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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Delegate,

Welcome to PMUNC 2017! My name is Aleksandar Vladicic and I will be your chair for the European Council this year. I am a rising junior at Princeton University majoring in Politics with certificates in both Contemporary European Politics and Society, and Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. I am a part of Princeton’s International Relations Council and a fellow at Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination. I’ve chaired the last two PMUNCs, but I’m particularly excited to welcome you to the upcoming one, as we will be discussing some of the most pressing issues facing Europe in 2017.

I am looking forward to chairing our discussions on both the state of foreign relations of the European Union and certain aspects of the EU’s internal affairs, including terrorism, xenophobia and ultranationalism. Our European Council sessions will attempt to address the future of the EU's relations with the UK, US and Russia, and the foreign policy coordination between the Member States in times of crisis. Britain’s withdrawal from the EU (Brexit) challenged the decades-long process of European integration and thus, questioned the success of the EU. Concentrating on the effect of the EU's foreign policy on the stability of the Union, the committee will have to create a framework on EU foreign policy, especially with regards to the United Kingdom, but also NATO and Russia.

The second part of our discussion will focus on some of the internal affairs of the EU, such as the imminent danger of rising nationalist movements, ultranationalism and xenophobia to
the European integration processes and the prosperity of some people living in Europe. Eurosceptics and other groups arguing for a greater degree of national sovereignty often organize to protest against their respective countries’ participation in the European institutional frameworks. The recent migration crisis deeply challenged both the motto of the EU, “united in diversity,” and the European Commission’s commitment to building “an ever-closer union.” The European Council will try to identify the sources of the rising anti-European feeling, xenophobia and ultra-nationalism in Europe and find some new ways to prevent them and strengthen coordination between the Member States.

In preparation for the European Council, I would encourage you to carefully analyze the discussions held at our Council’s previous sessions, and gather and organize as much relevant information as possible pertaining to your country’s position and interests. In case you have any questions, please send me an email to vladicic@princeton.edu. I’m looking forward to meeting you in November!

Best,

Aleksandar
The European Council is a branch of the European Union that comprises the heads of state or government of the Member States, along with the President of the European Council (currently Donald Tusk) and the President of the European Commission (currently Jean-Claude Juncker). It was established in 1975, but formalized in the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009.

The European Council does not hold any formal legislative power, but serves as a strategic and crisis solving body of the EU. Therefore, the European Council does not negotiate or adopt EU laws. It defines the Union’s general political directions and priorities, i.e. sets the political agenda by identifying issues of concern and actions to take. At its meeting in Brussels on June 27, 2014, the European Council adopted five priority areas to guide the EU's work over the next five years: 1) jobs, growth, and competitiveness, 2) empowering and protecting citizens, 3) energy and climate policies, 4) freedom, security, and justice, and 5) the EU as a strong global actor.

Apart from these functions, the European Council exercises powers of appointment of its own President, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (currently Federica Mogherini), and the President of the European Central Bank (currently Mario Draghi). It also influences police and justice planning and can suspend the membership rights.

The European Council adopts “conclusions” at each meeting, but for the purposes of the conference, we will stick to the traditional UN resolution writing. We will address the issues of concern to the EU and try to identify possible solutions to them, having in mind the Strategic Agenda for the EU adopted in 2014.
TOPIC A: BREXIT

Introduction

In a 2016 referendum in the United Kingdom (UK), about 52% of voters voiced their support to leave the European Union. Nine months after the vote, on March 29, 2017, the UK invoked Article 50 of the Treaty of the European Union, which sets out the process by which member states may withdraw from the European Union. According to the Article, the timeframe allowed for withdrawal is two years, and can be extended only by the unanimous agreement of all EU members states\(^1\).

