



**Janet Daley WHY YOUNG** PEOPLE, LIKE THE YOUNGER ME, **KEEP FALLING FOR TROTSKY** 

OLD-SCHOOL JOURNALISM - REPORTING YOU CAN TRUST

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# THE CONSERVATIVE

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Organisation celebrated its For seven decades, NATO has stood at the forefront of European defence and guaranteed a lasting peace that many didn't think would survive in the years that proceeded Second World War. Yet despite its success, now more than ever, we need reminding of the importance of the trans-Atlantic relationship. With a resurgent Russia, growing threat of terrorism and populist attempts to either divide, scrap or replace the Alliance, support for NATO is more important than ever before.

The NATO Alliance has stood for the

he North Atlantic Treaty security for many countries on the peripheries of Europe. With the support of the 70th Anniversary this month. Americans and Canadians, NATO offers a sense of safety for those living within in its borders. And even as that frontier has expanded Eastwards, the value of NATO membership has not been lost.

> The Alliance has undergone huge geographic shifts. In the beginning NATO was focused on Western Europe and bridging the divide between Atlantic partners, bringing together 12 member states. Today it's an Alliance that spans the entire continent, with the collective might of 29 countries. From the USA to Poland, Canada to Croatia.

longest time as a beacon of freedom and also undergone several huge shifts in strengthen the Alliance's eastern flank.

policy, to reflect the changing dynam- The annexation of Crimea demonics of its members. From welcoming former rivals, who have become some the alliances closest allies, to the postcold war pivot that has seen a refocusing of efforts on counter terrorism and jihadism

# **An Old Threat**

However, since the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014, NATO has shifted its focus from the War on Terror back to countering the threat from Russia. The 29 Member States have become resolute in their commitment to effi-Over the last 70 years, NATO has ciently deter Moscow, and to further

strated the need for NATO to adapt its strategy when dealing with the Russia, as for too long they had been complaisant.

Not only must the Alliance remain vigilant, it must also upgrade its arsenal to maintain a sufficient defensive posture. NATO ought to invest more in heavy equipment and armaments that will minimize the threat posed by Russia's latest generations of combat aircraft and anti-submarine weapons, as well as finding smart ways to work around their current salami tactics. The NATO allies need to try their utmost to show Russia that its nuclear blackmail is useless and that they will not bow down to bullies.

### **Brexit**

# **EU27 PREPARING** FOR A "NO DEAL"

European countries are preparing for a "no deal" on Brexit. The Conservative has looked at the preparations taking place in different countries.

### Grzegorz Kuczyński

# **NATO MUST CONTINUE TO** BE FLEXIBLE **TO SURVIVE**

As NATO turns 70, a new report from Poland addresses what the future holds for the Alliance and how best to tackle the main threat posed to Central Europe by Russia.

### **Profile**

# VALDEMAR **TOMAŠEVSKI**

From Vilnius to the Nation

# **Anna Fotyga MEP**

# **NATO AT 70**

"Together we continue to overcome the most serious security challenges in a generation: Russia's aggression in and around Europe, terrorism and instability in our southern neighbourhood, as well as very real threats from cyber-attacks and missile proliferation."

### Jan Zahradil

# **CAMPAIGN DIARY** Part IV.

Freedom of religion and belief, Blue Green Summit, Road to Europe

### **Conservative Books**

### W.M. Thackeray's VANITY FAIR by James Delingpole

Vanity Fair is indeed a magnificent novel and a great, rollicking read, surprisingly modern in its tone and style, and refreshingly free of the earnest moralising we have to endure in contemporaries like Dickens.

# ON DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE by Tomasz G. Grosse



U institutions are increasingly the European Union (CJEU) as well as its restricting democratic practices policy of extending the scope of EU law, seeking to enhance the competences of EU supranational institutions and the protection of the rule of law principle within the community. The second mechanism is related to the majority voting procedure in the EU, which appears to be more and more frequently used within its structures. Both instruments are considered problematic in light of democratic standards. According to some scholars, such mechanisms may therefore result in the rebellion of Member States along with their societies against EU institutions and thus might deepen further disintegration processes in Europe.





# NATO

by Richard Milsom

TATO has for 70 years secured the peace Flanders, while 40 per cent live in bilingual Brusand freedom of the West through part- sels and French-speaking Wallonia. Speculation With both new and old threats emerging, what be held on the 26 May. itself to ensure that it continues to have a bright must first fight the election. Education has found future. The Conservative's special feature looks at its way on to the agenda. A topic that has long NATOs past, present and future.

itself towards how to face an old enemy using election. new tricks. We discuss the need for members In our Campaign Diary you can follow the camof the Alliance to increase funding and allocate paign of the ACRE spizenkandidate Jan Zahradil more resources when it comes to the threat who has been active on the campaign trail with from the East. Polish MEP and chair of the meetings in Germany, Belgium and the Czech European Parliament Committee on Security Republic. and Defence Anna Fotyga offers us some reflections on NATO at 70.

look back at how what she said about NATO in that have been under threat. We have an article in 1992, still rings true today. In an article she wrote the culture page showing how the supporters of at the time of the Bosnian War, we can still draw these pastimes have fought back and won. on lessons that need to be learnt.

paign is intensifying. The Netherlands has just liament on economic governance and energy had challenging regional elections and numer- independence of the Baltic countries from Rusous other countries are about to head to the polls, sia. And Valdemar Tomaševski an MEP and including Belgium, Spain and Finland. We have defender of minority rights in Lithuania and the an article on the influence of the internet and EU, especially the rights of education, land and social networks on Spanish politics and how it has language. impacted the rise of Vox, a new conservative force Finally, bullfighting has long been a past time in the country. The same is true in Finland, where in Spain, but what future does it have in a modthe Finns Party has created an election video that ern developed country. We look at the arguments

We also discuss the notoriously difficult pro-surprising environmental one. 

nership and cooperation. But today the is rife already about which parties will form the treaty organisation is at a historic crossroad. next coalition and the general election that will should NATO do next, and how can it best adapt.

But before they can talk about coalitions, they

been debated in Francophone Wallonia it has now With a resurgent Russia, NATO must gear become a topic of debate in the Flemish regional

In the Culture section of *The Conservative* we have a travel guide to Katowice in Poland, Bull-Margaret Thatcher died in April 2013, so we fighting and hunting are ancient tradition in Spain

We also profile Dr Roberts Zīle a Latvian The European Parliament electoral cam- economist and key player in the European Par-

went viral but has also upset the establishment. being made to try and keep it alive, including a

are no country-wide political parties and 60 per and make people think, we have no doubt that cent of the population live in Dutch-speaking this edition will be no different.





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Reformists in Europe (ACRE).



# **SUMMIT SEASON**





convened to continue ACRE's campaign for the exchange ever on our continent. The conference protection of freedom of religion or belief. The brought together academics, political and civic event was held on 2 April in Brussels and was a leaders and those working to develop an inclufollow-up to last year's event.

together religious thought leaders to highlight and the development of our current civilisation. how the European Union could improve the pro- Now more than ever before, it is vital to undertection of freedom of religion or belief, and to outline policies toward a greater respect of religious — in order to develop a more inclusive European diversity in the EU.

This year the Faith and Freedom Summit gathered elected officials, NGOs and individuals to Green Summit on conservative approaches to continue the discussion on how to improve the environmental issues, held in Brussels Solvay protection of freedom of religion or belief. With library. The seminar focused on how conservathe 2019 European elections in sight the event tives can best improve our environment using had added the chance to sign a pledge that reads market mechanisms, the innovation that comes as follows: "I pledge that I will uphold and defend from capitalism and the natural sense of trustthe freedom of conscience and religion of all indieseship that is part of Burkean conservatism. We viduals by rejecting and speaking out against big- believe that environmentalism, and the world otry, discrimination, harassment and violence; we live in, are altogether too important to be left and so build a more equitable society for all." The to the left; and we believe that conservatives are pledge was supported by Mr Ahmed Shaheed. natural conservationists. This year's BlueGreen current UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Summit had two focuses. The first was on water

campaign, ACRE's affiliated foundation New efficient water and waste management.

learning and rich libraries, and where European ena as often as possible. scholars translated many lost manuscripts back The second panel was on clean energy. The dis-European Renaissance.

as Daniel Hannan, Morten Messerschmidt, Tom was very interesting.



CRE has been very active with three Holland and Thierry Baudet discussed how the events in the last two weeks. The sec- European Renaissance was formed by the greatond Faith and Freedom Summit was est cultural, social, scientific and commercial sive society from across Europe, to reflect on The purpose of the event in 2018 was to bring how this movement gave birth to modern Europe

On 3 April ACRE organised the third Blueand waste management, with a discussion of the As part of the overarching Faith and Freedom power of market competition to inspire clean and

Direction organised a conference in Granada Recognising that government regulation and from 29 to 31 March. The focus of the conference individual benevolence alone are insufficient was on how, during the "La Convivencia ("the to face the environmental challenges ahead, Coexistence") - a period in which Jews, Chris- the panel discussed the need for green techtians and Muslims coexisted in peace - Anda- nology and research to create the necessary lusia became a bridge between the religious and breakthroughs. We need reforms of regulatory philosophical teachings of the East and the West. structures to ensure the best possible regulatory The underlying question was what we in modern environment to ensure that these breakthroughs Europe can learn from the ancients of this period. take place. Significant innovations will change The "Dark Ages" were not "dark" where love of the cost-benefit calculus of green solutions and learning and high culture was the norm. It was a show that economic development and environtime when Andalusia had all the great centres of mental improvement can be concurrent phenom-

into Latin effort from Arabic. In the 12th century cussion focused on the power of the difference Andalusia brought together scholars and people between private and corporate ownership and of different faiths to work on science and philos- the need to inspire sustainable management of ophy, and this cross-pollination laid the ground-natural resources in the energy sphere. The panel work for the rapid development of learning and discussed the power in the market processes and discovery that would later become known as the new technology to encourage sustainable stewardship. In particular the discussion on carbon At the event European political figures such capture schemes and the use of natural resources

recognised and partially funded by the European Parliament.

The views and opinions expressed in the publication are solely those of individual authors and should not be regarded as reflecting any official opinion or position of the Alliance of Conservatives and Reformists in Europe (ACRE), its leadership, members or staff, or of the European Parliament.

MANAGING EDITOR emistoklis Asthenidis

**ADVISORY BOARD** Jan Zahradil MEP Anna Fotyga MEP Raffaele Fitto MEP Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP Prof Ryszard Legutko MEP Daniel Hannan MEP

VIDEOR o.d. (videor.ba)

HOW TO CONTACT US

**ADDRESS Alliance of Conservatives &** Reformists in Europe (ACRE) Rue du Trone 4, B-1000, Brussels, Belgium

WEB theconservative.online EMAIL info@theconservative.online

INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Please address submissions and letters to the editor to: Managing Editor / The Conservative EMAIL editor@theconservative.online

### **Zdzislaw Krasnodebski MEP**

theconservative.online

# A reckless political project that threatens energy security

New EU gas pipeline rules do not go far enough warns ECR MEP Zdzislaw Krasnodebski. Legislation intended to ensure that the EU's energy market rules apply to pipelines arriving from third countries such as Russia provide too many loopholes and ignore the interests of neighbouring Member States, warned Krasnodebski, who is the ECR energy spokesman and Vice-President of the European Parliament.

hen first announced, the probeing as accessible to other operators, as pressure on Ukraine, currently the main posals were seen as a direct those situated within the EU. attempt to prevent Russia from further exerting undue influence who followed the proposals for the over EU Member States vis-à-vis their Group, said: planned Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which "Without saying so these connects to the EU in Germany and new rules were intended includes former Chancellor Gerhard to ensure one particular Schröder as board member.

pipeline operated to the same levels of ment gives too much transparency and efficiency, while also room for manoeuvre for

Speaking after the vote Krasnodebski,

project played by our

RUSSIA



LITHUANIA

### **Daniel Dalton MEP**

# MEPs back one hour limit to remove online terrorist content

Internet platforms which host terrorist content would have one hour to remove it under new EU-wide legislation backed by MEPs. Fines of up to four per-cent of turnover could be imposed on repeat offenders who fail to remove terrorist posts under proposals being led through the European Parliament by ECR MEP Daniel Dalton.

specifically focused monitoring of ant it is that we act."

tion. He said:

ment authorities have made clear to data and cannot remove individme that terrorist content disseminates ual posts. most rapidly in the first hour and that Mr Dalton said: "Any new the one hour principle is vital.

"This propaganda can be linked to tical and proportionate actual terrorist incidents and national if we are to safeguard authorities must be able to act deci- free speech. Without a sively. The online posts linked to the fair process we risk the

could also be asked to introduce were another reminder of how import-

users and the importance of free speech". receive an order. Instead they will be should know better. Mr Dalton said the existing voluntary given a longer period to put processes code operated by platforms had brought in place. The report also includes spethis legislation through Parliament in improvements but now needed to be cific protection for small businesses mid-January. My draft report came out backed up by carefully targeted legisla- which may not be able to meet the 60 days later. And we are now voting on 8 minute deadline and suggests that April.' "There is clearly a problem with ter- cloud infrastructure services for comrorist material circulating unchecked on panies be removed from the scope of fight online radicalisation in June 2017, the internet for too long. Law enforce- the legislation as they do not control but the Commission did not publish its

legislation must be prac-

over-removal of content as businesses would understandably take a safety first approach to defend themselves. It also absolutely cannot lead to a general monitoring of content by the back door."

BELARUS

EU countries that are not willing to act

The agreement reached will see the EU country where a pipeline lands be

responsible for applying the new rules and allows exemptions from those rules

can be authorised. Crucially however,

the criteria for assessing whether such

exemptions can be granted are vague

and pose serious questions on how they

can be applied. This only exacerbates the

widely shared concerns that Nord Stream

2 will see Germany become Europe's gas

transit route for Russian gas into the EU.

"Nord Stream 2 is a reckless politi-

cal project that threatens our

energy security and puts the interests of one country

Krasnodebski concluded:

hub and allow Russia to exert even more

Addressing members the Home Affairs Committee ahead of the vote, Mr Dalton refuted suggestions that Parliament had been holding up the legislation.

He said: "Apparently, if MEPs dare to question a comma or full stop of the Commission's proposal they are either trying to run down the clock or they are ites that are regularly targeted recent terrorist outrage in Christchurch in the pocket of big tech firms. This is not true and ultimately damages faith in politics. It is a blatant smear campaign posts as a last resort while paying "partic-Platforms will not have to meet the directed against this Parliament, conular regard to the fundamental rights of one hour deadline the first time they ducted in the pages of newspapers that

"MEPs chose this committee to get

"In contrast, EU leaders promised to proposal until September 2018." The legislation was

> approved in committee by 35 votes to one, with eight abstentions. It is hoped it will be voted by the full Parliament in Strasbourg next week.

