

Brussels blog round up for 28 April – 4 May 2012: Political winds are blowing against Germany, calls to boycott Ukraine and Euro 2012, and is Schengen under threat?

May 4 2012

Chris Gilson and [Julian Kirchherr](#) take a look at the week in Brussels blogging.

The EU Centre

In the wake of the financial and economic crisis, freedom of movement is under attack in the EU. *The Centre for European Reform* explores why and outlines the reasons why France may [leave the Schengen area](#). However, each Member State – including the United Kingdom – is reliant on the EU. The *Honeyball Buzz* is still surprised that David Cameron admits [Great Britain's dependence](#) on exports to the Eurozone.

Meanwhile, *Martinned* argues that a “[religious observance of the principle of subsidiarity is essential](#)” to ensure the EU's democratic legitimacy. Healthy democracy requires both a vertical and horizontal balance of powers.

EU Foreign policy and the European neighbourhood

Who will be the next Member State of the European Union? *The New Federalist* argues that [Iceland should not join](#) the European Union because of its indebtedness, while the *Fride Blog* calls for a strategic partnership with the Gulf region: “[The EU should take the plunge.](#)” The *European Council on Foreign Relations* looks at China's relationship with ‘[The New Europe](#)’, which includes many non-EU countries. Is this undermining the EU's ability to present a united front to China?

The German Marshall Fund blog ponders whether we are seeing a [new alignment in the Eastern Mediterranean](#); between Israel, Cyprus and Greece, especially in the area of energy security. Writing at BlogActiv.eu, *EU Logos* discusses this week's [EU-ASEAN](#) summit, which aims to strengthen the EU's ties with Asian nations. Later, *The New Federalist blog* looks at the [EU's ties with Africa](#), and the possibility of creating a common market by 2025.

The Euro Crisis and Greece

Many are hoping that the Fiscal Compact will revive the economies of the European Union. However, *The European Citizen* argues that the Fiscal Compact would [impose endless austerity](#), a measure which would only benefit Germany. Thus, *NPTThinking* believes that Ireland will [vote against the treaty](#). At BlogActiv.eu, *Karpenteich* thinks that the political winds in Europe are going [against Germany](#), saying that the idea that Germany knows what is best for Europe is now on the wane.

What then is the solution to the economic crisis? *Bloggingportal.eu* calls for [more growth](#) in Europe – just as *Open Europe Blog* which demands [a European Marshall Plan](#). But how does a government create sustainable economic growth? *Nucleus* at BlogActiv.eu wonders if the UK will join in this [new plan for growth](#). *Rhein on Energy and Climate*, blogging at BlogActiv.eu says that the European Investment Bank now needs to step in and start investing in infrastructure projects in order to stimulate [job creation](#).



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Protesilaos Stavrou comments on [the fall of the Dutch government](#) last week in the wake of the European financial crisis. It collapsed due to its failure to reach a compromise over the country's budget which would comply with the Maastricht convergence criteria. Meanwhile, *Nada es Gratis* says that Spain is now experiencing a "[slow motion stop](#)", with stoppages and even reversals of capital inflows into the country.

The *OFCE Blog* explores [the implications of the crisis](#) for the European middle class. Supposedly, the middle class is destabilizing.

French elections

A Fistful of Euros has a [round-up](#) between the two election rounds, saying that the interval brings anyone "with a grudge [against the candidates] boiling to the surface". Meanwhile *Vasistas* looks at Sarkozy and Hollande's [policies](#) on digital freedom and net neutrality.

According to *Open Europe*, Italian Prime Minister, Mario Monti, would be happy to see a victory for Hollande, as it would [weaken France's ties with Germany](#), potentially giving Italy a chance to take France's place as Germany's strong economic ally.

Across Europe

At BlogActiv.eu, *Con acento Hispano* looks at '[neopopulism](#)' in Europe, with the rise of parties of the extreme right, such as the Front National in France and the Freedom Party in the Netherlands.

Towards the end of the week, there are growing calls for a boycott of the Euro 2012 football completion, hosted by the Ukraine, due to allegations that the former prime minister, Yulia Tymoshenko, now in prison on corruption charges, has been beaten in prison. *Debating Europe* asks, should European leaders boycott the competition? Meanwhile at BlogActiv.eu, *Marek Siwec MEP on Poland and Europe* [argues against](#) a boycott, saying that football is a way to engage with politics.

Looking at the [Greek elections](#) this weekend, *Open Europe* concludes that a coalition between the New Democrats and PASOK party is the most likely outcome, but they cannot see it lasting a full term.

And finally...

What has Herman been up to? He has been busy: This week, he met [Karim Massimov](#), the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan. And he shook hands with [Li Keqiang](#), the Vice Prime Minister of China, and gave a [speech](#) at an EU conference on International Affairs. Keep up the good work, Herman!

The European Citizen argues that a vivid European blogosphere would not lead to [a vivid European public sphere](#).

Worryingly, Google's *European Public Policy Blog* calls the data collected by governments a "[gold mine](#)".

And: Don't forget [Heidelberg](#)!

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Note: This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of EUROPP – European Politics and Policy, nor of the London School of Economics.

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