, on not totally losing trade with traditional Eurasian partners, on the effective entry into force of the DCFTA, on debt restructuring and on a commitment to ambitious reforms. Ukraine's current trade barriers must be removed. For now, at least, Ukraine seems dedicated to doing just that.

In-Depth Analysis [EN](#)

[Myanmar/Burma: Ethnic conflict threatens unity](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 22-10-2015

Author RUSSELL Martin

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword armed forces | Asia and Oceania | Burma/Myanmar | defence | economic geography | establishment of peace | ethnic conflict | ethnic group | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | POLITICS | politics and public safety | religious discrimination | religious group | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS

Summary Myanmar/Burma faces no major external security threats; it enjoys friendly relations with its neighbours, all of which, like it, are signatories of ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. Internal threats are more serious, with the country racked by long-running ethnic insurgencies. Over the past few years, most of the rebels have signed ceasefires but a final peace accord remains elusive. Recent years have also seen mob violence targeting the country's Muslim minority. Resolving these issues is of crucial importance for the country's democratic transition.

At a Glance [EN](#)

[Outcome of the European Council of 15 October 2015: Post-European Council Briefing](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 22-10-2015

Author DE FINANCE Stanislas | DRACHENBERG Ralf

Policy area Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Economics and Monetary Issues | Environment

Keyword Africa | Asia and Oceania | border control | common foreign and security policy | criminal law | Economic and Monetary Union | economic geography | EU institutions and European civil service | EU migration policy | EU relations | Europe | European construction | European Council | EUROPEAN UNION | external border of the EU | FINANCE | Frontex | GEOGRAPHY | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | Libya | migration | monetary economics | political geography | political refugee | POLITICS | politics and public safety | removal | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | Syria | Türkiye

Summary The one-day European Council meeting held on 15 October 2015 again focused on the issue of migration, as indicated in the EPRS Pre-European Council Briefing. While assessing the state of implementation of the migration 'orientations' agreed upon by the informal European Council on 23 September 2015, EU Heads of State or Government concentrated on working to secure the European Union's external borders. The main decisions taken in this respect were: the agreement to work on an integrated border management system, and also the enhancement of Frontex's mandate in relation to the development of a European Border and Coast Guard System. The European Council also considered further cooperation with third countries regarding migration issues, welcomed the agreement of an EU-Turkey joint action plan, and looked at how to best 'respond to the influx of refugees in Europe and ensuring returns'. Other agenda points addressed by Heads of State or Government were the situations in both Syria and Libya, the 'Presidents' report' on completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union and the state of play concerning the UK referendum on EU membership.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Outcome of the Extraordinary European Council of 23 September 2015: post-European Council briefing](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 05-10-2015

Author DRACHENBERG Ralf

Policy area Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council | Area of Freedom, Security and Justice

Keyword application of EU law | Asia and Oceania | common foreign and security policy | economic geography | economic policy | ECONOMICS | EU aid | EU finance | EU institutions and European civil service | EU migration policy | Europe | European construction | European Council | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | external border of the EU | fund (EU) | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | migration | migratory movement | political geography | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | summit meeting | Syria | Türkiye

Summary At a special meeting on migration on 23 September 2015, EU Heads of State or Government agreed on increasing financial assistance to EU external relations initiatives and United Nations' programmes, strengthening the EU's external borders, enhancing cooperation with third countries, fighting root causes of the migration crisis and reinforcing diplomatic efforts to end the conflict in Syria. According to the statement issued by Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, the agreement to set up 'hotspots' in frontline Member States, by November 2015 at the latest, constitutes a great achievement.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Conflict in Syria](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 02-10-2015

Author PAWLAK Patryk

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword aid to refugees | Asia and Oceania | chemical weapon | civil war | common foreign and security policy | cooperation policy | defence | dictatorship | economic geography | EU finance | EU financing | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | military intervention | political framework | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | settlement of disputes | Syria | terrorism | the EU's international role | UN resolution

Summary Since its beginnings in 2011, the conflict in Syria has cost more than 250 000 lives and over 4 million Syrians have been forced to seek security in neighbouring countries – primarily in Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon. A further 7.6 million people are displaced within Syria. The rise of ISIL/Da'esh and other jihadist groups has aggravated the situation. Despite this humanitarian and security crisis, however, progress towards a political settlement to the conflict has been slow.

At a Glance [EN](#)

[Ukraine: Follow-up of Minsk II](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 16-07-2015

Author BENTZEN Naja

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword autonomous movement | border war | civil war | common foreign and security policy | communications | constitutional revision | defence | defence policy | disinformation | economic geography | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international sanctions | international security | LAW | Moldova | NATO | political geography | political prisoner | POLITICS | politics and public safety | regional security | Russia | settlement of disputes | sources and branches of the law | Ukraine | world organisations

Summary Four months after leaders from France, Germany, Ukraine and Russia reached a 13-point 'Package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreements' ('Minsk II') on 12 February 2015, the ceasefire is crumbling. The pressure on Kyiv to contribute to a de-escalation and comply with Minsk II continues to grow.

While Moscow still denies accusations that there are Russian soldiers in eastern Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin publicly admitted in March 2015 to having invaded Crimea. There is mounting evidence that Moscow continues to play an active military role in eastern Ukraine. The multidimensional conflict is eroding the country's stability on all fronts.

While the situation on both the military and the economic front is acute, the country is under pressure to conduct wide-reaching reforms to meet its international obligations. In addition, Russia is challenging Ukraine's identity as a sovereign nation state with a wide range of disinformation tools.