# **European Parliament overreach**

# **European Parliament** considers baring ExxonMobil E**x**onMobil

The European Parliament has had a hearing to discuss whether or not a lobbying a ban should be imposed on the U.S. oil giant ExxonMobil. The hearing in Brussels came about because of an anti-fossil fuel campaign led by two American activists and academics, Naomi Orestes and Geoffrey Supran, who have made clear that their goal is to vilify the image of fossil fuel companies.

about Mr Supran's testimony last week groups enjoy the same rights. is that it shows that Exxon is actually should do about climate change.

misled the public".

ernment – in this case the European which one will be next?■

Parliament - has the right to choosing which actors can keep their civil rights, and which should have those rights taken away. Individuals have a constir Supran came to Brussels to tutional right to free speech. A corpotestify that since the 1970s, ration, as a group of individuals with a legal personality, in the same way as internally - that they knew about cli- Greenpeace, have the same right as a mate change and it would be terrible natural person to do so. If the funda-- while saying another in advertise- mental rights such as free speech are ments and public statements. How- taken from ExxonMobil, what other, ever, this testimony ignores the fact natural and legal persons and associthat the two companies were sepa- ations should lose their rights? The rate entities at that time. The testi- European parliament must stand up mony quoted research from Exxon and to the woke activists and insist that all adverts from Mobil. One of the ironies corporations, NGOs and other interest

Finally, the activists somehow correct in their assessment of what we believe ExxonMobil to be advocating against climate change mitiga-The Orestes and Supran paper, tion. But Exxon's internal modelling is underlying the effort to ban Exxon- predicated on the imposition of a car-Mobil, is deeply flawed and it is doubt- bon tax. William Nordhaus shared last ful if it is academic research at all. One year's Nobel Prize in economics for his of the experts cited in the paper, Prof. decades of pointing out that a carbon Kimberley Neuendorf, said the paper tax was the only useful or viable soluhas "fundamental errors in their anal- tion. The Stern Review and the techniysis", failed to meet "basic standards of cal parts of the IPCC reports reached scientific enquiry" and concludes that the same conclusion. The solutions the study is "unreliable, invalid, biased, ExxonMobil are advocating for are in not generalizable and not replicable the mainstream when it comes to cli-... [the authors] provide no scientific mate science, including their supsupport for a claim that ExxonMobil port for the Paris climate change agreement.

The first error of this activist attack

The fundamental question at stake on ExxonMobil is the premise that oil in the EP hearing are not the climate companies, fossil fuel providers, are activists' proposal to limit the freethose responsible for carbon emis- speech of ExxonMobil. The central sions. But this is fundamentally incorquestion is if one of the right to free rect. We who transport, feed, heat speech and democracy. For if the right ourselves are responsible for the emistolobby is curtailed for ExxonMobil sions that come about as a result of will not BP and Shell be next. After Big our desire to drive cars and have hot Oil have been banned, will not the purveyors of plastics, fertiliser, sugar and The second error of the activ- fatty foods all be banned. And after ist attack on ExxonMobil is that gov- these industries have been banned

### **Jim Nicholson MEP**

# **New CAP to give Member** States more responsibility

MEPs have voted on the shape of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for the next seven years. The proposals are intended to continue providing support to EU farmers in order to guarantee food security while also making the CAP more flexible and adaptable to emerging sustainability challenges.

States with more flexibility over how they allocate funding is central to the proposals, which will allow national authorities to design policies that respond specifically to local concerns. Direct payments to farmers will continue, providing them with the certainty

and stability they need to produce food.

"Europe needs its farmers who provide for our food security. We've tried to allow countries the opportunity to tailor policies specifically to local needs and challenges as well as trying to put farmers at the forefront of designing these schemes so that they work for them. As technology is increasingly playing a role

in farming and we need to ensure we can take account of the new opportunities that innovation brings, particularly in terms of sustainability.

There are also new clauses to help farmers to take better account of biodiversity and natural resource challenges. with payments conditional

on enhanced environmental

Nicholson concluded:

"Farmers care passionately about the Speaking ahead of the votes ECR environment and the extra sustainabil-Agriculture spokesman Jim Nicholson ity incentives will help them to deliver our biodiversity goals."

## **Federal Election in Belgium**

# Which parties will form the next coalition?

oalition forming is notoriously difficult at the Belgian federal level. And, as Belgium is gearing up for a crucial general election on 26 May, speculation is rife about which parties will form the next coalition.

The core issue is that 60 per cent of Belgians live in the Dutch-speaking North, Flanders, while 40 per cent live in bilingual Brussels and French-speaking Wallonia. There are no big country-wide political parties, so a coalition government must be formed by parties from two different ideological backgrounds and two different cultures.

There is a dominant centre-right consensus in Flanders that clashes with the dominant centre-left consensus in Francophone Belgium. In 2007 negotiations to form a federal coalition government lasted half a year, after the 2010 election they took a year and a half, and in 2014 they took five months. Expectations are that they will also take a long time after these elections.

The current government, led by Francophone liberal Charles Michel, is in fact a caretaker government, following a disagreement with the Flemish national- mate action, and its support for what it autumn. However, the N-VA has said ist N-VA, which refused to continue to calls "ecorealism", also seems to strike that it will only enter a federal governback the government over its support for a chord with many voters who support ment with the Francophone socialists the "Global compact for migration". The technological innovation to resolve if the latter concede to reform Belgium party is the leading force in Belgian poli- environmental problems. In particu- into a "confederal" country. Even if the tics, able to convince around 30 per cent lar the greens are struggling to respond next Belgian federal government canof the Flemish electorate, and accord- to the argument about why they refuse not rewrite the Belgian Constitution, it ing to opinion polls its firm stance on the unclear power as a form of energy, could possibly devolve powers if it has a migration compact seems to be appreci- when this would be a great way to limit two thirds majority in Parliament. Most ated by voters. Over the last five years the CO2 emissions. N-VA, while in government, has been the An interesting development is how has insufficient funding for pensions, driver behind a number of competitive- the Flemish socialists seem to be open healthcare, justice and police; while ness reforms including tax cuts for both to joining a coalition with the N-VA, the regions have surpluses. One remindividuals and companies that, accord- Feeding the speculation that this would edy would be to transfer powers to the ing to independent estimates, have be a possible coalition is the fact that the regions without making a full compenresulted in around 200,000 extra jobs. leader of the N-VA, Antwerp's Mayor satory transfer of funding.



by green activists wanting more cli- Antwerp with the Flemish socialists last

analysts agree that the federal level

whether to pursue more intellectual

In the last 20 years, a whole raft of

## **Regional elections in Belgium**

# **Educational competence**

n Belgium the federal level and level has halved since 2000. This is support innovative experiments. the regional level are equally sov- reducing the value of going to a Fran- Another bone of contention is when ereign; the federal level cannot cophone school in Brussels and driving pupils should be obliged to choose override decisions of the regions. One students to the Flemish system. important competence devolved to the regional level is education. In this elec- ing a substantial topic in Flemish election the devolved education compe- tion campaigns. According to a new regulations has been imposed by legistence looks set to become an issue in survey, the quality of Flemish educallators on schools. These include rules all the regions, and could therefore also tion has severely deteriorated over the limiting the freedom of schools to

For the past 30 years international the region was classified as a top per-registration is requested the only critecomparisons, such as the "PISA" rank- former in reading literacy, mathemat- rion that can be used to decide whether ing, have indicated that the quality of ical literacy and scientific literacy. a child can be enrolled. This has led to education in the Francophone parts. The only weak point noted at the time parents having to physically camp in of the country has been questionable. was the disproportionate number of front of a school, sometimes for a week, Education has therefore been the topic students with a migrant background in order to register their child. Rules of intense political debate in the Fran- dropping out of school. In the two have become so strict that for a time cophone region. Many voters, par- decades since, the gap in performance schools were not permitted to give priticularly in Brussels, see the lack of between the Flemish and Franco- ority to siblings of pupils already regiseducational attainment as one of the phone education systems has halved, tered in the school, Many other similar main reasons for high levels of youth almost entirely due to a drop in quality restrictions were imposed on schools, unemployment. There are many job on the Flemish side. opportunities for people able to speak Dutch in Brussels and in the Flem- debate on education. The Flemish not equipped to cater for their needs. ish suburbs around Brussels. Accord- N-VA argue in favour of maintaining a Recently Flemish teachers went on ing to a survey, however, fewer than 10 focus on knowledge over learning cer-strike in protest of over-regulation and per cent of pupils graduating from the tain skills, while the centre-left, liber-lack of funding for schools. Francophone schools in Brussels are als and Christian democrats reject this



However, education is also becomeducation or vocational training. become an issue in the federal election. last two decades. In 2002 education in reject pupils, making the order in which

The results have caused a heated with special needs even when they were able to speak Dutch decently, and that approach as old-fashioned and instead the financing and regulation of the

A third issue is the discussion over Catholic school network. The Cathated quite independently, but from the 1950s these schools started receiving more subsidies to allow them to scrap school fees. This resulted in succes sive governments seizing more control. Many today reject the top-down regulatory approach, but few are willing to open up to reintroducing school fees.

such as a duty to welcome children

Given that education has become part of the electoral campaign in all regions, it may also soon become part of the federal campaign, despite the fact that the federal level does not have any npetence to regulate the matter.

### **Election in Finland**

# A HEALTHY DISCUSSION



tion government resigned on 8 committed criminal offences. March, just five weeks before the 
In the election manifesto of the Finns cost increases. But the plan did not have ing for the ageing or for schools. the necessary buy-in from all the rele-March the government resigned.

tators doubt that this is the real rea- Sipilä. At the core of Blue Reform's elecson. Their interpretation is that the tion programme is strengthening famresignation was a strategic move to ilv values and security. Their goal is to give the parties in the government - secure Finland and the everyday life and Prime Minister Sipilä and his Cen- of Finns. They believe that to create a tre Party in particular - more freedom sense of security immigration must be

during the election campaign. To date, the Finns Party leader Jussi land, such as religious violence and sys- election. tematic harassment of young girls." The In the opinion polls the Social Demo-

he Finnish centre-right coali- immigrants were most likely to have

scheduled general election. Prime Minis- Party, which has been in opposition since ter Juha Sipilä said it was in response to Unne 2017, the overarching perspective the government's failure to implement is that the country's public finances and a far-reaching healthcare reform pack- prosperity are based on income from age that had been promised in the previ- the export industry, as well as on taxes ous election. The government's original on work and entrepreneurship, and that plan called for a transfer of healthcare these together form the foundation of the and social services to the counties (the country's wealth. According to the parentities between the national level and ty's manifesto the Finnish State exists the municipalities). Social welfare and for Finns and should always, in the first healthcare would be combined at the instance, take care of Finns' interests. same level with the aim of creating seam- Over the past decades, however, billions less service chains in the provision of have been viewed as minor costs when welfare. The hope was that a more effec- referring to immigration and world tive system of providing health and improvement. At the same time, the social services would halt the ongoing political power has been poor at provid-

Blue Reform is a party founded by a vant political actors in the process, and group of ministers and Members of Parwhen the proposal failed to get support in liament in June 2017 when they split from the Finns Party. These ministers Numerous politicians and commen- have stayed in the government of Juha controlled

Due to the party split both parties lost Halla-aho has dominated the election some support in the polls, but during the campaign. He has caused a stir with spring they have regained voter confihis statement that some "immigrants, dence. The Finns Party rose to 12 per cent mainly from Africa and the Middle East, in the average of five opinion polls in late are blatantly overrepresented in vio- March, compared to 8.8 per cent in the lent and sexual crime statistics. They 2017 municipal election. Blue Reform are also bring new types of crime to Fin-set to get 1.5 to 2.5 per cent in their first

statement was heavily criticised by the crats (SDP) are reported to be the biggest establishment parties, but when it was party, with about 20 per cent of votes. The fact-checked by the State-owned media SDP have reject participating in a coalicompany Yle the claim was found to tion government with the Finns Party, be correct. Yle, citing sources at Hel- while the centre-right National Coalition sinki University, said that research have been open to including the Finns in showed that Somali, Iranian and Iraqi the formation of a coalition government.

# THE CONSERVATIVE

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# **EU27 PREPARING FOR A**

European countries are preparing for a "no deal" on Brexit. The Conservative has looked at the preparations taking place in different countries.



Ireland may lose up to 4 per cent so-called "maximum facilitation" - proof its GDP in the case of a "no deal". If posals that the UK Government had the UK embark on considerable tariff been pushing for but that were so far out-compete Irish products from shelves able in Brussels and Dublin. However, in UK shops. The Irish Farmers' Associa- even if the UK and Ireland agree not to

A "no deal" could also create risks for France or the Netherlands. the Northern Irish peace process. There The aim of the Irish Government is to are persistent rumours that the Irish Govhire around 1,000 extra customs staff and ernment has been drafting emergency 300 new veterinary officials. The governporder in the event of a "no deal". The \_ nary officials to hire, and it is thought that European Commission has made clear it will be impossible to deploy all customs that in such a scenario it would make officials this spring Land near ports has special efforts to avoid border checks—been acquired for border inspection infra-

cuts, non-European producers may well always officially dismissed as unwork-

hitting the peace process, echoing the structure, truck parks and offices.

### The Netherlands, Belgium and France

criticise the government's preparation. to prevent shortages. As a result the Dutch Government has In Europe's largest port. Rotter-

exemption for providing services in the Brexit, a figure which has shot up since. pital federation warned two months ing millions on security at ports and airago that it foresees "great risks for [its] ports. It will also gain the right to push daily operations if Britain leaves the EU through laws by emergency decree. without a deal". Qserve Group warned In a statement Medef, France's largest last month that "the impact would be employer federation, expressed that enormous". Some medical operations there would be severe trade disruption may not even be possible. Belgian and "absolute chaos in Calais".

In December the Dutch Court of Audit hospitals are also stockpiling medicines

started hiring 928 extra customs staff, dam, imports of livestock from the UK out only around one third of those will will grind to a halt, as a vital inspecbe deployed this spring. Furthermore, tion point at the harbour is not ready. staff for the Food and Consumer Prod- major traffic jams due to lack of space uct Safety Authority will be available. for trucks without the right paperwork.

A study released at the beginning of The Belgian Government has been February showed that only a minority hiring extra customs staff, but a leadof Dutch industrial companies are ready ing Belgian customs official has warned for Brexit, but this number is thought of insufficient preparations for a "no to have increased since. The govern- deal" Brexit, even suggesting comment did start a campaign featuring a panies should temporarily minimise fluffy blue monster, including a compre- import and export to the UK. If 10 per nensive website, urging companies to cent of lorries did not have the proper The Dutch Government has passed port of Zeebrugge. In February only 20 Brexit legislation, including to grant per cent of companies trading with the UK-based asset managers a temporary UK were ready to cope with a "no deal"

rexit. There are fears of a shortage of recruiting an extra 740 customs officials

### **Germany, other Member States** and the EU institutions

Germany is planning to employ 900 is a Spanish concern — to taking ing the United Kingdom", with a risk UK does not do so. of "many billions of euros each year in 

The EU institutions themselves have

that while some big companies are Tunnel as well as road transport. taking measures, most have not made When it comes to food, however, the expensive investments needed industry has pointed out that preparain new staff or IT. The German Farm- tory measures "will not prevent signifers' Association has warned that a "no" icant disruption of supply chains". The

tions to secure fisheries access - which tainty will be large.

extra customs staff, but at the end of national measures to secure the settle-January none of these had been hired. ment of financial transactions - which German industry is getting nervous. Sweden has done. Hiring extra customs Eric Schweitzer, President of Germa- staff is something that is being underny's Chamber of Industry and Trade, taken by the likes of Latvia and Denwarned that we could witness the mark, which has even put money aside

"completed" their "no deal" planning The German Central Bank has for Brexit, providing emergency proviwarned that many companies are sions to help EU fishing fleets and proinsufficiently prepared for Brexit, and tect rail services through the Channel

deal" Brexit would create "chaos". EU's measures are unilateral and par-Other Member States that are not tial, for example with regard to temlikely to be as affected by a "no deal" porary recognition of clearing houses, Brexit have also taken measures. This and when it comes to areas such as ranges from pushing the EU institu- aviation and especially data, the uncer-



# Vox dominates online political debate

n recent years the influence of the internet and social networks on Spanish politics has grown exponentially. Thanks to these new communication channels, the old bipartisan paradigm has been replaced by a multiparty system, in which the People's Party and the Socialist Party share the limelight with three new groups: the centrist Citizens Party (Ciudadanos), the far-left Podemos coalition and rising conservative Vox Party.