If no agreement or extension is reached by March 29, 2019, the UK will immediately leave the EU and all the agreements between the UK and EU will cease to apply. Article 50 does not specify whether the withdrawal process can be reversed. Since the UK is the first country in history to trigger Article 50, politicians and lawmakers are split over the possibility to revoke the process. While British Prime Minister Theresa May claims that “there can be no turning back”, the President of the European Council Donald Tusk believes that the only alternative to “hard Brexit” is “no Brexit.”\(^2\) According to the Treaty of the European Union, a state which has withdrawn from the EU may still request to rejoin the Union under the procedure referred to in Article 49\(^3\).

History


After the British voted “leave,” polling agencies reassessed the unpredicted outcome, trying to understand what were the main factors that shaped the voters’ decision. Rowena Mason, political correspondent for The Guardian offered the following assessment: "Polling suggests discontent with the scale of migration to the UK has been the biggest factor pushing Britons to vote out, with the contest turning into a referendum on whether people are happy to accept free movement in return for free trade."\(^4\) A Times of London columnist, Philip Collins, went a step further in his analysis: "This was a referendum about immigration disguised as a referendum about the European Union."\(^5\)

To understand the negative attitude toward immigrants in the UK, Rose Meleady of England’s University of East Anglia conducted and published a study in the British Journal of Social Psychology, which shows that the fear of immigration can drive prejudice against immigrants. She found that an increased contact with immigrants in the UK on everyday basis improved attitudes toward them.\(^6\)

The Leave campaign hoped that Brexit will alleviate European pressure on Britain to accept and process more asylum seekers coming from the Middle East or elsewhere and allow Britain to institute its own immigration laws and procedures. British PM Theresa May said that one of the main messages she has taken from the Leave campaign is the need for reduction in immigration. She reaffirmed her mission to bring the net level of migration, i.e. the number of people leaving the UK against the number of immigrants, to “a sustainable level.”

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Britain has repeatedly emphasized that it would like to continue providing maximum freedom of trade to its own and European companies in a single market, but not to the determinant of its national sovereignty. Both European and British sides have unique interests in negotiating the Brexit deal, but the European Union leaders have made it clear that they would not allow the British side to cherry-pick the conditions of exit.

![European Union map]

German Chancellor Angela Merkel announced at the German Parliament that the United Kingdom can only remain in the European Single Market if it accepted the EU migrants, i.e. “the freedoms of movement of goods, capital, services, and people.” When British Prime Minister Theresa May understood that the Brexit deal would not proceed as planned, her administration proposed a free trade agreement between the EU and the UK, which replaced the idea that the UK would stay in the European Single Market. This proposal faced opposition from the EU, since European negotiators want to first “divorce” from the UK, and only then discuss future cooperation.
Current situation

On May 22, 2017, the European Council adopted negotiating directives and authorized the start of the Brexit negotiations. Negotiators identified the question of residency rights as one of the priorities in deciding the terms of exit. Citizens’ rights are the rights and protections offered to all EU citizens, including free movement and residence, equal treatment and a wide range of other rights under EU law regarding work, education, social security and health. More than four million people will be affected directly. About three million people from other EU states live in the UK, and 1.2 million Brits live in other EU countries. Many have turned to Ireland, applying for citizenship, in order to maintain the EU citizens’ rights, since Ireland is an EU Member State.

Prime Minister Theresa May put forth a deal, according to which the EU citizens legally staying in the UK would not be forced to leave the UK. In addition, every EU citizen living in the United Kingdom for at least five years up until a specified deadline between March 2017 and March 2019 would enjoy the same rights as a UK citizen, conditional on the European Commission reciprocating the offer for the British expatriates in the EU. Even though the European negotiators have looked favorably upon certain points of the British proposal, they still find it difficult to accept it as a whole in its current form, due to a loss of certain privileges EU citizens in the UK currently enjoy. Those privileges include the protection of the European Court of Justice and the unconditional right to bring family members into the UK from other countries. The European

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leaders insist that the European Court of Justice should continue to provide the same legal protection to the EU citizens in the UK after the UK officially withdraws.