Against this backdrop, the international community and the EU are under increasing pressure to react. In the following pages, the current status of the Minsk II agreement is assessed and other recent key developments in Ukraine and beyond examined.

This briefing brings up to date that of 16 March 2015, 'Ukraine after Minsk II: the next level – Hybrid responses to hybrid threats'.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Something New Out of Africa? Chinese, US and EU Strategies for the Continent](#)

Publication type In-Depth Analysis

Date 22-04-2015

Author MANRIQUE GIL Manuel

Policy area Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights | Security and Defence

Keyword ACP-EU relationship | Africa | Africa | African Union | America | Asia and Oceania | China | cooperation policy | Cotonou Agreement | development aid | economic geography | economic policy | economic relations | ECONOMICS | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | extra-European organisations | FINANCE | financing and investment | foreign investment | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | international cooperation | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international trade | political geography | regional security | settlement of disputes | sustainable development | the EU's international role | TRADE | trade relations | United States

Summary The seventh College-to-College meeting between the European Commission and the African Union Commission underscores the close cooperation between the European Union (EU) and Africa. Institutional and political relations have intensified in recent years, coinciding with a renewed international interest in an African continent whose economic growth in the past decade has been remarkably strong. The United States (US) and China have also recently strengthened their links with Africa. While these three actors frame their relations with Africa in different ways, their interests converge around two broad areas: i) Africa's economic potential and the need to intensify trade and investment to generate economic growth and development; and ii) concerns about peace and security – and notably the threats posed by armed conflict and terrorist groups. In light of this renewed international interest and other important factors – including the expiry of the Cotonou Agreement in 2020 – the European Parliament should embark on an ambitious and strategic political reflection on the EU's relations with Africa. Parliament should recognise both the potential and vulnerabilities of the continent, as well as the EU's own varied interests across policy areas. Alongside other actors, including the US and China, Parliament should also work to ensure that Africa finds its due place in the changing international order.

[In-Depth Analysis](#) [EN](#)

[Outlook for the European Council of 19-20 March 2015: Pre-European Council Briefing](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 18-03-2015

Author BACIAN Izabela Cristina | DE FINANCE Stanislas | DRACHENBERG Ralf | MOERMAN Josephine | TENHUNEN Susanna

Policy area Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council | Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Economics and Monetary Issues | Energy | European Semester | Foreign Affairs

Keyword Africa | climate change policy | common foreign and security policy | coordination of EMU policies | economic geography | economic sanctions | ENERGY | energy policy | energy policy | ENVIRONMENT | environmental policy | EU institutions and European civil service | Europe | European construction | European Council | EUROPEAN UNION | FINANCE | financing and investment | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international sanctions | international security | investment promotion | Libya | monetary economics | negotiation of an agreement (EU) | political geography | Russia | settlement of disputes | trade agreement (EU) | trans-European network | Ukraine

Summary The Spring European Council will focus on building a European Energy Union. The Heads of State or Government will also exchange views on the economic situation and conclude the first phase of the European Semester for 2015, which includes giving guidance to Member States for the preparation of their national reforms and the stability or convergence programmes. They are also likely to consider the progress on the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and the state of play in the negotiations with the US on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). On the external relations agenda, the European Council is expected to discuss relations with Russia and the situation in Ukraine, in particular the implementation of the Minsk II Agreement, and agree on possible further steps. The difficult situation in Libya and its security implications for the EU will also be on the agenda. EU leaders are also expected to prepare the Eastern Partnership Summit in Riga on 21-22 May 2015.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

[Ukraine after Minsk II: the next level](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 16-03-2015

Author BENTZEN Naja | SABBATI Giulio

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword America | autonomous movement | border war | civil war | common foreign and security policy | communications | communications policy | economic conditions | economic geography | economic situation | ECONOMICS | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | establishment of peace | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | foreign policy | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | military intervention | military occupation | NATO | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | Russia | settlement of disputes | Ukraine | United States | world organisations

Summary One month after leaders from France, Germany, Ukraine and Russia reached a 13-point peace agreement in Minsk on 12 February 2015 – Minsk II, a follow-up to the September 2014 Minsk Protocol – the ceasefire is shaky, although it has at least reduced the number of deaths in combat, and the pressure on the international community to act continues.

While Russia denies accusations that it has been sending troops and weapons to support separatists in Ukraine's east, the undeclared 'hybrid war' is developing on all fronts. In the face of a shaky ceasefire and Ukraine's crumbling economy, the EU, the US and major international actors are discussing possible political, military, and economic responses to the deteriorating crisis. At the same time, EU Member States and NATO are stepping up efforts to counter Russia's 'information warfare'.

The on-going crisis in Ukraine erupted after former President Viktor Yanukovich refused to sign an Association Agreement with the EU in November 2013 and sought closer ties to Russia. Russia's active role in the eastern Ukraine crisis has exposed divides in the EU and the international community on how to react to hybrid threats. It comes at a time when the effectiveness of the EU's Neighbourhood Policy, including the Eastern Partnership, is being questioned.