Podemos and Ciudadanos enjoyed a steady rise between 2014 and 2016, out polls show that both parties have seen a downward trend for the past few years. Vox. on the other hand, was almost invisible until 2018, when party affiliation numbers began to grow at an exponential rate and rally attendance figures exploded. This upward trend culminated in December 2018, when 400.000 votes in Andalusia's regional election toppled the Socialist Party, which had controlled local politics since the early 1980s, and gave victory to a centre-right alliance.

Vox's growth is especially strong on ies of Vox supporters confirm the idea ty's 180,000 online visitors. that the conservative force has found 600.000 monthly visits, well above the other parties. dadanos' 215,000 visitors, Podemos' into real support and tangible numbers. between 18 and 35 years of age. 🔳



tics, where Vox is the largest politi- traffic statistics show that the num- tion is similar across Spain. cal party in terms of web traffic. Vox's ber of searches associated with Vox is Looking ahead, studies conducted

from 5.000 to 20.000, and in January Even more striking is the growth of this year Vox increased its membera way to connect with younger voters. of Vox on Instagram. Vox has more ship to 30,000. Attendance figures at A study by polling firm GAD3 shows than 225,000 followers compared to events and rallies are also revealing. On that Vox was the preferred choice of a combined number of followers of 31 March the People's Party gathered Andalusians who voted for the first 282,000 for the other four parties, fewer than 1,000 people at an event in time in the December 2018 regional Twitter, YouTube and Facebook fig- Barcelona, while the Vox event only a election. Young voters' interest in the ures show that Vox is growing at the few kilometres down the road gathered party is obvious from visitors' statis- fastest rate of all parties, and Google's more than 10,000 attendees. The situa-

official website receives more than four times greater than that of the four by Sondaxe show that Santiago Abascal may be the second most voted pres-People's Party's 85,000 visitors, Ciu-ForVoxdigitalinterest has translated idential candidate among Spaniards

### **Spain's four elections**

# Fragmented centre-right hopes for a majority

he Spanish political scene is in maintaining the overall levels of sup-severe recession in 2008 and continelect new representatives in all four other parties. layers of government. The first will be 10 to 15 per cent to that number.

Between late 2017 and mid 2018 Mariano Rajoy's leadership was put to the rights" movement for years. test through a series of shocks. First the secessionist challenge in Catalonia, then will be the economy. Spain suffered a come. the Socialist Party successfully passed a vote of no confidence in the PP government, and then the PP government was replaced with a far-left coalition of

Podemos and different separatist parties. The different political forces of the centre-right, according to most polls, will get a majority of votes in the April and May elections. However, the distribution of power among the different centre-right forces has changed cantly. According to most poll PP currently stands to get 20 to 22 per cent of the popular vote, Ciudadanos around 15 per cent and Vox, which currently has no elected officials at either the national or regional level, could get as many as 12 to 14 per cent of the total number of votes.

Under the old bipartisan system, whichever party got a majority of votes would be in power. The new multiparty system, however, is more uncertain. The electoral laws will play a vital role in translating votes into seats. For the centre-right, the rise of Vox is crucial

about to get a shock. Between port for the centre-right and compenues to face the aftermath of the crisis,

elections coincide with a period of pro- PP and Citizens to take a firmer stand this regard. found change in the centre-right. Two against Catalan separatism. Vox has Another characteristic feature of

April and May, citizens will sating for the negative trend of the with an unemployment rate of around 15 per cent. Vox has proposed a signif-The rise of Vox has forced the cenicant reduction in public spending and the national elections of 28 April. One tre-right to redefine its agenda. The has also suggested deep tax cuts for month later, on 26 May, voters will go to party, led by Santiago Abascal, has families and businesses. The PP has the ballots to elect European, regional insisted on defending the unity of Spain adopted a similar discourse, while Ciuand local representatives. These four as the central axis of the debate, forcing dadanos has been more ambiguous in

years ago, the People's Party (PP) had also championed the defence of tradi- these elections is the incorporation of support of about 30 to 35 per cent and tions such as bullfighting and hunting celebrities and other media personalithe liberals in Ciudadanos added about - two activities with millions of enthu- ties in the different lists of candidates. siasts - which have suffered attacks These candidates from the domains from the left and the so-called "animal of media, business, culture and sports have increased the media interest in The central issue of the election the four electoral processes that are to



**European Parliament** 

# THE LEFT IS LEFT WITHOUT A REAL **ARGUMENT**

and press in breach of Godwin's law



have been suppressed under totalitar-

During the debate that ensued Bau-

The word "boreal" is borrowed from

The boreal debate continued to

To outsiders it looks like the estab-

European peninsula.

t the victory celebration of not even remotely based on fascist Forum for Democracy (FvD) - ideas, and indeed many of the estabthe recently established party—lished policies that the FvD criticised that won the largest number of votes in the campaign on objective criteria in the Dutch regional elections on 20 are closer to Mussolini's "corporatist" March - party leader Thierry Baudet philosophy. For example, the extenaddressed his party in a 20-minute sion of direct democracy and referenspeech that was broadcast live to over dums that Baudet tirelessly argued for one million households by the Dutch during the campaign are precisely what national broadcasting company.

At the core of the heartfelt speech ian regimes were the shared values on the European continent, the abolition of the det explained the use of the word referendum and the need to control "boreal" as a geographical expression. immigration. The speech was consid- That was it. There was, in his view, ered quite moving by those who were nothing more to it than that. present, even if it made use of some references not common in today's the Latin word Borealis, which simply political climate, such as Hegel's owl of means "northern". It is used in numer-Minerva. Baudet emphasised that the ous contexts such as the Greek god Netherlands was part of "a civilisation of the northern wind ("Boreas"), the that has created the world's most beau- natural phenomenon of the northern tiful architecture, music and paint- lights ("Aurora Borealis") and about ings. Our country is part of a family ... a third of the Canadian landmass (the but like the other countries that belong "Forest Borealis"). The word has been to this boreal world, we are being used by Baudelaire, Victor Hugo and destroyed by those who ought to promany more who felt it was a beautiful tect us. We are being undermined ... by word to describe the countries of the the established political class."

There was much that could have been discussed in the post-election escalate over the course of the week analysis of the FvD victory and indeed following the speech. An article pubthe speech. It might have been taken lished by NRC Handelsblad, generally as an invitation to debate the fate of accepted as the country's newspaper Europe, to discuss Dutch immigration of record, contained a quote by a mempolicy, or to revisit the climate change ber of Nicolas Dupont-Aignan's Debout argument or one of the other topics of La France (DLF), critical of the use of the campaign. But the Dutch establishthe word "boreal". But the day after the ment parties and the press avoided all article was published DLF released an of these discussions, instead focusing official press statement pointing out the debate totally and exclusively on that they "formally contest the NRC only one word in the speech, namely article, which was filled with lies and boreal". The entire Dutch post-elec- \_ imaginary quotes against Thierry Ba tion debate has turned to semantic det, in all respects".

Based on the use of the word lishment parties have turned the entire "boreal", numerous journalists post-election debate in to a straw man claimed the FvD to be fascist. The reaargument to demonise the winner. And soning is something along the lines that it looks like much of the press has been the word "boreal" "must be" a "fascist" playing along. The Dutch people, how-"dog whistle" because it has been used ever, do not seem impressed by this by some far-right groups in France. exercise as in the polls since the elec-The implication drawn from this is tion the FvD has gained another six that the use of that word must "reveal" seats. If there were parliamentary elec-Baudet's "actual intentions". To date tions today, the polls indicate that the the post-election debate has ignored FvD would be the largest party also on the fact that the FvD's programme is the national level.

# **Remembering Smolensk**



n 10 April, Poland fell silent

The disaster took place as senior fig-security services of Communist Russia. to mark nine years since the ures of the government, military and civil The commemorations of the air crash cers, murdered in the Katyn forest by the brothers grave.

Smolensk plane crash, which society were heading to Russia to mark the in Warsaw were sombre, with former caused the deaths of several of the most 70th anniversary of the Katyn Massacre. Polish Prime Minister and chairman important political figures in the coun- The event was supposed to be to remem- of the Law and Justice Party Jarosław try, including the sitting President, Lech ber the 22,000 polish soldiers and offi- Kaczyński laying a wreath on his twin

theconservative.online



**Controversial new** EU copyright rules approved

> Parliament approved changes to Especially controversial are Articles 11 by copyright, as well as protected issues tual property. such as irony and user-generated memes

ernments could not support the final packThe legislation follows other EU iniParliament, the spokesman of the Euro-

t the end of March the European the European Digital Single Market.

EU copyright rules, after a politi- and 13. Article 11 wants news aggregators, cal deal was closed on the issue in Febru- like Google News, to pay media compaary. The so-called "Directive on Copyright nies a so-called "link tax" when sharing in the Digital Single Market" aims to stim- their content. Article 13 wants platforms Last year Tim Berners-Lee, the inven-

tor of the World Wide Web, warned that into national law within two years, but The new rules faced a lot of opposition, the legislation inverts the current model the big question now is how YouTube and with tens of thousands of people taking to by placing liability on the platforms Google will manage to address the techthe streets of German cities ahead of it. directly for ensuring the legality of con-Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Nether- tent. The end result would fall heavily on before they are made public. The Eleclands and Poland issued a joint statement ordinary users of internet platforms; not tronic Frontier Foundation has worried arguing that the end result on copyright only those who upload music or videos, that the consumers will be left in the cold is a step back and fails to strike a balance but also those who contribute photos, text when their work is censored thanks to a between protecting right holders and the or computer code to open collaboration malfunctioning copyright bot. interests of individual citizens. These gov- platforms such as Wikipedia and GitHub. Reacting to the vote in the European

ACRE ALLIANCE OF CONSERVATIVES AND REFORMISTS IN EUROPE

age because the legislation risked having a tiatives to regulate the internet. Last year pean Commission declared that the EU negative impact on the competitiveness of there was the cumbersome General Data was "taking back control" of the internet.

ulate innovation, creativity, investment to police the content uploaded to posts Protection Regulation, imposing all kinds and production of new content, also in the ahead of their publication. For this, auto-of requirements on storing and using data, digital environment, but critics fear it will mated software would be necessary to while the European Commission's antialso restrict material that is not protected detect and filter out violations of intellectrust regulators have hit Google with more than €8 billion in fines.

The law still needs to be implemented

**Spitzenkandidat** 

# THE MAASTRICHT **DEBATE 2019**



of the European political parties for of Limburg - as well as the European the role of European Commission Youth Forum and the European Jour-President. The 90-minute event will nalism Centre. be broadcast live across the European Similarly to the 2014 edition, the

rent European Commission Presi- for the first time.

2019 is being jointly organized by three widest possible audience.

will take place on April 29 eve- Europe - Maastricht University, the ning with the lead candidates City of Maastricht and the Province

debate will focus on the concerns of It's been five years since the last students and young people across Maastricht Debate, where cur- Europe, many of whom will be voting

dent Juncker defended his vision for On this occasion, the organizers Europe and outlined what he would do have invited POLITICO, the leading European publication for EU influence This year, the Maastricht Debate ers, to ensure an extensive reach to the

# A blow for the Franco-German tax initiative

# **EU** digital services tax fail - for now



The EU plan to impose a tax on Plans are now to focus on more fisthe revenue of online advertisement cal coordination at the OECD and and trading user data, originally a Fran- G20 level. Eugen Teodorovici, the co-German idea, was rejected by Swe- Romanian Minister responsible for den Finland, Denmark, and Ireland. the issue within the Romanian Coun-

tax" would have meant a 3 percent tax is no progress by the end of 2020. the on the revenue of large multinationals EU will reconsider the idea. German selling online advertising or provid- Finance Minister Olaf Scholz has said ing online sales platforms. It has been he's "optimistic" that the G20 initiaharshly criticised by digital companies. tive, which occurs in cooperation with Member states like France, Italy, Spain the Organisation for Economic Coopand the UK have nevertheless decided eration and Development (OECD) to introduce similar measure at the would deliver results by then. No national level. The French government strategy has been announced so far, has claimed this could raise 500 mil- but the goal is to work out plans how

Trade policy think tank ECIPE has tal services globally. pointed out that "a key assumption... largest digital enterprises".

The think tank has highlig French car manufacturer Renault's ters in the EU, thereby touching upon effective corporate tax rate in France the heart of national democracy. Ireis lower than American digital giant land has however swiftly rejected the Google. It thinks the EU Commission's idea. At the relevant ECOFIN meetassumptions were wide of the mark, as ing on 12 February, France and Spain its estimates have made clear that "real were among those strongly in supworld financial data show that the aver- port, the countries open for discusage corporate tax rates of many digital sion were Austria, Belgium, Denmark, companies actually exceed the European Finland, Greece and Portugal. Strongly Commission's "hypothetical" estimates against, apart from Ireland, were Croaby about 20 to 50 percentage points." tia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary,

digital taxes drive tech investment to vakia and Sweden.

he attempt to introduce a digi- other countries, harming smaller comtal tax at the EU level has failed. panies and start-ups in the process.