At the same time, campaigners for British nationals in Europe have written to Theresa May to plead with the Prime Minister not to throw them “under the Brexit bus”⁹. British nationals in Europe is the association of eleven citizen groups across the EU, which urges the British government to stop treating the citizens’ rights as an immigration issue and make better progress on deciding the deal's terms.¹⁰ They want Theresa May to promise to ensure the status quo for EU citizens in the UK, so that they could get a mirror deal for the British in the EU.

Guardian put together a list of likely points of contention around which most of the disagreements over the citizens’ rights are based¹¹. Those include:

1. Start date: The UK’s preferred cut-off date is 29 March 2017, when article 50 was triggered, whereas the EU wants it to be the day that Britain formally leaves.

2. Family union: EU nationals who marry after March 2019 will lose their right to bring family members to the UK unless they pass the minimum income test required of UK citizens who want to bring in non-EU family members.

3. Students: There is no clarity on whether students allowed to finish courses will be able to stay on to work after their studies.

4. Application process: EU nationals who have already gone through the often torturous and sometimes expensive process of attaining permanent UK residence will have to go through another registration process.

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¹⁰ Ibid.

5. Right to leave and come back: Unless they meet certain requirements, EU nationals with settled status in the UK risk losing it – and therefore their right to return – if they leave Britain for more than two years.

6. Two classes of EU citizen: The UK suggests that unlike those who arrive before the yet-to-be-agreed cutoff date, EU nationals who arrive after it may stay for a “temporary period” but “should have no expectation of guaranteed settled status.”

7. Voting rights: The UK proposal makes no mention of whether EU nationals with settled status will be able to vote in local elections.

8. Enforcement: The UK insists British courts must enforce the agreement in the UK, while the EU wants the European commission to monitor it and the European Court of Justice – or an equivalent body following ECJ rules – to enforce it. The UK has repeatedly said Brexit must mean leaving the jurisdiction of the ECJ.

Many voters initially opposed the Brexit deal, having believed that the economic consequences of leaving the EU would be harsh for Britain. Others elected to leave for the economic reasons, hoping to strengthen British economic independence and security. Without EU membership, UK risks the free trade agreement it had with the EU countries. The EU is Britain single most important market for exported goods, and with the free trade agreement lifted, the UK will need to operate under the WTO rules, which includes paying tariffs and other border taxes to the European countries.

Since the EU is a multinational union with a single budget, certain MS receive more than they give, while others give more then they get back. The UK is one of the net contributors to the EU Budget, coming third in this category, just after Germany and France. The gross contribution to the EU Budget in 2015 was £17.5bn, but the UK rebate was worth £4.9bn [additional £4.5bn was paid back to the UK for farm subsidies and other programs]. The Leave campaign repeatedly
underlined the financial benefits of Brexit: the gross cost of £350m weekly would be eliminated, billions of pounds would be available for other purposes, and the UK government would be able to decide how to allocate the money the EU transfers back to it.12

In the first three months of 2017, just a few weeks after the Brexit negotiations were triggered, the Eurozone expanded by 0.5%, which is a rate 0.2% times stronger than the one observed in the UK. The UK experienced slower growth in the beginning of the 2017 due to a slowdown in consumer spending and retail sales.13 On the other hand, the weaker economies in Europe started rapidly expanding, even at the rate of 3% in case of Spain, thus pushing the overall rate of economic growth in the EU upwards. However, the EU will need to find a source to fill the gap that is going to be created when the third largest contributor to its budget is gone. Certain countries that used to be on the receiving end will be forced to switch gears and instead have net positive contributions. Otherwise, big European economies, like Germany, France or the Netherlands will have to increase their support for the economically weaker members of the Union.

Further, since the EU is an international organization with assets and liabilities and since Britain currently contributes to the EU budget, Brexit would necessitate the British to pay the “divorce bill.” Member States pay for infrastructure programs, social programs, scientific research, and wages and pensions for EU bureaucrats. EC President Jean-Claude Juncker said recently that Britain will need to pay roughly £50 billion ($63 bn) as it leaves and Britain promised it will honor its commitments without agreeing to any exact cost.14 It remains unknown what the bill will amount to.