This briefing is a follow-up to the 12 February 2015 briefing 'Minsk peace agreement: still to be consolidated on the ground'.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Outcome of the informal European Council meeting of 12 February 2015: Post-European Council Briefing](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 24-02-2015

Author DE FINANCE Stanislas | DRACHENBERG Ralf | MOERMAN Josephine | TENHUNEN Susanna

Policy area Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council | Area of Freedom, Security and Justice | Economics and Monetary Issues

Keyword censorship | common foreign and security policy | communications | coordination of EMU policies | economic geography | EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS | EU institutions and European civil service | Europe | European construction | European Council | EUROPEAN UNION | FINANCE | GEOGRAPHY | Greece | information technology and data processing | interinstitutional relations (EU) | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Internet | monetary economics | personal data | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | settlement of disputes | terrorism | Ukraine

Summary The informal meeting of the European Council on 12 February generated a statement on anti-terrorism measures, a discussion on improving economic policy in the eurozone following a presentation by Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, an assessment of the result of the Minsk talks in the presence of Ukrainian President Poroshenko, and a report by Eurogroup President Dijsselbloem on Greece. Mario Draghi, President of the European Central Bank also attended the meeting.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Minsk peace agreement: still to be consolidated on the ground](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 12-02-2015

Author ANOSOVs Evarts | BENTZEN Naja

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence

Keyword autonomous movement | common foreign and security policy | economic geography | economic sanctions | EU finance | EU financing | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | military intervention | military occupation | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | public opinion | Russia | settlement of disputes | Ukraine | war victim

Summary On 12 February, after more than 16 hours of negotiations in Minsk, the leaders of Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine reached an agreement to end fighting in eastern Ukraine. Representatives of the OSCE, Ukraine, Russia, and the pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine signed the deal, which includes a ceasefire in eastern Ukraine, to begin on 15 February, followed by the withdrawal of heavy weapons. In a joint declaration, Angela Merkel, François Hollande, Vladimir Putin and Petro Poroshenko stated their commitment to respecting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The document states that regular meetings will be held to ensure the fulfilment of the Minsk agreements. The tenor of most official international reactions was cautiously optimistic. International leaders said the deal gave 'hope', but at the same time emphasised that the agreement must now be implemented on the ground. Intense fighting continued during the talks, with the strategic transit hub of Debaltseve still contested. Moscow denies Ukraine's accusations that Russia is supplying troops and weapons to separatists fighting for the territory which Putin calls 'New Russia'. The on-going crisis in Ukraine erupted after former President Viktor Yanukovich refused to sign an Association Agreement (AA) with the EU in November 2013 and sought closer ties to Russia. Following radical protests from pro-Western groups, Yanukovich stepped down and fled to Russia. Moscow responded by annexing the Crimea in March 2014, sparking wide-ranging EU sanctions.

Briefing [EN](#)

Who wants to arm Ukraine?

Publication type [Briefing](#)

Date 10-02-2015

Author BENTZEN Naja

Policy area [Foreign Affairs](#) | [Security and Defence](#)

Keyword [America](#) | [Baltic States](#) | [communications](#) | [cooperation policy](#) | [defence](#) | [economic geography](#) | [EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS](#) | [EU institutions and European civil service](#) | [Europe](#) | [European External Action Service](#) | [EUROPEAN UNION](#) | [Finland](#) | [France](#) | [GEOGRAPHY](#) | [Germany](#) | [international affairs](#) | [international conflict](#) | [INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS](#) | [international sanctions](#) | [international security](#) | [military cooperation](#) | [Poland](#) | [political geography](#) | [public consultation](#) | [rearmament](#) | [Russia](#) | [settlement of disputes](#) | [Ukraine](#) | [United States](#)

Summary Against the backdrop of the intensifying conflict in eastern Ukraine, Kyiv's calls for defensive military assistance are becoming increasingly urgent. Ahead of the peace talks in Minsk on 11 February, where Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany plan to negotiate a peace deal after months of fighting, fears of an escalation of the already violent conflict are mounting. Russia denies accusations by Western countries and Ukraine that Moscow is sending troops to eastern Ukraine and supplying the rebels, and Putin has warned the West that sending arms to Ukraine could worsen the crisis. Although US President Barack Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel agreed to continue sanctions and diplomatic measures, pressure in the US to send defensive weapons to Ukraine is increasing. Some EU countries – including Germany, France, the UK, and Finland – remain very cautious in the face of these demands, warning that sending weapons to Ukraine could escalate the conflict. Lithuania and Estonia, however, have spoken out in favour of sending arms to Ukraine, and Poland has signalled support for the US position, albeit stating that military support would be 'worth avoiding'. On a similar note, experts from renowned think-tanks are divided on the issue. While some believe that the West should not provide arms to Ukraine, arguing that the West still needs Russia as a partner, others warn that Russia could be preparing for 'another major Russian/separatist offensive' in Ukraine, and thus urge direct military assistance in the form of defensive lethal weapons.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

EU-Georgia Association Agreement

Publication type [At a Glance](#)

Date 05-12-2014

Author BENTZEN Naja

Policy area [Democracy](#) | [Foreign Affairs](#) | [Global Governance](#) | [International Trade](#) | [Security and Defence](#)

Keyword [association agreement \(EU\)](#) | [economic geography](#) | [economic reform](#) | [economic structure](#) | [ECONOMICS](#) | [EU visa policy](#) | [Europe](#) | [European construction](#) | [European neighbourhood policy](#) | [EUROPEAN UNION](#) | [free-trade area](#) | [GEOGRAPHY](#) | [Georgia](#) | [international affairs](#) | [international law](#) | [INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS](#) | [international security](#) | [joint body \(EU\)](#) | [LAW](#) | [political geography](#) | [political reform](#) | [POLITICS](#) | [politics and public safety](#) | [ratification of an agreement](#) | [Russia](#) | [settlement of disputes](#) | [signature of an agreement](#) | [tariff policy](#) | [territorial law](#) | [TRADE](#)

Summary Since the 2003 Rose Revolution, Georgia has continually strengthened its ties with the EU. The June 2014 signature of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement sparked increasing Russian pressure on the beleaguered government in Tbilisi over its pro-European foreign policy course.