The so-called EU "digital services cil Presidency, has said that if there to tax tech companies providing digi-

The episode follows several failed was that digital companies [should] EU attempts for taxation at the EU pay their fair share of tax", however level. For years now, attempts to have noting that "the European Commis- common EU rules on how to define sion's "hypothetical" estimates for the tax base have stalled, which was effective corporate tax rates (ECTRs) foreseen in the EU's so-called Comdo not reflect the high effective cor- mon Consolidated Corporate Tax porate tax rates of most corporations Base (CCCTB) - proposal, which was that operate in the EU and outside EU relaunched in June 2018 but still Member States, including the world's faces a lot of opposition. In January, the EU Commission also proposed now to end national vetoes over tax mat-The Coalition for a Digital Economy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, an NGO, has furthermore noted that Poland, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Slo-



# Grzegorz Kuczyński

# NATO MUST CONTINUE TO BE FLEXIBLE TO SURVIVE

As NATO turns 70, a new report from Poland addresses what the future holds for the Alliance and how best to tackle the main threat posed to Central Europe by Russia.

shown back in the 1990s when the Alli- way, a step that explains the need to it is still valid to protect the Alliance the fall of the Soviet Union and the end ern flank. of the Cold War. Instead, NATO allies Also, NATO ought to invest in heavy while expanding a specific NATO+ specified a set of new objectives and equipment and armaments that will program that would tighten military managed to expand, attracting new minimize all threats posed by Rus- cooperation with non-NATO memmembers. The Alliance served as a tool sia's anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) bers, such as Finland and Sweden, that for stabilizing the volatile Central and strategy, salient elements of which are at risk of Russia's ntervention. Fur-Eastern Europe region, as exempli- are latest generations of combat air- thermore, the Alliance should commit fied by accepting new member states, a craft and anti-submarine weapons. itself in supporting the defense capatendency that deems particularly visi- Besides, NATO allies need to try their bilities of Ukraine, Georgia and Molble in the Balkans. It is a paradox that, utmost to show Russia that its nuclear dova; as long as they are not ruled by Alliance will expand its presence. Five is a threat posed to the Alliance and its despite earlier rumours about the end blackmail proves completely useless. pro-Moscow regimes, the direct mili-years after Moscow's annexation of immediate rival. of the Alliance, the aggressive policy They should equally increase both tary threat for NATO seems relatively Crimea it is essential to introduce sub- You can read the full report at: of Putin's Russia brought NATO into the frequency and scale of military weak. The post-Soviet area, along with stantial changes to NATO doctrinal https://warsawinstitute.org/

or 70 years of its existence, the return to the Cold War-like reasoning, Russia, taking into account the NATO North Atlantic Treaty Orga- both in politics and military issues.

flexibility and ability to adapt to rap-vital to convince the Russians that NATO allies should also concentrate idly changing international condi- NATO is committed to defending each on simplifying and shortening decisive tions. Its particular importance was of its members in a highly efficient and command mechanisms. Naturally, ance continued to exist, even despite further strengthen the Alliance's east- against hybrid and informational war-

further existence, making the Alliance drills held in the regions bordering the Balkans, should now be where the papers, officially admitting that Russia nato-russia-relations-return-enemy/

Response Forces while boosting comnization has demonstrated its To efficiently deter Moscow, it is bat readiness of all NATO allied units. fare methods. This ought to take place



# Voters in search of solutions turn to center-right leaders



ne dramatic economic and in Chile and Perú, where Sebastián dominating international media cov- may not advance center-right posierage and spurred EU Lawmakers into tions as much as expected, but still passing multiple resolutions on the represents an alternative to leftist dire situation in the country. This has forces that openly oppose conservahidden the fact that the Venezuelan tive ideas for society, institutions and tragedy is changing political fortunes economics. elsewhere in Latin America from the Even in the former bastions of the left to conservative politicians. With region's socialist left we are seeing an estimated five million people leav- some significant changes. In Bolivia, ing the country to escape the misery Evo Morales has been forced to give up and violence generated by the socialist on some of his most radical proposals. regime, large numbers of regular voters In Ecuador, Lenin Moreno has broken across the continent hear first-hand up his alliance with Rafael Correa, his

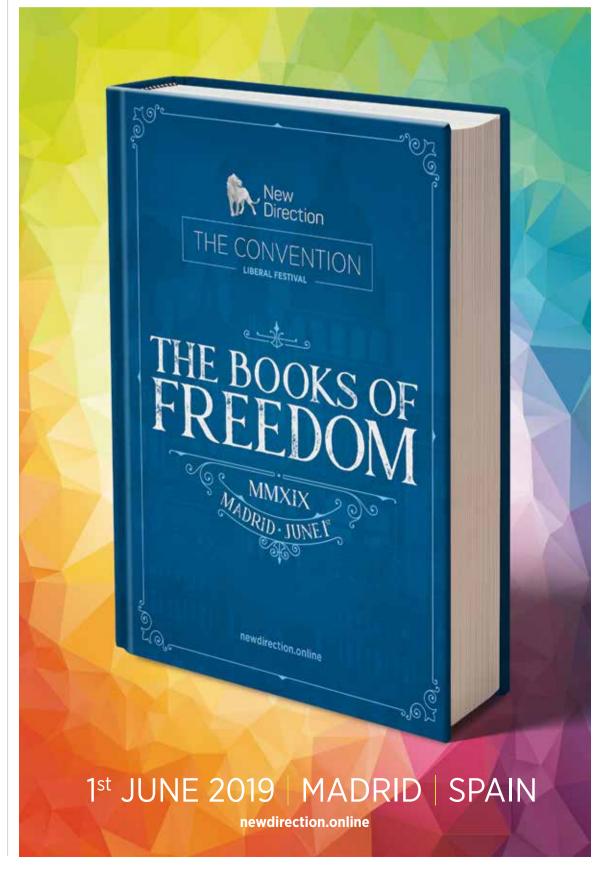
Argentina. Where the systematic corformer Socialist leader. reformist government

candidate who was once a militant openly defends a conservative agenda. member of M-19, a terrorist group, His triumph truly marks a turning

social situation in Venezu- Piñera and Martín Vizcarra have ela has resulted in the country embraced a moderate agenda that

the effect of Nicolás Maduro policies. predecessor, and has launched an oper Perhaps the best example is in investigation into the corruption of the

ruption and rising inflation contrib- But perhaps the most striking case uted to the electoral defeat of Cristina of all is that of Brazil. For years, the left Kirchner and opened the door to held the institutions of government, businessman Mauricio Macri's new thanks to the leadership of Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff, Today, both In Colombia, Iván Duque was former presidents are under investigaelected president last year by defeat- tion and the government is in the hands ing Gustavo Petro, a radical left-wing of Jair Bolsonaro, a military man who giving the right renewed mandate. point for Brazil and cements the idea And Conservatives also hold power that leftist forces are in retreat.



### **White House**

theconservative.online

# **Donald Trump meets NATO Secretary General**

resident Donald Trump met with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on the 2nd of April at the White House. The meeting covered a wide range of topics from terrorism to the situation in the Middle East and finally the contributions made by member states to the Alliance. Mr Trump said during a press confer-

ence after the meeting: "Over the past two years, the Secretary General and I have developed a very strong working be a fair alliance. And therefore, Allies relationship... We're both committed have to invest more in defence. You to ensuring that NATO can address the have a very clear message on that, and full range of threats facing the Alliance your message is having a clear impact. today. And there are many threats."

The President went on to talk about invest more. After years of decline. the importance of NATO in tackling we've seen all Allies are investing more major threats around the world, including defence. ing terrorism and the crisis in Syria. He This echo's calls by the President for also took the chance to congratulate the European member states to start paying Secretary General on the 70th Birthday more. Currently only six NATO member

Liberals strengthen

**Election in Australia** 

the economy

he Australian government is

a surplus of \$7.1 billion. A \$55.5 billion

turnaround from the deficit the Liberals

inherited six years ago from the previous

Labor government. It will also see a total

of \$45 billion of surpluses over the next

four years. The surplus will continue to

build toward one per cent of GDP within

back in the black with conservative Prime Minister Morrison delivering the first budget surplus in more than a decade. This year will see



remain a strong alliance, we have to Because Allies are now starting to

states meet the 2% defence threshold; the Secretary General Stoltenberg said, United States, Greece, the United King-"NATO is a strong alliance, but to dom, Estonia, Romania and Poland.

## **Defending Media Freedom**

# Jeremy Hunt and Amal Clooney agree joint legal plan

K Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt and his Special Envoy on Media Freedom Amal Clooney will establish a panel of legal experts to counter draconian laws that hinder journalists from going about their work.

The High Level Panel of Legal Experts will examine legal and policy initiatives that states can adopt to improve media freedom includ

who want to strengthen legal mechanisms to improve media freedom:

Offering advice to government

- Supporting the repeal of outdated
- and draconian laws; Encouraging and supporting governments to help ensure existing laws and international
- obligations are enforced: Promoting best practice and model legislation to protect a vibrant free press.

"Violence against journalists has reached alarming levels globally and Amal Clooney said: we cannot turn a blind eye. The media "I welcome the UK Government's has a crucial role to play in holding the focus on this issue at a time when jour-

powerful to account. There is no escap- nalists are being killed and imprisoned ing the fact that draconian and out- at record levels all over the world and l dated laws around the world are being look forward to working on new legal used to restrict the ability of the media initiatives that can help to ensure a more



# **EU and Russia: CURRENT PROBLEMS** AND FUTURE SCENARIO. **CZECH PERSPECTIVE**

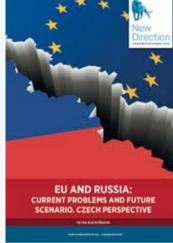
insula, the whole western world was that they failed to notice Russia slip left in shock. It wasn't the first time back into her old autocratic ways. By that Russia had used its military offen- New Years Eve 1999, President Putin sively against another sovereign state had taken control. Western politicians - in 2008 the Kremlin ordered the who never felt the need to engage invasion of the Republic of Georgia in with Russia or try to understand it,

sia had taken hostile action against a than friendly. country that shares a direct land border with the European Union. Surprise economic giant. It has yet to recover extortion. Whilst we believe that at this was not the right reaction. Ten- from its post-soviet slump. The GDP NATO is a defence alliance to keep us sions have been high between the EU of the world's largest nation is not safe, Russia perceives it as an immiand Russia for a long time. And the even comparable to that of Italy or nent threat. Whilst we see an opporcurrent tensions between the EU and other European states. And yet even tunity to open up to our friendly Russia did not appear from nowhere, with limited resources. Russia is able neighbours, Russia sees us moving in The roots lie deeper in the past.

paring themselves to face a life after enemy out to get them. communism. And the EU was preparing to welcome them into the Euro- to respond to this. With the awaken- ness, we will not have any success in pean project as free and independent ing of an ambitious neighbour in the dealing with Russia. Until we learn to democracies. European politicians east, the west faces a question of how understand Russia's modern history, were so occupied with these new real- to deal with an evolving threat from a its interests and motivations, we will ities that Russia disappeared from the resurgent Russia agenda. They took for granted the idea As western democracies we believe equal counterpart. that a Russia without Communism and in soft power and leading by example,

hen at the end of February without the Soviet Union would auto-2014 Russian troops took matically become a liberal democracy. control of the Crimean pen- They were so focused on themselves suddenly woke up, facing a new power whilst Russia resorts to a more con

to project itself on the world stage as on their territory. In the nineties, Europe was in a superpower. It achieves this in two We will never move on in our relaupheaval. Germany was undergoing ways. Firstly by maintaining a strong tionship without understanding Rusa process of reunification. Central and military and secondly by unifying it's sia in a realist framework. Until we Eastern European countries were pre- people behind the myth of an external realize that any concessions or ges-



threats of force, divide and rule tac-Make no mistake: Russia is not an tics, and economic pressure and

tures of good will from our side are Europe has not yet figured out how seen by Kremlin as signs of weaknever be able to face Russia as an





A strong economy means will allow erning Liberal Party of Australia said the Australian government to lower "Reducing debt will ensure that the next taxes, guarantee essential services, generation does not pick up the tab for invest in infrastructure and keep Aus- the last. In delivering a surplus budget, tralians safe and secure. The budget surthe Government's economic plan is givplus will also mean that the Australian ing Australians more opportunities, and government can start to pay down some creating a stronger economy."

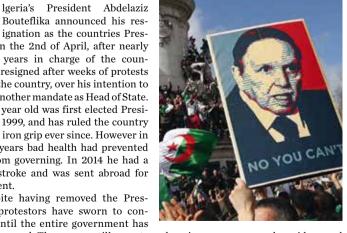
lenges of the future.

# President resigns after 20 years

Bouteflika announced his resignation as the countries President on the 2nd of April, after nearly twenty years in charge of the country. He resigned after weeks of protests across the country, over his intention to seek a another mandate as Head of State. The 82 year old was first elected President in 1999, and has ruled the country with an iron grip ever since. However in recent years bad health had prevented him from governing. In 2014 he had a major stroke and was sent abroad for

Despite having removed the President, protestors have sworn to continue until the entire government has been removed. There were still reports place in some areas and a widespread of large scale celebrations in the capital opposition boycott, Abdelaziz won with after the announcement was made that more than 80% of the vote. President Abdelaziz would step down. Alongside the demand for Abdelaziz This is seen as a step towards turning to step down were a number of other

the Arab Spring protests that took place drafting of a new constitution. They across the region in early 2012. The last have called for more democracy and less Presidential election took place in 2014, corruption in the country and its instiwith a few incidents of violence taking tutions.



Algeria towards the path of democracy. demands, including the formation of Algeria had been largely immune to a national unity government and the 10 PROFILE THE CONSERVATIVE

VETERAN MEP RUNNING AGAIN

# Dr Roberts Zīle

atvian heavyweight politician In 1998, after a few years in this role, Alliance who was based in Latvia and economist Dr Roberts Zīle Was appointed Minister of Spe- He was elected Vice President of is running for his fourth term cial Affairs for cooperation with inter- the nationally conservative Union for in the European Parliament national financial institutions in two Europe of the Nation's political group for Latvian party the National Alliance. successive governments, and between in 2004, and when For Fatherland and In the European Parliament, Zīle has 2002 and 2004 he served as Minis- Freedom/LNNK joined the European focused on the economic governance of ter of Transport in a third government. Conservatives and Reformists Group the EU and solving the adjoining issues Zile also developed an extensive eco- (ECR) in 2009, he became a member of of banking crisis national economic nomic reform programme, known as the Executive Group. downturns and energy issues – espe- "Zīle's programme", designed to pre- Dr Roberts Zīle was born in Riga in cially ensuring the energy independence vent a looming real estate crisis and to 1958. In 1981 he finished his Baccalaureof the Baltic countries from Russia. create a socially equitable tax system ate degree in Economics at the University

executive of the Latvian Citizens' Con- investments. gress after devoting more than a decade to economics. It was at this point that his rience, Dr Zīle was elected Chair of For Australia before gaining a Doctoral degree political career took off; first becoming Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK and in Economics from the Latvia University of deputy in Riga City and then as an assis- nominated as the party's candidate for Agriculture. After a couple of years worktant to a Member of the Latvian Parlia- Prime Minister in 2006. Later, when ing as an editor Zīle moved on to become ment. Zīle himself was elected to the new association of political parties a research fellow, and was appointed Head next parliament in 1995 – for the "For National Alliance "All for Latvia!" – "For of Unit at the Latvian State Institute of Fatherland and Freedom" list – where he served as a member of the European created, he was elected Co-chair. Once himself in different civic causes, including Affairs and the Budget and Finance the organisation was set up he resigned founding the Economists Association to Committees. Soon Zile advanced to in order to focus fully on his mission as stimulate the growth of Latvia's economy become the Chair of the Budget and Member of the European Parliament and and spread knowledge of economic issues Finance Committee

In 1990 Zīle was entrusted with the in Latvia oriented towards productive of Latvia and the Latvian Institute of Agri-

to open the way for a leader of the National to the public.

culture and Agricultural Economics. He





FROM VILNIUS TO THE NATION

# Valdemar Tomaševski

iminas Technical University) and grad- of his two children.

lished to ensure the minority rights of the Vilnius region. Poles in Lithuania – defending the rights In 2016 Tomaševski accepted the role managed the budget effectively.

the European Parliament since 2009, Action of Poles in Lithuania - Christian the answer is to be found in Valdewhere he has been trusted with several Families Alliance (EAPL-CFA). The par- mar Tomaševski's motto "God - Honsignificant commissions: Vice Chair of ty's future looks bright, due for a large our - Fatherland". As a devoted catholic the delegation of relations with Belarus, part to the well-known courageous work who strives tirelessly towards improvmember of the Committee on Civil that Tomaševski has carried out as Chair ing conditions for his people, his motto Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, and in his political duty overall. truly sums up the core of this great poland member of the Committee on Tomaševski has announced his itician's strong sense of political duty.