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14 IBID.
The cost of withdrawal may be determined only closer to the end of the negotiations since this fee depends on the nature of the future relationship between the UK and the EU.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies published a report funded by the Economic and Social Research Council which warned that “Britain would lose up to £70 billion in reduced economic growth if it didn't retain Single Market membership, with new trade deals unable to make up the difference.” On the other hand, many believed that leaving the EU will over time have a net positive effect on the UK since the strict regulations that the multinational institution like the European Union imposes on its members would be lifted. Experts disagreed whether the unpredictability and uncertainty of the market will drive businesses abroad, but the data shows that the British GDP increased by 0.7% over the last three months of 2016, possibly due to the better than expected performance of the manufacturing industry.

However, the pound has dropped drastically compared to its value before the Referendum. It has been trading about 15% lower compared to the dollar, and 12% lower compared to the euro than it was before the Referendum. When the Brexit bill passed, the pound hit an eight-week low compared to dollar. Despite the surge in the value of the British currency, the investor confidence is still holding up well – the UK stocks have risen since the Referendum.

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15 Steven Swinford, “Britain could be up to £70billion worse off if it leaves the Single Market after Brexit, IFS warns”, The Telegraph, August 10, 2016, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/08/10/britain-could-be-up-to-70billion-worse-off-if-it-leaves-the-sing/

16 Ibid.

As many deals that the UK as an EU Member State will cease to exist after the Brexit vote, the UK will need to sign multiple new agreements, 759 in total according to Financial Times, excluding the UN and WTO opt-in accords, and “narrow agreements,” which additionally need to be dealt with.  

Throughout the Leave campaign and after the Referendum, the British side has repeatedly stated that they want to see the end of the European Court of Justice. Rulings taken by the European Court of Justice would no longer be binding by the UK law. This is expected to produce a great deal of legal trouble for both sides, since both European and British economic agents and courts could interpret the same legislation differently. The EU wants the European Court of Justice to keep overseeing the rights granted to EU citizens even if they might live in the UK.

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18 Paul McClean, “After Brexit: the UK will need to renegotiate at least 759 treaties,” *Financial Times*, May 30, 2017, [https://www.ft.com/content/f1435a8e-372b-11e7-bce4-9023f8c0fd2e](https://www.ft.com/content/f1435a8e-372b-11e7-bce4-9023f8c0fd2e)  
Another possible point of contention between the two entities is the border control. Even though the UK is an island country, it will still share the border with the EU, since Northern Ireland, being a part of the UK, shares the border with the Republic of Ireland, which is an EU Member State. The UK residents currently enjoy free movement across the border to Ireland (thus the EU), which as well pertains to the free movement of goods and services. Closing this border could bring tension to the region, which was only recently torn by conflict.

In addition, the fear of Scotland leaving the UK, and possibly remaining in the EU, seems to be greater than ever. About 55% of Scotland voted to remain in the UK in a referendum in 2014. However, unlike England and Wales, majority of Scots and Northern Irish wanted to remain a part of the EU. Many argue that a second referendum in Scotland should be expected soon, which would open the possibilities of Scotland remaining in the EU, another border between the UK and the EU, and a tone of other political, economic and legal issues. Scottish PM Nicola Sturgeon has already asked for permission for a second referendum to be held, but has subsequently given up on the idea after losing at the 2017 general election.

Brexit negotiations could unfold in many different ways. Aside from changing its mind and requesting to rejoin the Union, the United Kingdom has multiple alternatives. The United Kingdom could apply to join the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), remain in the European Economic Area (EEA) and therefore continue to have access to the Single Market. But this would mean allowing the free movement of people and contributing to the EU Budget, which is something the UK is not likely to sign on to right now. Norway, for example, being a part of the EEA but not the EU, provided around £586 million to the EU budget in 2014. Or, the UK could decide to go
alone and negotiate bilateral agreements with the EU along the lines of the Swiss model\textsuperscript{20}. Other reasonable alternatives are welcome as well.