[At a Glance](#) [DE](#), [EN](#), [ES](#), [FR](#), [IT](#), [PL](#)

South Sudan: The Roots and Prospects of a Multifaceted Crisis

Publication type [In-Depth Analysis](#)

Date 05-03-2014

Author MANRIQUE GIL Manuel

Policy area [Foreign Affairs](#) | [Human Rights](#)

Keyword [Africa](#) | [concentration of powers](#) | [cooperation policy](#) | [economic geography](#) | [establishment of peace](#) | [ethnic conflict](#) | [extra-European organisations](#) | [GEOGRAPHY](#) | [human rights](#) | [humanitarian aid](#) | [INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS](#) | [INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS](#) | [international security](#) | [LAW](#) | [multinational force](#) | [political crisis](#) | [political geography](#) | [political prisoner](#) | [POLITICS](#) | [politics and public safety](#) | [rights and freedoms](#) | [settlement of disputes](#) | [South Sudan](#) | [Uganda](#)

Summary The violent conflict that erupted in South Sudan during the night of 15 December 2013 had many triggers, the closest being political disputes between the country's top politicians, President Salva Kiir and former Vice-President Riek Machar. The fact the December crisis escalated into an open civil war reflects underlying tensions and wider misgivings within the South Sudanese population, especially between ethnic Dinka and ethnic Nuer. External actors – mainly the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the United Nations, the EU and the US – have played a crucial role in supporting a population that has faced significant human rights abuses and humanitarian shortfalls. These actors have also worked to find a negotiated solution to the crisis from the outset, brokering the ceasefire agreement signed on 23 January 2014. However, the peace deal between the two parties marks only the beginning; the process of reconciliation, rehabilitation and nation-building will be long, and reports of violations of the ceasefire demonstrate the fragility of the situation. Immediate, as well as medium- and long-term, challenges must be addressed swiftly, so that Africa's youngest state can embark a credible path to development.

[In-Depth Analysis](#) [EN](#)

[Russia's G8 Presidency: With an Ambitious Agenda, Can Moscow Deliver?](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 11-02-2014

Author TROSZCZYNSKA VAN GENDEREN Wanda

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword criminal law | drug traffic | economic geography | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | foreign policy | GEOGRAPHY | group of leading industrialised countries | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | Russia | settlement of disputes | summit meeting | terrorism | the EU's international role | world organisations

Summary In January 2014, the Russian Federation took over the G8 presidency from the United Kingdom, and with it the responsibility for shaping the year's political agenda and for organising this year's G8 summit, to be held on 4-5 June 2014 in Sochi. A latecomer to the G8 (having become a member in 1997), Russia has assertively pursued its foreign policy interests within the group. The current Russian presidency has decided on a range of priorities, largely corresponding to Moscow's own current policy interests and to the priorities of Russia's previous, 2006 G8 presidency. This year's foci include the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism, conflict resolution, disaster management and health security. While Russia has said it supports enhancing the parliamentary dimension of the G8, this year's annual speakers' meeting has again been scheduled after the summit itself – on 5-7 September 2014 (in Moscow) – which means the speakers' meeting will take place too late to feed recommendations and insights into the summit itself. While the G8 has been accused of elitism and of failing to fully implement its summits' commitments, the group remains an important platform for its members to discuss – and often find common positions on – key foreign policy issues.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: still awaiting the green light for enlargement talks](#)

Publication type At a Glance

Date 30-01-2014

Author KATSAROVA Ivana

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword accession negotiations | culture and religion | economic geography | ethnic conflict | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | Greece | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | national identity | North Macedonia | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS

Summary The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia obtained the status of candidate country in December 2005. The European Commission's annual progress reports since 2009 have consistently recommended the opening of negotiations. However, the name issue still appears the main stumbling block. The dispute arose in 1991, when the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia seceded from Yugoslavia and declared independence under the name "Republic of Macedonia".

At a Glance [EN](#)

[European Common Security and Defence Policy: Cost of Non-Europe Report](#)

Publication type Study

Date 15-11-2013

Author BALLESTER MARTINEZ Maria Blanca

Policy area European Added Value | Security and Defence

Keyword arms industry | BUSINESS AND COMPETITION | business classification | common security and defence policy | cooperation policy | defence | European arms policy | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | European Union law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | military cooperation | military research | PRODUCTION, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH | public contract | research and intellectual property | settlement of disputes | small and medium-sized enterprises | TRADE | trade policy | Treaty of Lisbon

Summary The report 'Preparing for Complexity - The European Parliament in 2025', presented by the Secretary General of the European Parliament in January 2013, identified the core set of problematic issues in defence policy as a) duplication, b) lack of a common strategic view and c) lack of a clear vision for the future. The purpose of this paper is to develop these considerations and to focus on the benefits of greater cooperation at European level. Setting out the economic argument of the added value of Europe in defence, and the current cost to the Member States of 'non-Europe', can highlight the need to build on the structures, systems and under-utilised legal bases that have been put in place in recent years. Cost of Non-Europe reports examine policy areas or sectors of strategic importance where the possibilities for greater efficiency or the realisation of a 'public good' through common action at EU level are potentially significant. The case for more Europe is perhaps more compelling in defence than in almost any other policy area, given that no single Member State can achieve an optimal level of security without cooperation. The costs involved go beyond the purely economic, and include political and opportunity costs.