Tomaševski has been a Member of initiative changed its name to Electoral ication to serving his country? Maybe

born in 1965 in Vilnius. As the is also a Board Member of the European Lithuania. The election will be held in May. son of teacher-intellectuals, Conservatives and Reformists in Europe The core of the party's political message is Tomaševski performed well (ACRE). He is indeed a success story in "When Christian values are the foundain school, living up to his parents' passion for education. In 1983 he was selected sionate politician, Tomaševski is also a reliable politics and the policy of supportto be a student of Vilnius Engineering beloved husband and father, married for ing the traditional family". EAPL-CFA has Institute of Construction (Vilnius Ged- 30 years to his wife Violeta, the mother governed Vilnius district, demonstrating the party's track record in effective local During these years of industrious studies, voters, he ran for the office of president decade, that local government has made Tomasevski also performed military ser- of Lithuania and came fourth out of significant investments in roads, sewage vice as a draftee in Murmansk Province seven candidates, with 5 per cent of the and water infrastructure, which will be in Russia from 1984 to 1986. votes nationwide. In the city of Vilnius a central issue to the campaign – secur-In 1994 Tomaševski was one of the creators of the party Electoral Action of paign is recognised as successful as he Furthermore, it has constructed sev-Poles in Lithuania (EAPL), and became was the youngest runner for the position eral schools and kindergartens, 50 playits first Vice President. The party that at this time. In 2014 he ran for the pres- grounds, 6 social care facilities, 2 hospitals was later to become the most successful diential office again and won 8.23 per and 16 sports fields. All of these investforeign party for Polish people was estabcent of the votes nationwide, winning in ments have been made without incurring any debts, proving that EAPL-CFA has



# TURNS +

# THREATS BY RUSSIA AND TERRORISM GROWING

lin is seeking to distract Russian citi- ern Ukraine (and to some degree in ety of tools. problems. Turmoil in the Middle East and case, at least not yet. North Africa, civil war in Syria, and con
The threat posed by Russia is much second key challenge for the security of therefore much more difficult to track. exposing Russian lies and manipulation. flicts in Yemen and Libya, has brought bigger than it has been since the end of NATO countries is terrorist groups such. We also have to remember that experiwhilst exposed to the threat of terrorism. played taken advantage of Western or use human shields on their own soil. witnessed the revival of a threat which fronts.

ontrary to popular belief pre- Both Europe and NATO face unprece- complacency and struck whilst we are This requires a completely different has already been very creatively used Cold War, the end of the mil- These range from conventional war- defence.

itary standoff between NATO fare through the expansion of terrorist Moscow's vision of divide et impera areas. and Soviet Union did not mark a new groups, radicalisation of our own citi- rule was much broader than just diplo- Another side of this coin is the need to tions employed by Russia are not only era of peace and safety. Under the rule zens to information warfare and pro- macy. What has followed since 2009 dismantle terrorist cells operating in our undermining security on Europe's Eastof Vladimir Putin, Russia is trying to once paganda fuelled mainly by the Russia - including the annexation of Crimea, own countries. Another directly linked ern border, it is also targeting our partregain lost influence and prestige by pur- Despite predictions by numerous vention in Syria on the side of Assad amongst young people. Europe's popu- The "weaponisation of information" by suing an increasingly aggressive and experts that future warfare will predom- regime - clearly shows that the Kremlin lation is suffering from terrorist attacks the Kremlin is a well-thought through revanchist policy. This coincides with inantly belong to special forces and not is determined to pursue its goal of work-led by radicals and militants whom have and well-funded strategy and should the fact that while doing so, the Krem- tanks and artillery, the situation in East- ing on different fronts and using a vari- been either trained abroad or have been be regarded as a threat equal to more

vailing since the end of the dented threats on many different fronts. divided about the future of European way of thinking about warfare, espe- by the Soviet Union before - inforcially in cities and densely populated mation warfare targeting both NATO and the EU. The strategic communicarecruited by terrorist organisations in traditional ones. NATO is aware of the zens from the country's growing internal Syria) clearly shows that this is not the Today, not only Ukraine, but also Mol- Europe and America. These individuals problem and its Stratcom Centre of dova and Georgia are under threat. The often have European citizenship and are Excellence in Latvia does a great job at

an unprecedented wave of migrants and the Cold War. Simply look at recent his- as Daesh or Al Qaeda. NATO should be enced radical Islamist fighters may - and continue to strengthen its position and refugees towards Europe. Almost all of tory. Because we did nothing in 2008, ready to militarily counter and fight ter- almost certainly do - infiltrate the waves the best means of defending the West our neighbourhood is touched by open the Kremlin now believes it can get rorist groups which use partisan tactics of refugees coming to Europe. against Russia and the growing other or frozen conflict, unrest and civil war, away with whatever it wants. They have and often melt into civilian populations Last but not least, we have recently threats that continue to emerge on all

# NATO TURNS 70



They should increase both the frequency and scale of military drills held in the region especially with the NATO summit, President Trump came out Treaty Organization and backing has Response Forces while boosting com- declaring victory, stating that "NATO dropped among key Western nations bat readiness of all NATO allied units, now is a really a fine-tuned machine. as well. The YouGov survey, released playing Russia at their own game when People are paying money that they have on the 70th anniversary, showed 44% of it comes to flex-

ing its muscles. The allies should also strengthen their position when it comes to cyber security and safe guards against the dissemi-

nation of fake news, perhaps even going never paid before." He also claimed these NATO membership among European so far as to ban Russian propaganda out- countries "are happy to do it" and that allies has dropped since 2017. The suplets such as RT or VK. Naturally, this the U.S. was "being treated much more port in Great Britain has dropped from is a valid move to protect the Alliance fairly." In fact, no new commitments were 73 to 59 per cent; in Germany from 68 against hybrid and information warfare. made, the two percent of GDP target had to 54 per cent; in Denmark from 80 to

ing and enhancing military cooperation in 2014. Trump had asked for concrete per cent; in France from 54 to 39 per with non-NATO members, such as Fin-steps to show a willingness to spend two cent; and in the United States from 47 land and Sweden, that are also at great percent by early 2019, however, a recent to 44 per cent. risk from Russia. The post-Soviet area, decision by the German cabinet to keep In other findings 58 per cent of those along with the Balkans, should now be defence spending as low as 1.25% of gross who grew up at the beginning of the where the Alliance focuses its attention, domestic product for the next five years Cold War support America's continued ensuring that all of these young states could re-open the debate and possible participation in NATO; and 56 per cent can live in peace.

### Family Feuds

strife inside NATO. The primary inter- surplus last year of 11 billion euro, its fifth als and 33 per cent of Gen X members nal conflict in the Alliance is a financial annual surplus in a row. Not only Trump support America's participation. And one. Following his election to the presibut President Obama as well as former only 41 per cent of French citizens said dency Trump continued to put forward presidential candidate Senator McCain they would defend America. the view that "NATO is unfair econom- have singled out Germany for its unwillically to the U.S." and that U.S. taxpayers ingness to reach the NATO spending sion. Italy, recently joined the Chinese "are getting ripped off by every country commitment. in NATO." President Trump repeatedly pointed to Germany as an example of a defence expenditure is a clear signal ian commitment to the western hemirich European country that "owes vast to the US that NATO is no longer as sphere. Another similar example is sums of money to NATO and the U.S." important to Germany as it used to be, Turkey's decision to buy S-400 anti-air-

During debates in the U.S. Senate instead they are trying to pivot towards craft missiles from Russia. on the admission of the latest member an autonomous European defence capacountry, the Balkan state of Montenegro, bility. There is also a split in the German Seventy and Still U.S. Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah) stated coalition government, with Chancellor Going Strong on the floor of the Senate that he doesn't Merkel and her Defence Minister both In seventy years, the Alliance has consee how the accession of Montenegro, a - yowing to meet the two percent target by - sistently grown - stronger, From 12, country with a population smaller than 2024 and the SPD questioning the target. members in 1949 to 29 allied states most congressional districts and a mil- At the same time Franco-German calls in 2019. With a new wave of Balkan itary smaller than the police force of for the establishment of an EU-army are enlargement bringing Montenegro the District of Columbia, is beneficial seen as partly driven by what they coninto the alliance in 2017, as its newest enough that we should share an agree- sider to be an introvert and unreliable member. It is perhaps also appropriment for collective defence." The sen- IIS administration President Trump, ate that this year also marks 20 years timent of Senator Lee was echoed by called the proposal for an EU army to prosince Poland, Hungary and the Czech then candidate Trump, who during his tect against threats from Russia, China Republic joined the alliance, a symelection campaign described NATO as and even the U.S. "very insulting." "being obsolete and disproportionately In Europe only the UK, Poland, Esto-self-determination after leaving the too expensive (and unfair) for the U.S.." nia and Greece meet the 2% target and Soviet Empire.

sured then U.K. Prime Minister David alliance in Europe. Cameron to increase defence spending. which he did, after Obama had called Losing Support no longer be able to claim a special ular legitimacy for defending other lasting peace. ■

relationship with the U.S. unless they countries in the Alliance. New polls "paid their fair share."

In 2018, following a contentious NATO support the 70-year-old North Atlantic

Americans support the nation's place in the agreement; 10% If NATO can continue to maintain that unity oppose NATO membership and 29% are of purpose moving forwards, then Europe unsure will continue to enjoy its lasting peace.

According to the poll, support for

This ought to take place while expandbeen agreed to in 2006 and re-affirmed 70 per cent; in Norway from 75 to 66

show that less than half of Americans

lead to further splits within the alliance. of that baby boomer generation believe The German decision was not driven by the treaty continues to serve an importany fiscal urgency, on the contrary, Gerant role in defending Western nations. Of course. like all families, there is many is running balanced budgets with a However, only 35 per cent of millenni-

> There are other threats to cohe-Belt and Road initiative, a 2.5billion Berlin deciding not to increase its euro deal that calls into question Ital-

bolic moved that reaffirmed their right

Trump was not the first U.S. Presithe Eastern European states are pushing As an Alliance, NATO has gone dent to echo these sentiments, in-fact for a stronger and better-funded NATO, from strength to strength, not only his predecessor President Obama pres- causing an East-West split within the through welcoming new members, but by being ready to embrace change, and stand united whilst doing so. If NATO can continue to maintain that him out saving "free riders aggravate" The second, and maybe more import- unity of purpose moving forwards. me" and threatening that the U.K. would ant, internal conflict is the falling popthen Europe will continue to enjoy its

# LESSONS FROM THE PAST

In 1992, just over 25 years ago, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher wrote this article in the New York Times calling for NATO intervention in Bosnia, following the invasion by Serbia. Her sentiments in this letter continue ring true today. Substitute Serbia for Russia and Ukraine for Bosnia, and her call for action could have been written by any conservative leader today.

feared and thousands of Serbian troops ply with certain Western demands: will be free to move on Sarajevo, itself • Cessation of Serbia's economic swollen with refugees from other areas.

The victims and losers in this conflict suffer more than the usual penalties of defeat. Some are herded into concentration camps where, even if the worst reports of atrocities are untrue they nonetheless suffer appalling privation and can be shot for insignificant offenses. Others are driven from their homes and obliged to give up their • Agreement to the demilitarization property. Children and passers-by are shot at and killed.

This is the Serbian "ethnic cleansing" policy—a term for the expulsion of • Promise of cooperation with the the non Serb population that combines the barbarities of Hitler's and Stalin's If those demands (which should be policies toward other nations

"freeze" the present situation in which the Serbs hold about two-thirds of Bosnia's

territory, whereas they make up only 31 percent of the total population as against 43 percent for the Muslims and 17 percent for the Croats. Such an outcome

would consolidate and ratify aggression. It was Serbia that planned and carried out aggress ion against Bosnia in April. The Government of Alija Izetbegovic in Sarajevo is most practical instrument to hand, must the legal and internationally recognized government of the Bosnian republic.

ing to do with what goes on in Boshigh command in Belgrade, which is tion into three cantons). providing financial and military means for the war—including the all important gasoline for the Serbian forces.

be done by the West unless we are pre- the Muslims in a united Bosnia would pared to risk permanent involvement discourage their radicalization, which in a Vietnam- or Lebanon-style con- would be inevitable if the Muslims were flict and potentially high Western casu- to be dispersed under alien rule. A desalties. That is partly alarmism, partly an perate Muslim diaspora—not unlike the excuse for inertia. There is a vast differ- Palestinian one—could then turn to terence between a full-scale land invasion rorism. Europe would have created an like Desert Storm, and a range of mili- Islamic time bomb. tary interventions from lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia, through supplying ten. Only the prospect of resistance and arms to Bosnian forces, to direct strikes defeat will lead to the rise of a more demon military targets and communications. ocratic and peaceful leadership. Wait-

side, we cannot expect that others will do be not only dishonourable but also very so. There is increasing alarm in Turkey costly: refugees, terrorism, Balkan wars and the Muslim world. More massacres of drawing in other countries and worse. Muslims in Bosnia, terrible in themselves, Hesitation has already proved

ers, such as the Soviet Union in the initiative before it is too late and a Serb past. It has up to now been encour- victory is accomplished, with terrible aged by Western inaction, nor least by long-term consequences.

errible events are happening in explicit statements that force would Bosnia; worse ones are threat- not be used. A clear threat of military ened. Sarajevo is under constant action would force Serbia into contembombardment. Gorazde is besieged and plating an end to its aggression. Serbia likely to fall. If it does, a large massacre is should be given an ultimatum to com-

- support for the war in Bosnia to be monitored by international observers placed on the Serb-Bosnian border.
- Recognition of Bosnia's independence and territorial integrity by Belgrade and renunciation of territorial claims
- Guarantees of access from Serbia and Bosnia for humanitarian teams.
- of Bosnia within a broader demilitarization agreement for the whole region.
- return of refugees to Bosnia.

accompanied by a deadline) are not Everyone witnessing or hearing of met, military retallation should folthese tragic events desperately wants low, including aerial bombardment of them to stop. But this feeling is exploited bridges on the Drina linking Bosnia by Serbia and its sympathizers to press with Serbia, of military convoys, of gun for a U.N. sponsored cease-fire. Reason- positions around Sarajevo and Gorazde, able as this sounds, it is an attempt to and of military stores and other installations useful in the war. It should

also be made clear that while this is not a war against the Serbian people, even installations on the Serbian side of the border may be attacked if they play an important role in the war. American leadership

in this endeavour is indispensable, as the E.C.'s paralysis has shown. But America cannot be expected to act alone. NATO, which is the deal with the crisis. It is not "out of area."