**Key terms**

**Brexit** - the popular term for the prospective withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU)

**Hard Brexit** - Favored by ardent Brexiteers, a hard Brexit arrangement would likely see the UK give up full access to the single market and full access of the customs union along with the EU. The arrangement would prioritize giving Britain full control over its borders, making new trade deals and applying laws within its own territory.

**Divorce Bill** - The EU has been clear that when the UK leaves, it is expected to pay off its share of the liabilities. There have been no official estimates published of the size of the bill. In the opening negotiations both sides will seek to agree on the methodology for calculating the bill, and the actual figure will be finalized at the end of negotiations.

**The European Court of Justice** - the highest court in the European Union in matters of European Union law.

**The European Council** - The European Council, charged with defining the European Union's (EU) overall political direction and priorities, is the institution of the EU that comprises the heads of state or government of the member states, along with the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission.

**Questions**

Delegates will have to continue negotiating the Brexit deal. They should concentrate on answering the following questions:

Is “hard Brexit” possible?

Will the EU (continue to) allow the British to cherry-pick the Brexit agreements?

Is there going to be a transitioning period once the Britain leaves the EU?

What are the borders between the UK and the EU going to look like, particularly with Ireland?

How are the MS going to finance what used to be British contributions to the EU Budget? How will the judicial matters be settled in future? How much is UK paying for the Brexit deal?

Other questions which come up as our debate proceeds will be discussed as well.
TOPIC B: MIGRATION AND SECURITY

Introduction

Between January 2015 and March 2016, over a million asylum seekers, but also economic migrants and even Islamic State militants disguised as refugees or migrants have crossed the border of the European Union. Majority of the asylum seekers came from the Middle East, particularly Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, but also Africa, and Kosovo, having fled deteriorating humanitarian situation, never ending conflicts or poverty in their home countries.\textsuperscript{21}

The flow of Syrian refugees to neighboring countries started during the onset of the civil war in 2011. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 4.8 million have fled to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq, and 6.6 million are internally displaced within Syria. Women and children make up about three quarters of the total number of Syrians who were forced to leave their country. More than a million asylum were processed in the EU during the massive inflow of refugees in 2015 and 2016. Since 2016, however, the number of asylum seekers in the EU has dropped exponentially, but there remains a concern over how to properly deal with those who have already been granted asylums in the EU, but also those who are still incoming.

At the same time, following the migration crisis, the EU faced a series of terrorist attacks. A total of 142 failed, foiled or completed terrorist attacks just occurred in 2016 on European soil, with more than 1000 people arrested for those offences. The EU identified fighting terrorism as a top priority and adapted a comprehensive approach to tackle the issue of “foreign fighters,” which includes: “strengthened rules to prevent new forms of terrorism, reinforced checks at external

\textsuperscript{21} Operation Portal Refugee Situations, \texttt{http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean?page=1&view=grid\&Type\%255B\%255D=3\&Search=\%2523monthly\%2523
borders, enhanced firearms controls, and creating a dedicated body to curb terrorist propaganda online.”

History

Although Germany has had the most asylum applications in 2015, Hungary had the highest in proportion to its population, despite having closed its border with Croatia in an attempt to stop the flow in October 2015. “Tensions in the EU have been rising because of the disproportionate burden faced by some countries, particularly the countries where the majority of migrants have been arriving: Greece, Italy and Hungary”.  

During the migration crisis in 2015, Hungary became overburdened with asylum applications, so much that it stopped processing them. On August 24, 2015, Germany used “sovereignty clause” to assume responsibility for processing application of asylum seekers despite not being legally obliged to such action, i.e. by the Dublin Regulation. Germany thus took about a million refugees in 2015 and 2016, which is more than the rest of the MS did altogether. Many Germans took to the streets to express disapproval of Chancellor Merkel’s immigration policies, having blamed her for the terrorist attacks in the country and across Europe.