Study [EN](#)

The g7+ group of fragile states

Publication type Briefing

Date 10-10-2013

Author SABBATI Giulio

Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid

Keyword Afghanistan | Africa | America | Asia and Oceania | Burundi | capital movement | Central African Republic | Chad | Comoros | cooperation policy | Côte d'Ivoire | Democratic Republic of the Congo | development aid | East Timor | economic geography | ECONOMICS | extra-European organisations | FINANCE | forced migration | free movement of capital | GEOGRAPHY | gross domestic product | Guinea | Guinea-Bissau | Haiti | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Liberia | migration | monetary relations | national accounts | Papua New Guinea | political geography | settlement of disputes | Sierra Leone | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | Solomon Islands | Somalia | South Sudan | Togo | trade balance

Summary The g7+ is an association of 18 fragile and conflict-affected states that have joined forces to share experiences and promote a new development framework based on five peace-building and state-building goals. The group brings together: Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Timor-Leste and Togo.

Briefing [EN](#)

The "New Deal" for engagement in fragile states

Publication type Briefing

Date 09-10-2013

Author GRIEGER Gisela

Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid

Keyword Afghanistan | Africa | aid system | America | Asia and Oceania | Central African Republic | cooperation policy | Côte d'Ivoire | Democratic Republic of the Congo | developing countries | development aid | Development Assistance Committee | development policy | East Timor | economic conditions | economic geography | economic policy | ECONOMICS | extra-European organisations | GEOGRAPHY | Haiti | international cooperation | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Liberia | political geography | settlement of disputes | Sierra Leone | Somalia | South Sudan | world organisations

Summary Despite steadily increasing inflows of official development assistance (ODA), fragile and conflict-affected states lag considerably behind other developing countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the 2015 target. Fragility and armed conflicts have seriously undermined their development. The "New Deal" framework has been specifically designed for and tailored to the development needs of fragile states. It challenges traditional donor-led development concepts, but has since been endorsed by more than 40 countries and international organisations, including the EU.

Briefing [EN](#)

The East China Sea territorial dispute: Senkaku, Diaoyu, or Tiaoyutai Islands?

Publication type Briefing

Date 29-07-2013

Author KLUGMAN-VUTZ Cornelia

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Global Governance

Keyword Asia and Oceania | China | economic geography | ENVIRONMENT | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | interpretation of the law | Japan | LAW | law of the sea | natural environment | Pacific Ocean | settlement of disputes | sources and branches of the law | Taiwan | territorial dispute | UN convention

Summary Japan, China, and Taiwan all lay claim to a group of barren islands and rocks in the East China Sea (ECS). They see strategic and economic advantages in claiming sovereignty over them. Chinese and Taiwanese trawlers and other boats regularly approach the islands, which are under Japan's control. Taiwan recently tried to alleviate tensions by proposing an "East China Sea Peace initiative".

Briefing [EN](#)

Colombia: new momentum for peace?

Publication type Briefing

Date 10-07-2013

Author CIRLIG Carmen-Cristina

Policy area International Trade

Keyword AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES | America | civil war | Colombia | criminal law | drug traffic | economic geography | farming systems | forced migration | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | land reform | LAW | migration | political geography | political involvement | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | war victim

Summary In autumn 2012, Colombia's government and the insurgent Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) started direct peace negotiations, in an attempt to put an end to the 50-year old conflict, which has had over 5 million victims to date. Recently, they have agreed on the first issue on the agenda, relating to land reform. However, the outcome of the talks remains uncertain, as four other difficult issues figure on the agenda: political participation, an end to the conflict, illegal drugs and victims' rights.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Reform of the UN Security Council](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 22-05-2013

Author GRIEGER Gisela

Policy area Global Governance | Security and Defence

Keyword European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | institutional reform | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international security | political framework | POLITICS | politics and public safety | settlement of disputes | the EU's international role | UN General Assembly | UN Security Council | United Nations | United Nations Charter | veto

Summary The divergent responses of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to the crises in Syria and Libya – a veto on action in the former case contrasted with authorisation for action in the latter – have once again provided a reminder of the power of the UNSC's veto-wielding permanent members to determine when the UN's collective security system may come into action.

Briefing [EN](#)

[A Call for Peace in Turkey](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 28-03-2013

Author D'ANGELO Sandro

Policy area Democracy | Foreign Affairs

Keyword accession to the European Union | Asia and Oceania | constitutional revision | economic geography | establishment of peace | ethnic group | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Kurdistan question | LAW | linguistic discrimination | national minority | political geography | political prisoner | POLITICS | politics and public safety | rights and freedoms | rights of minorities | settlement of disputes | social framework | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | sources and branches of the law | Türkiye

Summary On 21 March, the jailed leader of the Kurdistan's Workers' Party, the PKK, called for a truce with the government of Turkey. For nearly three decades, the 'Kurdish issue' has dogged Turkish politicians and the country's Kurdish minority. PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan repeated the words of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's — 'now let weapons be silenced and ideas talk' — and added, 'this is not an end but a new beginning'. In exchange for the PKK fighters' retreat, Turkey's 15 million Kurds would gain wider constitutional recognition. The peace process is likely to involve three stages. PM Erdoğan was the first Turkish government leader to address the Kurdish question by proposing to expand Kurds' rights. His 2009 'democratic initiative' represented a window of opportunity...but the window was rapidly shut. An air strike in 2011 damaged the shaky confidence between the PKK and the Turkish government. Dialogue remained difficult until the end of 2012, when talks were reopened. The EU's progress reports on Turkey have called for Kurds to enjoy greater rights. The EP has called on Turkey to invest greater efforts in finding a political solution for the Kurdish issue. Necessary reforms — in particular to protect minorities — could put Turkey's EU accession process on track. The latest developments have made many in Turkey optimistic that this will prove an historic opportunity.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Coups in the Central African Republic: Chronicle of a Fall Foretold](#)