The West's ultimate aim should be The pretense that Serbia has noth- the restoration of the Bosnian state, backed by international guarantees nia is just that—a pretense. From the within a regional pact, perhaps under start there has been close coordination C.S.C.E. supervision, and guaranteeing between supposedly independent Ser- the rights of the three main groups in bian forces in Bosnia and the Serbian Bosnia (but not allowing for its parti-

Such a solution would prevent the irredentist wars that the partition of the country between Serbia and Croatia It is argued by some that nothing can would inevitably provoke. Also, keeping

Serbia will not listen until forced to lis-Even if the West passes by on the other ing until the conflict burns itself out will

would also risk the conflict spreading. costly. The matter is urgent. There are Serbia has no powerful outside back- perhaps a few weeks left for a serious

If only the West had adapted its strategy sooner, we may not be in the situation that we are in today. Western leaders would go on to waste the Unipolar moment. and the once in a generation chance to create a truly free and democratic Europe.

As a result, Russia has deployed similar tactics to those of the Serbs, and have taken advantage of the same complacency as that which the West showed towards Bosnia in the 1990s. The cost of this inaction has been the invasion of both Georgia and Ukraine in the last two decades. Perhaps there were lessons to have been learnt from the past, and perhaps it's not too late to learn them now.

# RUSSIATHE MAFIA STATE AND ITS AIMS

to it for sure is not the "Russian national" ing Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth nothing but mockery – a KGB officer as a interest". Everybody knows millions in order to conquer it. In the 19th cenof people were killed in the struggle for tury it did the same to Turkey and to power inside Kremlin in the 20th centhe Habsburg Monarchy to dominate tury, very few remember that the Rus- the Balkans and Balkanisation is still sian political class was able to dissolve the a synonym of disorder. USSR for the same reason in 1991.

It is the struggle for the Kremlin sia destabilised the entire among post-soviet siloviks mafias that world by plotting with Hitshapes Russia's internal politics. Accord- ler to blow up the international ing to Russian sociologist Olga Krishta- order hoping for a worldwide novskaya, 78 per cent of the Russian revolution. Today Ruspolitical elites have their roots in either sia continues this tra-KGB or GRU (Military Intelligence) dition by warming up where they were taught how to maniputhe frozen conflicts in late people and how to kill them.

There is only one ultimate goal for all gia 2008), inspires new of them - to be in power, to derive prof- ones in Ukraine (2014its from that and to remain unpunished. ?), gives fuel to the That was the core of the deal between on-going ones (Syria) ing over Russia. What he needed to take the Baltic basin?). power was effectively war and destabilisation and he created this with the terror- affected by wars and then being effecist bomb attacks on his own compatriots tively stabilised after the cold war was goals today? in Moscow, Volgodonsk and Buynaksk to the post-Yugoslavian area where peace launch the second Chechen war in 1999. was restored not in the cooperation with • to turn Ukraine into a failed state. Alexandr Litvinenko who revealed the Russia but in spite of its support for the truth behind this was poisoned.

Putin has ruled Russia since 1999 and dictatorship) and in spite of its desperate the exporting of instability is the main efforts to maintain the tension (for examtool of his foreign policy. It is not his ple the Russian battalion involved in the invention but has been for a long time a Priština airport seizure). Russian historical tradition. He inher- Russia sponsored terrorism in the ited this modus operandi from the past Soviet times. Putin was a Colonel in the both directly in the frozen conflicts in KGB then. Today while portrayed by Transnistria, Nagorno Karabakh, South Kremlin's propaganda as a "leader of the Osetia and Abkhasia and more remotely civilised world in the struggle against

In the 20th century Rus-

The only real goal the Caucasus (Georof Putin and his siloviks is to stay at power.

The only region in Europe having been main source of troubles (the Milošević

hurchill was wrong. Russia is not from the plethora of historical conflicts Islamist terrorism" and a "defender of "a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, that Russian has been part of. In the 17th the traditional Christian values against inside an enigma", and "the key" and 18th centuries Russia was destabilis- decadent 'Gayropa' " he should provoke "Christian knight" – come on. Russia exports four goods: oil, gas,

corruption and destabilisation. Raw materials are the main source of money in Russian budget spent on armaments (used to blackmail other countries or to invade them) and to corrupt the European

in the West. The Rusply of energy raw mate-

Russia wants: IN EUROPE

- The potential success of Ukrainian reforms (as well as the Georgian ones in Shaakashvili's government) constitutes an existential challenge for Putin's 'suzerain democracy' and "must be prevented with all the means".
- to destroy transatlantic ties to get rid of American presence in Europe and to destroy the EU system turning it into the 19th century type concerto

of the powers with Russia as a major player and the countries between Russia and Germany as nonexisting factors. This is why Russia supports all radicals from the left and from the right, manipulates the migration crisis, provokes new waves of refugees to

flee from Syria and undermines the prestige of European Governments such as the German Government attacked with the story of the Russian German repatriate teenager allegedly raped by immigrants. political class (Schröder) or to Russia inspires disorder in its neighboursupport radical parties hood in Norway and Finland (Russian

sponsored immigration route to Europe), sians made 'gas wars' Sweden (air and submarine intrusions) destabilising the sup- the Baltic states (Russian minority riots control. - 2007 and citizens kidnapping - the The only real goal of Putin and his siloviks rials to Europe with its Kohver case) in Poland, Hungary and is to stay at power. The Russian raw mateclimax in 2009 must be Romania (the propaganda war aimed at rial exporting economy is declining in an mentioned too in order the revitalisation of the memory of his- irreversible way. The decreasing standard to complete the image. torical conflicts between Poland and Lith- of living for ordinary Russians is causing Yeltsin and Putin while the latter was tak- and prepares future conflicts (perhaps in Lord Palmerston said to show what the uania, Poland and Ukraine, Hungary and his government a serious problem. Putin Russian goals are for the world, half the Ukraine, Hungary and Slovakia, Roma- has ruled the country since 1999 - long job is to prevent Russia from achieving unia and Ukraine, Romania and Hungary enough not to be able to blame his predethem. What are therefore the Russian etc. The best example of this is the Ruscessor. The only way to manage this intersian official proposal of March 2014 for nal crisis is to blame the "Americans and Poland, Hungary and Romania to parti- their European puppets". tion Ukraine).

Russia wants: IN THE MIDDLE EAST to maintain Russian influence by having military bases in Tartus and Latakia and therefore maintaining its relationship with the Assad regime by

the coast.

• to have a never ending war in the interior (in Syria and Iraq) – in a conflict that would consume Western resources and political attention by

supporting the Alawite stronghold on



Dr Przemyslaw Zurawski vel Grajewski

University of Lodz, Poland

drawing them away from Europe Russia also wants the oil price to increase (due to its financial reliance on this resource) and to prevent the building up of gas and oil transit route from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean – a way to supply energy to Europe out of Russian

When the war started in Ukraine a deputy from the Russian Parliament said of the West "They will scold and scold and then they will stop scolding". Putin needs "small victorious wars". War and destabilisation abroad is his only instrument to manage the internal crisis and to stay in power. Acknowledging the Russian perception of "Western weakness" and Russia having international impunity will result in more aggressive behaviour by Russia in the future.

# WISHFUL THINKING VERSUS REALITY

NATO's Forward Presence in Eastern Europe is a Necessity



ince 2004, NATO has defended the independence of the Baltic States, but more can be done. In 2014 NATO's member countries agreed to enhance the deterrence capabilities of the Alliance – a set of measures called the Readiness Action Plan (RAP). These were updated after the NATO summit in Warsaw to become NATOs Forward Presence. The combination of the RAP and the Forward Presence offer a new

the context of the illegal annexation of thus far, there is still work to be done ing a "dialogue" with Russia are at least Crimea and, more generally, the "inter- to increase the defence capabilities benefiting from this because otherwise nal conflict" in Ukraine were a surprise of Eastern Europe. We had to wait one has to conclude that Putin's propato some. Not so for Latvia and its two until the Warsaw Summit of 2016 for ganda war has also gained an audience in Baltic neighbours Estonia and Lithuania troops to finally be deployed in Poland, the West. which were not naive enough to believe which shares a border with the milita- I believe in the right of every country that there is such a thing as a "softer" rised Kaliningrad oblast. It also took to choose its own foreign policy, includor "more pragmatic" Russia. The Bal- until 2016 for more troops to finally be ing mine. I am certain that the Baltic States have suffered under the Soviet deployed in Latvia and it's neighbours. tic States and Poland choose security. Union for long enough to build an immuOne could also add that the Bal- If we do not, Russia will choose for us. nity against the lies of the giant neightic States, particularly Latvia, are still The sooner the wishful thinkers underbour to their East. It might be a different reliant on Russian gas as well as being stand this, the better for everyone. More

I am certain that the Baltic States and Poland choose security. If we do not, Russia will choose for us.

piece of mind for the Baltic States, as we who are still living pre-independence and a credible threat that enabled Ruscontinue to face harassment from Rus- memories which includes a large daily sia's annexation of Crimea. Baltic States sia. The nearly 5,000 troops stationed dose of Russian TV news and thereby are no different. Russia's imperial ambiin Latvia, Poland, Lithuania and Esto- belonging to a different society - not- tions have not diminished whilst the nia serve as a first line of defence against withstanding their failure to becoming wishful thinking of certain people in the fully-fledged citizens.

Russia's tactics and actions within Despite all the progress achieved way one can hope that people advocat-

matter for those inhabitants of Latvia partly incorporated in the ex-Soviet NATO means more security.

**Dr Roberts Zīle MEP** 

Member of the European Parliament, ember of the ECR Bureau

electricity grids and rail market – thus already being involuntary integrated in the wrong region to some degree. Given the slow and painful progress of the Rail Baltica railway project that aims to connect the region with the rest of Europe, the situation is even gloomier still.

On the other hand, it needs to be understood that NATO is made up of a number of countries whose interests are somewhat divergent. For that reason it should not be assumed that there is a unified voice within NATO that lists the security of the Baltic States and Poland as its number one priority.

As NATO's presence in Eastern Europe increases, there are voices calling for this to be reversed. The argument goes that Russia feels threatened and should not be provoked. Such claims are unfounded and the opposite is in fact true. It was indeed a lack of opposition West only plays into Russia's hands. In a

# **NATO AT 70**

or 70 years, NATO has secured peace and freedom through partnership and cooperation. Marking its anniversary today in Washington, the Alliance will once again stand ready to face challenges from the East and the South, the war on terror. even the burden, and remain resolute in the face of growing challenges. Equally important is marking the anniversa- NATO has responded with speed and ries of NATO's enlargement to Central determination, implementing the big-Europe, demonstrating the strength of gest reinforcement of our collective the transatlantic bond and the unity of defence in a generation. Allies who share the values and vision Poland has been at the forefront for a Europe whole, free and at peace. of these changes, standing shoul-It is this critical anniversary that we der to shoulder on the frontlines with should reflect how Europe's destiny as our Allies. Working together, we have an integral part of Euro-Atlantic inte-strengthened our collective defence, gration was secured, providing hope cyber and missile capabilities, trained for our future generations and send- our partners, and taken cooperaing a clear message to others that pros- tion with the European Union to a perity comes with security, peace and new level, boosting our joint ability to

democracy. and complexity of these challenges, time.



respond to hybrid and other threats. As the most successful Alliance The NATO we see today stands in history, together we continue to ready to address the threats of tomorovercome the most serious security row, and it is because of dedicated partchallenges in a generation: Russia's ners like the United States, Canada, the aggression in and around Europe, ter- United Kingdom, or Norway, Poland rorism and instability in our southern—and other countries of the region that neighbourhood, as well as very real we remain at the cutting edge of operathreats from cyber-attacks and missile tional capabilities with a unique adaptproliferation. Undaunted by the scale ability to face our challenges in real



# NATO missile defence agreement proves it

NATO's missile defence system is not designed Every nation has the right to conduct exercises, This claim ignores the facts of geography. Rus-Since the early 1990s, the Alliance has consis-NATO's Open Door policy has helped close

General Alexander Vershbow, geography and physics make it impossible for the NATO system to shoot down Russian intercontinental parency, OSCE members are bound by the standards and territory of NATO nations, NATO only main-standards and territory of NATO nations, NATO only main-standards and territory of NATO nations, NATO only main-standards are similarly groundless. Outside the standards and territory of NATO nations, NATO only main-standards are similarly groundless. Outside the standards and territory of NATO nations, NATO only main-standards are similarly groundless. Outside the standards and territory of NATO nations, NATO only main-standards are similarly groundless. Outside the standards and territory of NATO nations, NATO only main-standards are similarly groundless. Outside the standards and territory of NATO nations, NATO only main-standards are similarly groundless.

nor even the projected" missile defence system observers to the NATO exercise Trident Junc"could stop or cast doubt on Russia's strate"could stop or cast doubt on Russia's strate"ture in October- November 2015.

"counter-piracy operation, showing clearly that (NRC). They reaffirmed their commitment to international agreements including the Helsinki the Founding Act at NATO-Russia summits in Final Act which says that every state has the

threat posed by proliferation more generally. It is therefore Russia's exercises, not NATO's, In fact, over 30 countries have obtained, or are which are a threat to stability

threatens Russia

NATO is trying to encircle Russia

officials have confirmed that the NATO and Allies have consistently stood by thus carry the approval of Russia, along with all In 1997 NATO and Russia signed the Found-

an attempt at encirclement.

мүтн 4

Russia, on the other hand, has repeatedly NATO has partnership relationships with Rome in 2002 and in Lisbon in 2010. nuclear questions. Furthermore, NATO has especially the case because Russia's military legitimately be considered a threat to Russia, interests but also on cooperation and the their own security repeatedly made clear that missile defence takeover of Crimea was masked by exactly or to any other country in the region, let alone shared objective for a Europe whole, free and Over the past 65 years, 28 countries have

NATO's Open Door policy creates

or directed against Russia. It does not pose a as long as they do so within their international sia's land border is just over 20,000 kilome- tently worked to build a cooperative relation- Cold War-era divisions in Europe. NATO As explained by NATO Deputy Secretary numbers and providing observation opportu- one-sixteenth, face current NATO members.

NATO began reaching out, offering dialogue ing democracy, security and stability further

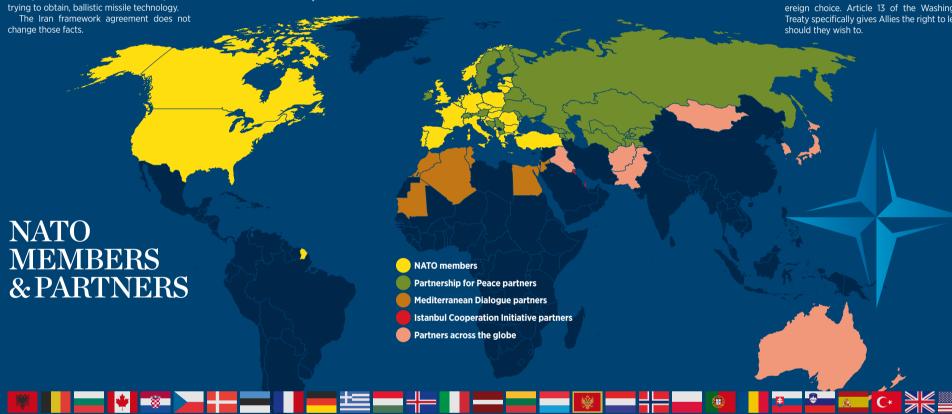
planned NATO shield will not, in fact, undermine the terms and the spirit of the Vienna Docu- other Security Council members. Before Rus- ing Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and tries. Each sovereign country has the right to tussia's deterrent. Deputy Prime Minister Dmi-ment. Those exercises which crossed the noti-sia's aggressive actions in Ukraine began, Rus-Security, creating the NATO Russia Permanent choose for itself whether it joins any treaty or

work agreement on Iran's nuclear called snap exercises including tens of thou-many countries in Europe and Asia. Such part-Since the foundation of the NRC, NATO and tional organisations, to be or not to be a party fence is wrong on two counts.

place close to NATO territory. This practice of in question, focus exclusively on issues agreed ing from counter-narcotics and counter-terror- the right to be or not to be a party to treaties.