In the situation of chaos, control systems were not always maximally effective and since there are no internal borders in between the MS due to the Schengen Agreement, terrorists disguised as refugees and other illegal immigrants freely moved across Europe once their asylum was granted. One of the major strategies to combat illegal immigration was the EU’s deal with Turkey. In order for Turkey to limit people smugglers and accept migrants deported from Greece, the EU had to make certain concessions. These concessions include billions of euros for assistance to Turkey, a

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promise of a visa-free travel, and a revival of negotiations for Turkey’s accession to the EU. Many European citizens openly protested what they perceived as a bad political judgement or “too much offered for two little in return”. The deal between the two entities has not been entirely effective - first, Turkish President Recep Erdogan once threatened the EU with scrapping the agreement, and second, hundreds of refugees arrived in Greece after having been deported to Turkey.

On August 20, 2015, Macedonia sealed its border with Greece thus blocking the main migration route to Western Europe. Migrants who arrived in Greece (on the EU soil) were thus stranded there without any promise of future relocation. International organizations for the protection of refugee rights have criticized the EU for having left thousands of refugees and asylum-seekers stranded in Greece in shocking conditions.

Current situation

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Even though the media has been quiet about the recent refugee situation in Greece, around 16,000 were still stranded on the Greek islands in March 2017. The Human Rights Organization Pro Asyl has accused the German federal government of “delaying the admission of refugees from southern Europe. Germany has committed itself to taking 27,500 refugees until September 2017 from Italy and Greece, as part of a so-called relocation program, but up until now, only 10 percent have come to Germany, according Pro Asyl.”

One of the major humanitarian issues during the Migration crisis in 2015 and 2016, which still happens to affect migrants travelling from Northern Africa to Europe, is the number of drownings in the Mediterranean Sea. According to the international Organization for Migration, about 2,000 people have already drowned in 2017 in the attempt to reach Italy over the Mediterranean.

To take care of incoming refugees, especially from Libya, Italy needs financial support from the EU. Instead of solidarizing with Italy, Austria announced it was ready to send troops and tanks to stop migrants crossing the border from Italy. Meanwhile, the UK has only accepted 13,000 asylum-seekers in 2016, and does not seem to be interested in providing further support. Migrant centers in Italy are overcrowded, and the government called the situation in the country “unbearable.” The EU resettlement plan has not been fully brought into effect. The country which launched the first European life-saving operation Mare Nostrum in 2013 has threatened to close humanitarian ships ports, because the situation went out of control.

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Some of the migrants are still being resettled through the quota system, but their possible return to the Middle East is also being discussed. However, Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, has recently published a study in which it proves that returning migrants back to their home countries would be an extremely costly process, amounting to 90,000 euros per person. Some migrants still live in the overcrowded camps in Greece and Italy, where they are waiting to be resettled to other EU countries. Yet many MS are reluctant to receive more migrants – by March this year, the EU has carried out only less then 10% of the targeted number of relocations MS committed themselves to in 2015. Some countries, including Hungary, Austria and Poland, have refused to participate in the resettlement program, while many Eastern European MS are participant only on a limited basis.

A series of recent terrorist attacks in the EU made people from all over the European Union worried about their safety and protection. In 2015, a total of 211 completed, failed, or foiled terrorist attacks were reported by EU states, resulting in 151 fatalities and over 360 people injured. The bombings in Brussels in March 2016 brought 32 deaths and wounded more than 300 other victims in a day of horror. Two suicide bombings occurred at Brussels Airport and another bombing at a Metro station happened in succession. A series of terrifying attacks in Paris killed 130 victims and injured hundreds of others. Gunmen and bombers hit a concert hall, a stadium, and other entertainment venues like bars and restaurants just moments apart in three coordinated teams. “1077 people were arrested in the EU for terrorism-related offences in 2015, almost half of which took place in France (424).”

