

# Brussels blog round up for 14-20 April 2012: 17 million are now unemployed in Europe, France and Germany plan border controls, and can the Internet revive the Greek economy?

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

## The EU Centre

The European Commission has launched a new program for employment which is supposed to create [more than 17 million jobs](#), reports *PressEurop*. Europe needs this many jobs because 17 million people are [currently unemployed](#) in the EU. Hence, economic growth is [the theme for the spring](#), argues Michael Berendt on *BlogActiv.eu*.

Do we need [more Europe](#)? The President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, has always fought for the United States of Europe, reports *Open Europe Blog*. But “today I know that this is not possible. [We will not turn Germany and France into California and Florida.](#)” What do you think?

Europe of Human Rights, blogging at *BlogActiv.eu* looks at the various [amendments](#) governments are proposing to the European Convention of Human Rights, while Nucleus wonders if Britain can [reform](#) the European Court of Human Rights.

The next Fisheries Council meeting on April 26<sup>th</sup> and April 27<sup>th</sup> will continue the debate among EU Member States’ ministers on the future Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). *Polscieu* comments on [the latest developments](#).

## EU Foreign policy and the European neighbourhood

The *Fride Blog* looks at France’s [prominent role in EU defence policy](#), saying that the policy may struggle to survive without French leadership.

The *European Citizen* says that the EU is still [united against](#) Switzerland’s moves to curb immigration from the EU’s 2004 accession states, saying that it is contrary to their agreement with Switzerland on the free movement of people, while the FT’s *Brussels Blog* reports on Franco-German plans to impose [border restrictions](#) for up to 30 days if they believe that other EU countries have not secured their borders properly.

## The Euro Crisis and Greece

What is the solution to the Euro crisis? *Jon Worth* argues that [the last initiative Europe needs](#) now is another attempt to reform its institutions, while Google’s *European Public Policy Blog* argues that



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making more use of the Internet in Greece could be a path to [revive the country's economy](#). *Neelie Kroes* Vice-President of the European Commission agrees, saying that ICT is now the [brightest spot](#) in the European labour market.

Would more free trade help Europe recover? *Debating Europe* recently interviewed Pia Olsen Dyhr, the Danish Minister for Trade and Investment. Does she think that liberalized trade between the EU and the US would be a good idea? [Read the post](#). Meanwhile, the *German Marshall Fund blog* makes the case for a US-Europe [charter on energy](#) to ensure fair prices for oil and gas.

Many economists argue that – besides more trade – a higher inflation rate in the Eurozone would also be beneficial. First, it would reduce the real value of debts, thus easing the broader deleverage of the European economy; and secondly it would [create “spending illusions”](#) that could lead people down the path of spending their money instead of “hoarding” it. *Protesilaos Stavrou* discusses why this argument may not hold. Meanwhile, *Rhein on Energy and Climate* at *BlogActiv.eu* is dismayed that Greece's central bank is considering paying an [€100 million dividend](#) for 2011 (mostly to the Greek treasury), given that the country has only narrowly escaped insolvency.

The Euro crisis makes the European Union less attractive for many of its members, and *Bagehot's Notebook* [wonders](#) whether Great Britain will leave the EU. Too many EU financial rules have been hastily drafted since the credit crunch, with too little heed paid to potential costs, the argument goes. Hence, Great Britain might be better off leaving the EU. *Open Europe Blog* calls upon David Cameron to set out [a clear vision for Great Britain's place](#) in Europe. *Martinned* wonders if the EU countries will be [scared](#) into making reforms, while the *Centre for European Reform* is concerned that despite all the recent changes to Europe's economic governance, the Eurozone's decentralized fiscal structure makes it [fundamentally unstable](#).

*Fride* does not think that Germany is becoming [Europe's hegemon](#).

## Across Europe

Two years ago, 96 people, including the then President Lech Kaczyński and former President of the Polish Government in Exile Ryszard Kaczorowski, were killed in a tragic plane accident in Smolensk. *The 6<sup>th</sup> Sense* argues that today [we still do not know what exactly happened](#).

How will the French presidential elections [affect Europe](#)? Currently, the “Merkozy” duo (German chancellor Angela Merkel and French president Nicolas Sarkozy) dominates any initiative the European Union undertakes to solve its debt and currency crisis. *Debating Europe* discusses how a new leader in France might create a new balance of power in Europe – with possibly vast policy implications.

*Croatia, the war, and the future*, looking at [tax evasion](#), comments that as much as 45 billion Croation Kunas may be owed to the government in unpaid taxes.

Writing on *BlogActiv.eu*, EU Logos find that [crime](#) has fallen in Europe by 6 per cent over the last ten years, while the *Fride Blog* looks at Spanish [trade diplomacy](#) in light of Argentina's recent nationalisation of Spanish oil company YPF.

## And finally...

What has Herman been up to? This week, the President of the European Council [met Ban Ki-Moon](#), Secretary General of the United Nations. He also [shook hands with Joachim Gauck](#), the President of Germany. And he [chatted with Abdullah II](#), the King of Jordan. Keep up the good work, Herman!

Across Europe, innovative Internet start-ups are making use of web possibilities to try out new ideas

and bring them to market. *Neelie Kroes* is now looking for [Europe's hottest start-up talent](#) in the European Commission's [Tech All Stars](#) competition.

*Jon Worth* now has [more than 5,000 followers](#) on Twitter. Congratulations!

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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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