The Iranian agreement does not cover the calling massive exercises without warning is a with them, such as disaster preparedness and ism to submarine rescue and civil emergency of alliance." And by signing the NATO-Russia

ereign choice. Article 13 of the Washington Treaty specifically gives Allies the right to leave



# 10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT NATO

AN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY HUB Germany), one land command (Izmir, Turkey) Control) aircraft. From 2018, NATO will also commitment to arms control, disarmament partners that includes over 40 countries from 28 member countries from Europe and North STANDING FORCES America. The Alliance takes all its decisions by NATO has a number of standing forces on

### COLLECTIVE DEFENCE

NATO's history, on 12 September 2001, the day

# NATO'S COMMAND STRUCTURE

ture also includes one air command (Ramstein, is a fleet of AWACS (Airborne Warning and NATO's strategy. This is matched by Allies' has developed a global network of security can join.

consensus. Every member country, no matter active duty that contribute to the Alliance's NATO FUNDING sions and decisions. Member states are com- These include NATO's four standing maritime contributions to the costs of running NATO and 1999, NATO helped to stop mass killings and 10 partners. Other than partners taking part in nitted to individual liberty, democracy, human group fleets, which are ready to act when implementing its policies and activities. The expulsions in Kosovo, and NATO troops con- NATO missions and operations, the Alliance rights and the rule of law. These values are at the heart of NATO's transatlantic bond.

diled upon. Additionally NATO has an integreatest part of these contributions is indirect the heart of NATO's transatlantic bond.

grated air defence system that links national grated air defence system that l COLLECTIVE DEFENCE

the Alliance's ballistic missile defence capaincur the costs involved whenever they volunThe greatest responsibility of the Alliance is to
bilities. The Alliance also conducts several air teer forces to participate in a NATO operation.

Afghanistan will never again become a safe bilities. The Alliance is to
bilities. The Alliance also conducts several air teer forces to participate in a NATO operation.

Afghanistan will never again become a safe bilities. The Alliance is to
bilities. The Alliance is to protect and defend NATO's territory and pop-policing missions in which Allied fighter jets. For example the cost for providing a fighter. UN mandate to protect the people of Libya. Australia, Japan and South Korea. the Washington Treaty, sets out the Alliance's collective defence commitment. It states that an attack on one shall be considered an attack on one shall be con

### after the terrorist attacks on the United States. TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT

NATO benefits from being able to draw on the <u>installations</u>. military expertise and capabilities of its mem-NATO has a permanent, integrated military bers. This includes tanks, submarines or fighter **DETERRENCE** 

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and one maritime command (Northwood, operate five Global Hawk surveillance drones. and non-proliferation.

international peace and security. In 1995, NATO the African Union, The Alliance's Resolute Sup

tions finance the costs of NATO's integrated Hurricane Katrina and to Pakistan after the cerned to decide if it wishes to seek memstructures, collectively-owned equipment or October 2005 earthquake. NATO Defence bership. On six occasions, between 1952 and Ministers took swift decisions on 11 February 2009, a total of 16 European countries chose 2016 to deploy ships to the Aegean Sea to sup- to seek membership and were admitted. This port Greece and Turkey, as well as the Euro- process has contributed to peace and security command structure where military and civil-ian personnel from all member states work together. The Alliance has two top-level Strategic Commands (Allied Command Operations, in Mons, Belgium, and Allied Command
Transformation, in Norfolk, United Under these Strategic Commands are two Under the Aegean Sea within 48 hours of the Minister Countries aspire the Aegean Sea within Joint Force Commands (in Brunssum, Nether-tries, and in some cases, partner countries or The Alliance's deterrence is based on an Threats like terrorism, piracy, the proliferation try according to its own merits. A wide range lands and in Naples, Italy) that can deploy and other troop-contributing countries. The only run military operations. The Command Struc- military equipment that NATO owns itself capabilities, which remain a core element of warfare know no borders. That is why NATO need to be implemented before any country

Their capabilities are too limited, their planned advance of exercises which include more than places: Kosovo, Afghanistan, and at sea off the numbers too few, and their locations too far 9,000 troops, unless the exercises are snap Horn of Africa. All three operations are car
Council (EAPC), open to the whole of Europe, NATO, they received the pledge that NATO

at peace. No other partner has been offered a chosen freely, and in accordance with their

# WHY YOUNG PEOPLE, LIKE THE YOUNGER ME, KEEP FALLING FOR TROTSKY



is a columnist for *The Sunday Telegraph* and a broadcaster.

Why did that

neo-Marxist position

over so many, when it

had apparently failed

as a political system

in all the countries

of the world where

it had actually been

installed?

retain such a hold

The shutting down of all political activity (even the distribution of leaflets and the wearing of badges), not only on civil rights issues but on the Vietnam a fight for free speech and the right of tests, being hurled down the stairs of acolytes maintain their belief?

tory employment practices.

Ironically, what Marx created dent revolution. Back in the day at and Lenin brought to fruition Berkeley, this was not a Marxist revolt in its first incarnation. It began as an was not an antidote to religion expression of outrage at the banning of all political activity on campus property which they saw as oppressive announced by the university authorities at the beginning of the 1964 academic superstition, but a new variant vear, almost certainly at the behest of local businesses tired of being picketed by University of California students protesting over their racially discrimina-

famously - or notoriously,

depending on your point of view

eventually throughout the universities of legal authorities as malign: a conspir-nists who remained attached to the offi-altered by action. If facts seem to contraof America and Europe, begin to iden- acy of the rich and powerful determined cial Soviet state interest were regarded dict the Marxist analysis, then they must tify themselves with a much more hard- to protect their own interests. From that as absurd. core ideology which came to be called the shocking disillusionment, it was not What followed from this was that the tive truth is a bourgeois construct" New Left? And perhaps the more diffi- a huge leap to the conclusion that the Soviet Union and all of its crimes and Ironically, what Marx created and Lenin cult question: why did that neo-Marxist political and economic system under failings could be discounted. Stalin had brought to fruition was not an antidote position retain such a hold over so many, which you lived was incorrigibly unjust. destroyed the integrity of the revolutor religion which they saw as oppreswhen it had apparently failed as a politi- But the second part of this histori- tion and therefore what went on in Rus- sive superstition, but a new variant of it: cal system in all the countries of the world cal examination is more problematic. sia and its satellites was a betrayal of a belief system which cannot, in its own

The first puzzle - when did demands uprisings remain in the Marxist fold them up, even temporarily, for a dicta-War and American foreign policy, was a for simple freedoms turn into systematic even after grotesque revelations about torship of the proletariat.) So it was relclear breach of the constitutional liber- (if schismatic) Marxist commitments? Soviet gulags and Chinese tyranny were atively easy to conclude that empirical ties of people who happened to live and - is fairly clear in my recollection. The common knowledge? When it became evidence of Soviet infamy was neither work on university premises. So, in the brutal reaction of the police to peaceful apparent that the great Leninist and here nor there. The revolution - propfirst instance, this campaign may have demonstrations was a tipping point. The Maoist revolutions had produced perse-erly speaking - had not failed: it had been driven by people who had Left-of- sight of students who refused to desist cution and terror, or at best, simply eco- never been tried. centre political views but it was not a from gathering in areas which had once nomic poverty and political corruption specifically Marxist - or even socialist been open arenas for political meetings, - in the face of all the available evidence, reason why the facts did not get in the movement. It was, in the true sense, or who staged non-violent sit-down pro-

of it: a belief system which

cannot, in its own terms, be

disproved.

assembly as guaranteed by the First buildings or summarily arrested produced a mass epiphany: a revelation of of answer to this. The first is histori- realigns your perception of the human When, exactly, did this change? When what the Left would call the repressive cal. Almost all of the influential Marx-condition. If the workers do not accept did the student rebels at Berkeley, and nature of the capitalist state. It was all ist activity in the 1960s and '70s was led its diagnosis, then they are in a state of later at the LSE and the Sorbonne and too credible to see the oppressive actions by Trotskyists: the old diehard Commu-

Why did so many veterans of those early the true goals and values of the Marxist terms, be disproved.

cause. A good many comrades went ever further than this in their analysis, arguing that the revolution had happened in entirely the wrong place. Marx had never advocated a Communist take-over in Russia because it was a totalitarian country which had not passed through a period of bourgeois freedom. What he had expected was that those Western nations which had passed through democratic revolutions would proceed to Communist rule as the next phase of historical progress, their populations realising that popular ownership of the economy was as important as popular control of government. (What did not seem to occur to him was that once people had experienced the "bourgeois freedoms", they would be unlikely to give

But there was another, more abstract uct of scientific observation: it is theobe dismissed as a mass delusion: "objec-



# ON DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE

Democracy constitutes the core of Europe's political culture. At the same time, it is endangered by the ongoing processes of European integration. As for the European Union, it has no proper legitimacy while such phenomenon is referred to as a democratic deficit.



Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse, PhD

**Democracy still** important for voters

CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT PAGE

cal legitimacy for the European project. utilitarianism of the European project. The most well-known typology specifies two types of legitimacy: the first is the **Integration mechanisms**: so-called "input legitimacy", which is not really democratic typically based on a mandate granted via core of democracy while utilitarian legitimacy has only a complementary

The essential problem of the EU results from the choice between the greater effectiveness of its governance and fidelity to the aforementioned democratic principles.

higher utility had been severely dented whereas utilitarian legitimacy ceased Council) that are subsequently han- law. Such attitude violates the demo- translates usually into a detention in to justify the EU's power over European dled through the majority voting pro- cratic principle, according to which only action efficiency as well as difficulties societies. According to polls conducted cedure. This institution plays a leading sovereign political communities, backed occurring at the decision-making level by Eurobarometer, such was the feel- role in legislative procedure ("commu- by their democratically-elected repre- in the EU institutions. This is dramatic ing of at least a large part of EU citizens. nity method"), even despite the fact that sentatives, are entitled to pass compe- for the European project, constituting a Therefore, it can be assumed that the it is the European Commission that has tences to international institutions. EU's structure is properly legitimated a near monopoly on legislative initiaduring "good times", but not during tives while the European Parliament majority voting have emerged, the proquent crises. periods of trouble. Before such problem- is also involved in the legislative pro- cedure of which raises some concern atic situations started to emerge, prog- cedure. In addition to improving gov- about its compliance with democratic Rule of law as a mechanism ress in integration processes enjoyed ernance, majority voting speeds up the principles. The EU is closer to a confed-for the integration progress some social consent, even though the law-giving process as well as facilitating eral rather than federal solution, thus project did not fully meet all democratic the adoption of more effective solutions constituting first and foremost a union. One of the most important instruments criteria. In the literature on this subject and not only those that could satisfy all of equal states while its democratic man- of the integration "through law" is the matter, such phenomenon is generally interested parties. Nonetheless, such date derives primarily from scrutiny carreferred to as the period of "permis- procedure shifts power in the EU to the ried out in subsequent Member States. law principle. Its main task is to defend sive consensus". Citizens allowed polit- community's largest states, which only Many scholars urge that the EU should the authority of European law and its ical elites to make decisions on the EU's intensifies during times of crises, and be referred to as a "demoi-cracy", and supremacy over national law. In addiessential affairs as long as there were no what I personally refer to as the sys-not as a "democracy"; it forms a union tion, it constitutes a source of power major problems; it was only later that temic tendency towards the "asymmet- of democratic national communities for the EU institutions, with particuthey began to monitor the issue of interic confederation". gration – either to criticize it or to question its further development. Such was main integration development mecha- So, voting processes in such systems pean Union, as both of them account for the manifestation of electoral politics, nisms should not be perceived as purely shall be primarily based on consensus, the interpretation of rule of law and its which had until recently been either democratic tools. According to Fritz understood in terms of unanimous decidormant or simply ignored by the elites W. Scharpf, integration "through law", sions made by their members. Thus, it is such principles mainly seek to promote new political period has been referred of both the EC and the CJEU, seem munity - or a group of them - to outvote the expansion of European law as well to as "constraining dissensus", which highly problematic from the perspective any other ones. Under EU principles, all as the competences of the EU instituwas equivalent to reducing integration of democratic principles. The former democratic communities shall be equal tions. Thus, the above-mentioned rules processes by dissatisfied Europeans. lacks appropriate electoral input legiti- with no apparent dominant structure. reconcile the supranational interests of Interestingly, some scholars have been macy while the latter does not have at its. Thus, providing only one of them with both the European Commission and the wondering why certain societies evendisposal adequate political supervision a greater number of votes and - more Court of Justice of the European Union. tually decided to accept integration pro- from the elected "majoritarian" insti- importantly - outvoting some other However, in Europe, the rule of law cesses, bearing in mind that they kept tutions. Being part of the trias politica communities in the Council of the Euro-tends to be exercised in a rather flexible. evolving without any proper democratic model, the judicial system shall indeed pean Union - does not comply with discretionary and often arbitrary manmandates for quite a long time. Addi- enjoy some autonomy; nonetheless, it democratic legitimacy. If the European ner. Such approach gives the impression tionally, experts claim that the grow- cannot be completely free of influence Union had the intention to apply major- that some national interests, especially ing importance of electoral politics in exerted by the electoral politics in any of ity voting in its institutions, such occur- those of the largest and most influential the EU, thus the ever-increasing role the world's democratic countries. Such rences would have to take place only in Member States, are far more privileged of voters in political processes at the claim may be evidenced by the fact that cases where a losing minority could be than those of others, as evidenced by the

European level, may exacerbate hitherto crises and prevent integration from fully developing. Moreover, the European Union lacks the adequate demo- $Modern\ Europe's\ problems\ with\ democ-cratic\ legitimacy\ to\ conduct\ such\ radical$ racy seem to be a major challenge for reforms that would make it possible to future integration processes. Some deal with the aforementioned impasses research has referred to the "democratic" as well as to ensure more effective govdeficit" in the EU or insufficient politi- ernance, understood in terms of greater

general scrutiny. According to the afore- It is vital to indicate two basic integramentioned research, such legitimacy tion mechanisms. The first is referred to appears weak in the European context. as integration "through law" or "Euro-The second type of legitimacy, hereby pean constitutionalism". This consists in many democratic systems voters, parentialed to take advantage of the optreferred to as "output legitimacy", of granting European law supremacy liaments or representatives of the exec- out right, which would allow them to regards essentially the direct results of over national law, as well as envisag- utive branch have the right to appoint exclude themselves from a given regulaall policy-making processes. That is why ing the systematic strengthening of the judges, or to influence the choice of the tion without a need to implement it on it is justly specified as "utilitarian legiticompetences of the European Comstate's highest judicial bodies, with partheir territory. For instance, such was macy". In times of economic prosperity, mission (EC) and the Court of Justicular regard to members of constituthe case of the Central European counwhen the European Union was not tor- tice of the European Union in ensuring tional courts. Moreover, the EC tends tries that voted against legislation on mented by any serious crises, the issue proper implementation of EU law in to extend the scope of impact exerted the compulsory relocation of asylum of insufficient "input legitimacy" was all Member States. In light of the disusually downplayed; instead, the com- cussed concept, European treaties being within exclusive competences been outvoted by other Member States, munity was rather praised for its useful- aspire to become EU constitutional law of Member States and those that have they refused to enter the directive into ness in relation to the Member States, whereas the CJEU is eager to be perbeen nominally excluded from the juris-force in their respective national sysbeing alleged to provide better solutions ceived as the constitutional court for diction of the CJEU. The Commission tems. Although such behaviour constito social and political problems. There- the entire community. Under the notion interferes in these areas on the pretext tuted an example of violating EU law as fore, utilitarian legitimacy was expected of integration "through law", as men- of protecting liberties on the common well as the principles of "European conto constitute the very core of both the tioned above, both treaties and Euro- market as well as taking advantage of stitutionalism", they acted according to EU's political authorization and its sub- pean law tend to encompass more and referring Member States to the CJEU. democratic rules. sequent progress. Yet this sometimes more public affairs. In addition, these Such was the case of the limited use of occurred at the expense of reducing two institutions actively seek to extend military offsets by EU countries, even of this part of the paper. The essential the influence of electoral politicization their current scope of competences as regardless of the fact that both security problem of the EU results basically from while progress in integration acted to well the impact of EU law, even beyond and defence matters were excluded from the choice between the greater effecthe detriment of "input legitimacy" of the literal understanding of treaty prothe political process. Nonetheless, elec-visions, which in fact influences some (pursuant to Article 346 of the TFEU). the aforementioned democratic princitoral mechanisms constitute the very spheres controlled exclusively by the As for the Court, it tends to agree with ples. Nonetheless, today's political real-

Thus, scholars claim that these two uniform European community (demos). and the Court of Justice of the Europrocesses. This along with expanding the competences, not democratic to let one national com-, a specific vision of integration, by

The European Union lacks the adequate democratic legitimacy to conduct such radical reforms that would make it possible to deal with the aforementioned impasses as well as to ensure more effective governance.