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Concerns about the terrorist attacks from all over France, Belgium and the rest of the MS some suggest are related to the migrant crisis and the rising number of Muslims in Europe. Many citizens of the EU, including Germans, condemned Merkel’s migrant-welcoming policies for being responsible for the rising threat and insecurity on the continent. In Hungary, 76% of those polled by Pew said that refugees increased the likelihood of terrorism; in Poland it is 71%; across Europe, the median was 59%.

The Guardian shed light earlier in 2017 on the recent report commissioned by an EU task force which highlights security failings that facilitated terror attacks around Europe. The documents note that “all those who committed or sought to commit large-scale terror attacks in recent years crossed the EU’s external border “at some point prior to committing their attacks”. It warns that even EU citizens subject to a European arrest warrant could enter the continent freely or to leave “without being detected due to the non-systematic check of EU citizens.” A further common element between recent attacks is the appearance of many of the suspects on surveillance lists, especially national watch lists. In a number of cases, perpetrators were subject to SIS [Schengen information system] alerts, which are an important tool in the detection of suspected terrorists.”

The EU citizens used to feel much safer in their countries than they do now. Apart from worrying about the possible terrorist attacks, many are affected by increased burglaries, traffic accidents, and shootings. Earlier this year, the Stockholm police, which used to have a much easier job prior to 2015, claimed that it struggled to get their job done with several Stockholm

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neighborhoods being dominated by gangs. European politicians and security strategists are still trying to identify how to approach these issues.

Such insecurity and fear only aggravate current economic hardships that the EU faces, especially in the fields of trade and tourism. Reuters further reported that an increasing number of people from the EU MS are turning to firearms and other self-defense weapons to protect themselves. It is on us to create a responsive and thorough agenda which will answer the needs of the people of the MS, make sure our response to any future threats or attacks is adequate and functional, and make people feel more secure in the EU.

The rise of populism in Europe is usually associated with such concerns. In a series of European presidential and parliamentary elections, the populist parties’ representatives have offered platforms that attracted significant attention of the Western media, and a fair number of followers and voters across the continent. Those parties’ support was the strongest in places where the opposition to receiving more migrants from the Middle East was equally extensive. However, despite extraordinary following and high predictions that they had earned, populist parties did not have great successes in the elections themselves.

A rising number of right-wing parties and ideas has spread across the world, usually opposing the current governments and offering more radical solutions to the issues Europe faces at this time. The rise of Donald Trump in the US and the Leave campaign in the UK are usually cited as successfully elected populist voices. On the election in France and the Netherlands, on the other hand, these parties did not receive as much of support. Populist parties and ideas directly or indirectly oppose the welcoming attitude of some Europeans toward Muslim immigrants and are

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targeting and stigmatizing Muslims and their religion. Stefan Lehne for Carnegie Europe has identified some of the key features of populist parties: they are based on the crude division between “us” and “them” (and are hence not open to compromise), they lead to a decline in the rational debate, they are led by charismatic leaders, they advocate for direct democracy, national sovereignty, and have few solution to the 21-century problems.\textsuperscript{31}

Since the beginning of the Migration crisis in Europe in 2015, xenophobia was on the rise across the content. Asylum-seekers religion is usually used to explain that they do not really belong to the European continent. "There is a special problem with some of the people who’ve come here and who are of the Muslim religion who don’t want to become part of our culture," said the leader of the UK Independence party and one of the key figures who advocated for Brexit, Nigel Farage, in an interview from 2015. What exactly led to the UK voting to leave the EU on the referendum is still debatable, but the Leave campaign, NYT argues, “effectively stoked fears of an immigrant influx to garner support, and the baiting of refugees was further fanned by concerns about terrorism, the influential Eurosceptic press and by the far-right, which attributed Britain’s economic problems to immigration.”

Such xenophobia and the lack of tolerance are opposed to the primary human rights values, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi stressed that those who do not talk about the benefits of immigration but instead stir up public opinion against refugees and migrants “have a responsibility in creating a climate of xenophobia that is very worrying in today's Europe”.