Publication type Briefing

Date 27-03-2013

Author BARNA Judit

Policy area Democracy | Development and Humanitarian Aid | Human Rights

Keyword Africa | Central African Republic | cooperation policy | economic geography | EDF | GEOGRAPHY | human rights | humanitarian aid | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | political crisis | political violence | POLITICS | politics and public safety | public order | regional security | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes

Summary After a coalition of rebels entered the capital of the Central African Republic on 24 March, President François Bozizé fled to Cameroon. Bangui, the capital, was plunged into chaos, and the situation there remains volatile. Capping years of violent conflict, an offensive by rebel forces destabilised the country in 2012. Under international pressure, a ceasefire was brokered in January 2013, bringing a short-lived unity government to power. Following the coup, the African Union suspended the Central African Republic's membership and imposed sanctions on rebel leaders. The EU, UN, and US have all condemned the violent coup, while remaining silent on the status of the unpopular ousted president. Even before the latest rebellion, the country faced a deepening humanitarian crisis. It is essential that public order and stability are restored and that the risk of regional spillover contained. The country's new self-proclaimed President, Michel Djotodia, has pledged to maintain a power-sharing government. He will need to create a wider, inclusive political and economic model to achieve lasting stability.

Briefing [EN](#)

European Institute of Peace: Costs, Benefits and Options

Publication type Study

Date 05-03-2013

External author Huib Poot, Max vanderSleen, Ferry Philipsen and Achim Vogt

Policy area European Added Value | Financial and Banking Issues

Keyword accounting | association | BUSINESS AND COMPETITION | cost-benefit analysis | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | foundation | international affairs | international organisation | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | legal form of organisations | settlement of disputes | social affairs | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | the EU's international role

Summary Financial appraisal note requested by the Committee for Foreign Affairs (AFET) on the European Commission's report "European Institute of Peace: costs, benefits and options". The note provides a representation of the possible costs of establishing a European Institute for Peace under the legal forms of an association, a foundation or an international organization. This entails, in broad terms: costs of establishment and operations, possible funding route, risks and uncertainties of the various options. Cost-benefit conclusions are drawn from the quantification analysis.

Study [EN](#)

The 2012 South Korean Presidential Election

Publication type Briefing

Date 07-01-2013

Author BENDINI Roberto

Policy area Democracy | Foreign Affairs

Keyword Asia and Oceania | democratisation | economic conditions | economic development | economic geography | economic relations | ECONOMICS | election campaign | electoral procedure and voting | executive power and public service | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | North Korea | POLITICS | presidential election | regional security | settlement of disputes | social framework | social inequality | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | South Korea

Summary The two main candidates hailed from the two dominant political parties. 'Economic democratisation' and North Korea policy emerged as key issues. To what extent will Park curb the power of chaebols remains unclear. North Korea will present both a challenge and an opportunity to Park's presidency. Reconciliation, cooperation and peace in Northeast Asia are among Park's top priorities. Balancing between the US and China might pose a particular challenge. Voting patterns suggest that South Korea's familiar policies might be shaken up in the future.

Briefing [EN](#)

How the EU Can Support Peaceful Post-Election Transitions of Power : Lessons from Africa

Publication type In-Depth Analysis

Date 08-11-2012

External author Richard ATWOOD (International Crisis Group, ICG), Belgium)

Policy area Democracy | Foreign Affairs

Keyword Africa | authoritarian regime | democracy | democratisation | election result | electoral procedure and voting | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | executive power and public service | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | political framework | political parties | political party | political situation | POLITICS | politics and public safety | rule of law | settlement of disputes | sub-Saharan Africa | the EU's international role

Summary This paper examines violence round sub-Saharan African elections and how the EU can help reduce it. It presents eight case studies. It identifies factors that can increase or mitigate risks of violence and parts of an election that are vulnerable. It draws out patterns from diverse political contexts, including: (i) elections after civil conflict; (ii) competitive polls in unconsolidated democracies; (iii) votes under authoritarian rule; and (iv) those immediately after the departure of a long-serving leader. Some drivers of violence recur in different places: high stakes, the vast rewards of public office, elites' manipulation of cleavages, political or economic exclusion, weak or politicised rule of law and electoral institutions, and the proliferation of weapons and armed groups among them. But the precise mix of causes varies between countries and elections. So too do patterns of violence, often depending on the parity of force between groups, and whether violence results from political competition or is a tool to repress it. Given this diversity, conflict prevention strategies must be multilayered, tailored to context and based on careful analysis of what drives violence. National actors must lead, and this paper offers a set of options for each political context through which the EU could help them. It also suggests broader policy shifts for the EU (including better analysis; sustained engagement; greater focus on the rule of law; a more realistic approach towards its observation and technical assistance; and developing regional capacity) that could improve its support to elections in Africa.

In-Depth Analysis [EN](#)

The Transnistrian Issue : Moving beyond the Status-Quo

Publication type Study

Date 26-10-2012

External author Stefan Wolff (University of Birmingham, the UK)

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword autonomous movement | economic geography | Europe | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | Moldova | national sovereignty | organised crime | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | Russia | settlement of disputes | social affairs | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | the EU's international role | Ukraine

Summary The conflict over the Transnistrian region dates back to the end of the Soviet Union and the establishment of an independent Moldovan state. However, until recently very little tangible progress has been made towards a sustainable conflict settlement. With the resumption of official talks in the 5+2 conflict settlement process, the Transnistrian issue is now relatively high up on the political agenda of all the parties involved, and the need for maintaining this current positive momentum and developing creative solutions has taken on added importance. This study adds to existing publications by offering an up-to-date analysis of the situation in Moldova and the Transnistrian region, placing it in a wider regional context and examining the positions of the key actors in the conflict settlement process. Against this background, and drawing on an analysis of existing proposals for conflict settlement, it offers a number of suggestions how a sustainable settlement could be achieved, emphasising the need to focus on outcomes that ensure a viable Moldovan state. On this basis, recommendations are made about future EU engagement with Moldova, the Transnistrian region, and the partners in the 5+2 conflict settlement process.

Study [EN](#)

Removing Bedouins from Jerusalem's Outskirts, Jeopardising the Two-State Solution

Publication type Briefing

Date 23-10-2012

Author HAKALA Pekka

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Asia and Oceania | economic geography | ethnic discrimination | forced migration | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Israel | LAW | migration | nomadism | Palestine question | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes | SOCIAL QUESTIONS | status of Jerusalem | territorial dispute

Summary More than 80 % of the Bedouins in the Ma'ale Adummim area are refugees from the Negev in southern Israel. This is the third relocation of Bedouins living in the West Bank planned by the Israeli authorities. The Bedouin communities have highly limited access to basic services and live under constant threat of demolition orders and settler violence. The Bedouin communities face grave socio-economic problems. Israel considers that Area C in the West Bank is intended exclusively for Israeli settlements and military use. A recent court ruling backs the state's efforts to find a 'solution'. Israel plans to expand settlements, thereby ignoring the position of the international community. An expansion of Israeli settlements, with a separation barrier constructed around the entire area, will de facto annex a sizable part of the West Bank into Jerusalem. The E-1 plan would lead to geographic division of the West Bank Palestinian territory. The Israeli authorities have only offered one option to the Bedouin communities: transfer to a new location in the West Bank. The Bedouins' wishes have not been taken into account.

Briefing [EN](#), [FR](#)

Escalating Tensions between Japan and China in East Asia's Maritime Areas

Publication type Briefing

Date 01-10-2012

Author D'ANGELO Sandro

Policy area Foreign Affairs

Keyword Asia and Oceania | China | economic geography | GEOGRAPHY | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | Japan | settlement of disputes | territorial dispute

Summary A longstanding territorial dispute between China and Japan — and Taiwan as well — has recently reignited, bringing with it old nationalist animosities. The dispute focuses on a group of uninhabited islands near the coast of Taiwan—called 'Senkaku' by the Japanese and 'Diaoyu' by the Chinese. On 10 September, the Japanese government announced it had reached a deal with the owner of three of the islands to buy them for 2.05 billion yen (around EUR 20 million). The decision, which is expected to be finalised in the following weeks, has resuscitated tensions with China and Taiwan, both of which claim sovereignty over the islands.

Briefing [EN](#)

[Iranian Nuclear Talks : Has the Time for Diplomacy Run Out ?](#)

Publication type [Briefing](#)

Date 21-06-2012

Author D'ANGELO Sandro | GRISORIO Martire Andrea

Policy area [Foreign Affairs](#) | [Security and Defence](#)

Keyword [Asia and Oceania](#) | [common security and defence policy](#) | [defence](#) | [economic geography](#) | [electrical and nuclear industries](#) | [ENERGY](#) | [EU institutions and European civil service](#) | [European construction](#) | [EUROPEAN UNION](#) | [GEOGRAPHY](#) | [High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy](#) | [international affairs](#) | [International Energy Agency](#) | [international issue](#) | [international negotiations](#) | [INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS](#) | [INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS](#) | [international security](#) | [Iran](#) | [nuclear fuel](#) | [nuclear weapon](#) | [political geography](#) | [settlement of disputes](#) | [world organisations](#)

Summary The negotiations on the Iranian nuclear programme between Iran and the P5+1 group (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany), which resumed in Moscow on 18 and 19 June 2012, have failed to produce a deal. Iran reiterated its right to develop nuclear energy under the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) without further limitations. On the other hand, the P5+1 countries held to their aim of curtailing Iran's enrichment activities. The two parties failed even to agree on a new round of negotiations.

[Briefing](#) [EN](#)

[Proceedings of the Workshop on "Transatlantic Economic Relations"](#)

Publication type [Study](#)

Date 15-06-2012

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MATTLI Walter (Oxford University, UK) ,
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DOVER Robert (Dover and Jones Ltd, UK)

Policy area [Foreign Affairs](#) | [Global Governance](#) | [International Trade](#)

Keyword [America](#) | [Asia and Oceania](#) | [China](#) | [cooperation policy](#) | [economic conditions](#) | [economic cooperation](#) | [economic geography](#) | [economic growth](#) | [ECONOMICS](#) | [EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS](#) | [FINANCE](#) | [financing and investment](#) | [foreign investment](#) | [GEOGRAPHY](#) | [INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS](#) | [international security](#) | [international trade](#) | [investment abroad](#) | [labour market](#) | [labour market](#) | [liberalisation of the market](#) | [political geography](#) | [settlement of disputes](#) | [TRADE](#) | [trade policy](#) | [trade relations](#) | [United States](#)

Summary Proceedings of the Workshop on "Transatlantic Economic Relations", held on 30 May 2012 in Brussels.