Country policy

THE EC

The Commission's agenda on migration outlines an immediate response to the crisis in the Mediterranean and sets out longer term steps to manage migration in all its aspects: reducing the incentives for irregular migration, saving lives and securing external borders, a strong common asylum policy and a new policy on legal migration.

GERMANY

The German government has undertaken a series of steps to reform laws and shape public opinion in order to bring about better integration and managed migration. Germany accepted over one million refugees during what Chancellor Angela Merkel described as ‘extraordinary’ circumstances. Her migration policy caused outrage among some at the time, leading to a surge in support for the
far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party. She also said she would continue pushing for a fair
distribution of refugees around Europe because Greece and Italy were bearing a disproportionate
burden of the refugee crisis “simply because of their geography.”

FRANCE

Due to "poor housing", lower social benefits and a thorough asylum application process France is
not commonly considered attractive enough to seek asylum in. France has been repeatedly struck
by jihadist militants in recent years: since 2012, terrorists have attacked targets including a Jewish
school near Toulouse; the offices of the satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo and a kosher market; the
Bataclan concert hall and several other locations in Paris in a coordinated act of violence that killed
some 130 people in November 2015; and a seaside promenade in Nice on Bastille Day 2016 in a
truck attack that killed more than 80. In all, well over 200 people have died in the recent attacks—
and ISIS has claimed responsibility for many of them. Recently elected French president,
Emmanuel Macron, has stated in his first annual address to France’s 170 ambassadors that fighting
terrorism will be his main goal on foreign policy agenda.

HUNGARY

Facing a massive inflow of refugees and migrants, who tried to reach Europe via the so-called
Balkan Route, Hungary accused the EU of being “too slow to act” and started construction of its

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first barrier on the border with Serbia back in June 2015. In addition, the Hungarian Government has repeatedly ignored EU orders to improve conditions for migrants in a controversial border zone camp. Hungary and Poland are facing separate legal action from Brussels for refusing to take part in the refugee program.

UK

Many now argue that it was the migration crisis in Europe which shaped the British public opinion ahead of the Referendum and which finally led to Brits voting “leave.” The British PM Theresa May stated numerous times that the UK outside of the EU will control immigration more effectively. What this means for Britain is yet to be seen, but following Brexit, the UK plans to impose immigration reduction on every sector and every skill level.35

ITALY

After the closure of the Balkan route last summer thanks to an agreement between the EU and Turkey, the bulk of migrant flows, mainly from Sub-Saharan Africa, has shifted to Italy — and the country is struggling to cope. Amid non-stop arrivals and overflowing migrant camps, Italy is pleading with its European neighbors to help. The Italian government has requested that more economic migrants be repatriated, more refugees be relocated across Europe, and more financial resources and stronger border agreements between Libya and Niger to limit outflows. Most pressingly it has also asked for a revision of a relief scheme led by Frontex, the E.U’s Border and Coast Guard Agency, which makes Italy the headquarters of all sea operations, and consequently a magnet for all rescued refugee boats.36

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Key terms

**Refugee** - someone who has been forced to flee his or her home country because of armed conflict or persecution.

**Migrant** - someone who chooses to resettled to another country in search of a better life.

**Xenophobia** - dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries

**Terrorism** - the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims

**Populism** - political program or movement that champions the common person, usually by favorable contrast with an elite

**Frontex** - an agency of the European Union tasked with border control of the European Schengen Area, in coordination with the border and coast guards of Schengen Area member states.

Questions

How will the EU address the migration problems in 2017?

Will the EU aid Greece and Italy and ensure that refugees receive proper treatment on the EU soil?

How will the EU deal with such sudden waves of migration in the future?

What will the EU do to combat future terrorist attacks?

Will the EU let the rising xenophobia take over the whole continent and how will this body respond to it?

These are some of the questions delegates are encouraged to address when discussing the migration crisis in Europe and any pertinent security issues.