[Study](#) [EN](#)

[Syria: current situation and background](#)

Publication type [At a Glance](#)

Date 01-07-2011

Author NEEDHAM Christopher

Policy area [Foreign Affairs](#)

Keyword [Asia and Oceania](#) | [economic geography](#) | [European construction](#) | [EUROPEAN UNION](#) | [GEOGRAPHY](#) | [government violence](#) | [human rights](#) | [international affairs](#) | [INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS](#) | [international sanctions](#) | [international security](#) | [LAW](#) | [political geography](#) | [political situation](#) | [political unrest](#) | [POLITICS](#) | [politics and public safety](#) | [regional security](#) | [rights and freedoms](#) | [settlement of disputes](#) | [Syria](#) | [the EU's international role](#)

Summary Public demonstrations since March have met with state violence, resulting in many deaths. The regime is expected to stay in control, at least in the short run, through its mighty security apparatus and a lack of sufficiently widespread anti-government support.

[At a Glance](#) [EN](#)

Implementing the EU Concept on Mediation : Learning from the Cases of Sudan and the Great Lakes

Publication type Study

Date 13-06-2011

External author Roger MIDDLETON (Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, UK), Paul MELLY (Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, UK) and Alex VINES (Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, UK)

Policy area Development and Humanitarian Aid | Foreign Affairs

Keyword Africa | Burundi | common foreign and security policy | cooperation policy | Democratic Republic of the Congo | economic aid | economic geography | EU institutions and European civil service | European construction | EUROPEAN UNION | foreign policy | GEOGRAPHY | international affairs | international organisation | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | non-governmental organisation | non-governmental organisations | operation of the Institutions | political geography | Rwanda | settlement of disputes | Sudan | the EU's international role

Summary This report concludes that the European Union can play an important role in mediation efforts to prevent or end conflict, but that to do so most effectively it needs to become more coherent and flexible in its approach. As a pre-requisite, the EU needs to develop a broader awareness of the motivations and strengths it brings to mediation efforts. Preventing or ending conflict through mediation is a concern for the EU and an area where the Union believes that it can play a useful role. In 2009 the EU adopted the 'EU Concept on Mediation and Dialogue Capacities'. However, despite worthwhile aspirations, this has yet to be fully integrated into EU structures and systems and is not widely known. This report assesses the Concept and the role that the EU has played in mediation, and related efforts to resolve crises and consolidate peace and stability, through a detailed analysis of two case studies -- Sudan and the Great Lakes region of Africa. Our research found that at times the EU is well placed to take a leading role in mediation. This was true in the Great Lakes, where the Union has a history of serious engagement and influence. But in Sudan the EU has not been well positioned to be a lead mediator, although it has played a useful role in supporting, and sometimes financing, the efforts of others. The report suggests that a number of institutional reforms could improve the effectiveness of the EU with regards to mediation. At a time of financial austerity in particular, when member states are constrained in the resources they can commit to mediation efforts, the EU has the opportunity to demonstrate real value as a force multiplier, rather than a duplicator to or distraction from the efforts of member states and others. The effectiveness of the EU as a mediator is intimately tied up with its effectiveness as a foreign policy actor. Well thought out and effective support to mediation efforts will play an important role in defining the EU's developing external reputat

[Study EN](#)

Analysis of the EU's Assistance to Moldova

Publication type In-Depth Analysis

Date 25-11-2008

External author Andris Spruds (lead author) ; Renars Danelsons and Vadim Kononenko (co-authors)

Policy area Democracy | Financial and Banking Issues | Foreign Affairs | Human Rights

Keyword civil society | cooperation policy | democratisation | economic cooperation | economic geography | Europe | European construction | European neighbourhood policy | EUROPEAN UNION | executive power and public service | financial aid | freedom of the press | GEOGRAPHY | human rights | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | Moldova | political cooperation | political geography | POLITICS | politics and public safety | rights and freedoms | settlement of disputes

Summary The European Union has intensified its political and economic cooperation with Moldova, which is one of the largest financial recipients from the EU per capita. The EU assistance is increasingly moving towards a sectoral approach. Major projects focus on strengthening democratic institutions and public administration, supporting civil society, human rights and freedom of media, reforming the social assistance and educational system, and improving border control and management. The financial assistance to Moldova has proved to be generally relevant, effective and efficient for Moldova's modernization process. However, Moldova's domestic constraints and lack of more strategic vision on the EU side for its relations with Moldova is an essential obstacle in ensuring the EU long-term sustainable contribution to the country's development and Europeanization.

[In-Depth Analysis EN](#)

Human Rights and Frozen Conflicts in the Eastern Neighbourhood

Publication type In-Depth Analysis

Date 07-11-2007

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London office and Central European University, Budapest

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Human Rights

Keyword Caucasus countries | Commonwealth of Independent States | economic geography | Europe | European construction | European Court of Human Rights | European neighbourhood policy | European organisations | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | human rights | INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | LAW | Moldova | OSCE | political geography | political rights | rights and freedoms | Russia | settlement of disputes | Ukraine | United Nations | UNO | world organisations

[In-Depth Analysis EN](#)

The Eu and Georgia: Time Perspectives in Conflict Resolution

Publication type In-Depth Analysis

Date 12-10-2007

External author Bruno Coppieters

Policy area Foreign Affairs | Security and Defence

Keyword conflict prevention | economic geography | Europe | European construction | European neighbourhood policy | EUROPEAN UNION | GEOGRAPHY | Georgia | international law | INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS | international security | international security | LAW | national sovereignty | political geography | Russia | settlement of disputes

In-Depth Analysis [EN](#)