In addition, more and more cases of has additionally worsened during subse-(demoi) that has failed to develop into a lar regard to the European Commission

the Commission in such cases. Need- ity makes it impossible to meet both of As for the second mechanism respon- less to say that, under the CJEU rulings, these criteria while any undertakings sible for deepening integration, this also in some matters in which the Euro-aiming to enhance action effectiveness During subsequent crises it turned concerns the ever-growing number pean Union has no competencies, Memare immediately associated with disreout that all claims concerning the EU's of cases submitted to intergovern- ber States shall exercise their respective garding democratic legitimacy. The fact mental institutions (mainly in the EU powers in accordance with European of obeying such strict democratic norms situation with no simple solution, which



expansion of the existing Nord Stream pipeline; the undertaking of which actually breaches EU law - or at least is far from the rule of law principle.

Europe's rule of law is safeguarded by the CJEU, referred to as the most independent judicial institution in the world. Nonetheless, its independence does not translate directly into having an apolitical nature. According to scholars, the Court does not operate in a political vacuum, being in fact a political actor, involved in implementing a particu-Moreover, it fosters the expansion of both European law as well as the power There emerge some examples of judicial decisions aimed at establishing longterm public support both for the Union ter literature as so-called "diffuse legit- took into account the change in attitude imacy". The aforementioned strategy of voters in Western and Southern counto some regulations regarding mobility of both liberal principles in the inter- lawyers as disregarding Europe's con- and weaker Member States.

right to move freely within the territory of claim that the Court bore in mind the ability of citizens to assert their basic national communities the EU, while another incentive was open fact that the EU's most influential Mem-rights if they were disregarded by interaccess to the welfare systems of the most ber States, including France, Germany national assistance programs. Thus, it Such steps as promoting the principle the EU's dormant election politics. Vot affluent European countries. The same and Italy, opposed such liberal rules. In altered its previous policy of "diffuse of the rule of law within the EU structures." ers have decided to defend their own applied to the possibility to work in the light of both interpretations, it is recog-legitimacy" that opted for safeguard-tures, escalating the power of both the national democracy against the authorinternal market; freedom of movement of nized that political factors have altered ing the rights of EU citizens while such EC and the CJEU in relation to subse-itarian and liberal tendencies that employees was widely encouraged, mostly the jurisprudence of the Court while its a step has been taken in the name of a quent countries, as well as outvoting all accompanied the progress of European by eliminating barriers imposed by coun- protectionist interpretations of EU law higher historical necessity. There is little countries representing interests other integration. The literature refers to such tries that could offer higher wages but seemed beneficial for the societies of doubt that the Court acted accordingly than those of the EU's largest Mem-direction of integration development which were also characterised by more the so-called "old Europe", while at the with European integration, preventing ber States, may eventually lead to some as "authoritarian liberalism", which is extensive regulations and a strong level expense of the newly-admitted Member the EU's monetary union from any disinstances, in which the EU's politibeing increasingly contested by some of unionisation. So, in both cases, namely States of the European community. access to social welfare and freedom of The issue of the jurisprudence of the lawyers refer to these actions as arbi- This might be executed on the basis of, such sentiment(s) will continue to grow the Court's iudicial decisions backed lib- Eurozone crisis, especially in terms of approach towards the treaties in force; ples. Individual national communities ence further processes of European inteeral solutions that were beneficial to the some unconventional interventions of some of whom resorted even to accus- or their governments may challenge the gration. Nonetheless, everything seems inhabitants of less affluent Central Euro- the European Central Bank (ECB), has ing the EU institutions of changing hith- authority of the Commission as well as to indicate that the European Union pean states, not to forget greater finan- come under scrutiny in the relevant lit- erto constitutional order. Of course, it the judgments of the CJEU, or even fail should alter its hitherto approach and cial solidarity granted by the countries of erature. Interestingly, some scholars is considered by some that the Court to implement any regulations that have adapt to the principles of democratic

tunities offered by other EU Member lated both the ban on the mutualisation of technocratic institutions, including tioned in other domains. Such a trend time perspective.

The EU is closer to a confederal rather than federal solution, thus constituting first and foremost a union of equal states while its democratic mandate

derives primarily from scrutiny carried out in subsequent Member States. lar vision of a progress in integration. States, or the possibility to profit from of debt as well as that on making the ECB the ECB as well as the CJEU. in 2016. as a result of which the counits judges seem to closely follow pub- public finances of the EU's most affluent dependent institution, which can be assistance loans to some members of the processes and thus, also to become indelic debate; they "read morning papers", countries as well as to reduce the free flow observed in situations where it forced monetary union. In such a way, formally with special regard to Western Euro- of workers on EU territory, a solution that borrowing states to accept all conditions independent institutions became a tool by the CJEU. pean titles, according to some experts. could have been implemented through the imposed by the creditor states. Both the for the most influential and well-off lations on local markets. as well as the work of the Court. Such the jurisprudence of the Court, numer- competence of the Member States (pur- between creditor countries and borrow- the increase in electoral politics within type of policy, which is currently being ous pundits question the actual reasuant to Article 5 of the TEU). This was ing countries. Also all actions performed Member States. thus undermining lib-

and employment in the internal market. nal markets as well as of the ongoing glo-stitutional law, including treaties. Simi-In the 1990s, the Court safeguarded the balisation processes. Yet other experts larly, the judicial institution limited the Growing rebellion of

perceived such interventions as evi- had sought to authorize such uncon- been adopted contrary to their posi- legitimacy, which could be achieved Nonetheless, at the time of the global dence of breaching or bypassing EU law. ventional policy conducted by the ECB, tions. Scharpf urges that undermining even at the price of less operational effifinancial crisis, such case law was sub- For example, the ECB broke the princi- though it was deprived of its legitimacy the EU's legal order may concern the ciency and weaker decision-making ject to gradual changes. The Court ceased ple of independence of the national fiscal based on the rule of law observance. rejection of liberal principles applied processes. Undertaking all steps aiming to invoke the rights of EU citizens to policy and the sole responsibility of the In the time of the recession, integra- in the internal market by voters being to improve the management, yet at the free movement, all to work - no longer Member States for their own debt (purtion "through law" was used to central-increasingly critical of liberalization and expense of democratic standards, conperceived in terms of superior values - suant to Article 125.1 of the TFEU). The ize power at the European level, which globalization processes. The same may stitutes a shortcut that seems profitable simultaneously stipulating that job oppor- institution is also believed to have vio- appeared particularly visible in the case also apply to liberal values being ques- for integration processes only in a short-

their social security systems, shall have a the lender of last resort (under Article They all became subject to the politicitry voted to leave the community. Most solely conditional character. The judicial 123.1 of the TFEU). In many cases, the zation, i.e. they served the interests of Britons sought to, among others, regain institution referred to the need to protect ECB has ceased to be a politically-in- the EU's wealthiest states that granted their sovereignty in enacting law-giving necessity to comply with protective regu- ECB and the EC disrespected the treaty European countries, thus sanctioning While observing such changes within which should be left to the exclusive more specifically - the monetary union) tion instruments, stem directly from created by the members of the CJEU, has son for such state of affairs. According a consequence of imposing fiscal auster- by the CJEU, including the rather arbi- eral norms and defending democracy been even described in the subject-mat- to some opinions, the Court essentially ity on some Member States that affected trary implementation of the principle Therefore, they result from the defithese public policies.

As for the Court, it authorized the

rule related to some public policies, the hierarchy of power in the EU (and to the rejection of two basic integraof the rule of law, have been completely cit of "input" democratic legitimacy of subordinated to such hierarchy, which Europe's political processes, and are consists of defending rights of EU citi- tries who, facing the global economic activities carried out by both the EC and I have previously defined as asymmetzens, ranging from consumer protection recession became much more critical the ECB that were referred to by many rical power relations between stronger

solution processes. Nevertheless, many cal order could be openly questioned. societies. We cannot be sure whether ent in the common market. Court of Justice in the context of the trary and as characterized by their loose or even to defend democratic principals well as how they might possibly in

seems more and more visible in the case of migration policy, as evidenced by the example of tensions amid the alleged violation of the rule of law principle by both Poland and Hungary, within the framework of which the right of the European institutions to interfere in states' internal reforms has been reportedly undermined in both countries Nonetheless, the European legal system was perhaps most seriously questioned during the United Kingdom's European Union membership referendun pendent of the judicial decisions issued

It is worth noting that all tendencies mentioned above, which ultimately lead fuelled by some instances of European inconsistency or even hypocrisy within the scope of the rule of law.

# Conclusion

Recent crises have seemingly woken up

THE WARSAW INSTITUTE REVIEW (no. 7)

# Jan Zahradil **CAMPAIGN** DIARY Part IV.

Freedom of religion and belief, Blue Green Summit, Road to Europe



# **Faith and Freedom Summit**



ACRE's lead candidate Jan Zahradil delivered a key note speech at lefts agenda. the Faith and Freedom Summit that took place on 2nd April in Bruswould put Freedom of Religion and Belief in Europe back in the are to develop effective solutions for sustainability,"

religion and belief in the European Union.

# Blue Green Summit and why conservatives are the best conservationists



The ACRE Blue Green Summit 2019 took place on 3rd April in the Brussels Solvay Library, and presented a great opportunity to counter the view that environmental policies are exclusively on the

Europe and beyond, in order to propose and develop initiatives that The EU, its Member States, and markets must all work together if we and European economy, trade and Competition and industrial policy.

warned that the issue of climate change, which absolutely dominates that the EU needs to become the world leader in trade. the need to reinforce the existing mechanisms protecting freedom of the public discourse on environmental issues, overshadows any other environmental problems we have such as water scarcity and draughts. states rather than their master," concluded Mr Zahradil.

# Jan Zahradil's Road to Europe



On 4th April ACRE lead candidate for the Commission Presidency Jan Jan Zaharadil opened the Summit saying: "Here in Brussels, the Zahradil spoke in the Spitzenkandidaten Series debate Road to Europe sels. The Summit brought together leaders from religion, politics, response to environmental issues is often to turn to regulation. The organised by the Financial Times and European economic think tank government, academia, activism and the not-for-profit sector from Green movement seems to have completely lost its way intellectually. Bruegel. The topics covered issues such as sustainable growth, Eurozone

> $\label{lem:compaigned} \mbox{Jan Zahradil campaigned for the EU budget to be restructured and}$ A water technology engineer by profession, Jan Zahradil also focused on infrastructure, innovation and research and also stressed

> > 'European institutions need to become servants of the member

Should environmental groups continue to reject pragmatic solutions, remain deeply suspicious of market forces, and obsess over utopian ideals, they will almost certainly lose the battle of ideas on how to avoid, mitigate and minimize adverse environmental impacts.



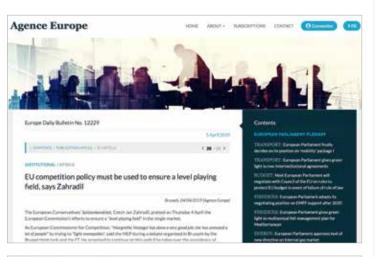
6:04 AM - 2 Apr 2019 Retweet @BrianMaguireEU Filming #OverACoffee - Great to chat with @ ZahradilJan this morning. We spoke about #EP2019, Salvini, Orban, Vox, Russia, China, 5G. Eurozone. Climate and #Brexit @ecrgroup #Spitzenkandidaten @EURACTIV

10:12 AM - 31 Mar 2019

This is interesting. Key **#EU** players, including @EU\_Commission, apparently do not follow strict #US strategy on #China. Why? For United States, China means geopolitical rivalry first, economy + trade second. For Europe, it is exactly the other way around.

11:52 AM - 26 Mar 2019 As @ecrgroup #Spitzenkandidat, I would kindly ask Mr. @vilimsky not to speak on behalf of us. We are well established, structured, growing. We are leading eurorealist + reformist force of next #EP. No need of any "fusion" with other groups.

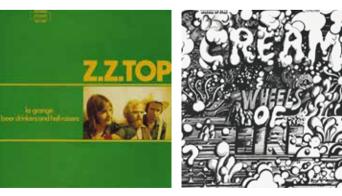
# IN THE NEWS







# MUSIC WHAT I AM LISTENING TO RIGHT NOW



# Beer Drinkers Politician & Hell Raisers

Very special beer from the Beer Mania in Brussels. Highly recommended for the upcoming EP election campaign



# **BUILDING A GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGN TEAM?**

# Ignore the "geniuses" in their little Ivory Towers. Just do the simple things but *do them well...*

production, and distribution, of cam- lots of people to help. Whoever said win- by sending in a postal vote! In such elecpaign literature. This time out we will ning an election was easy? You have to tions, Campaign Teams must wise-up to scrutinise some of the other core func- deserve it. And, traditionally, talking to the fact that there are, effectively, two tions which any, half decent, Campaign your voters is usually considered a good separate GOTV campaigns to run. One

voting intention identification. I say role for the lead person on the Cam- the target audience. "vexed" because in some countries can-paign Team and they will need a great may be for many a different reason not as trying to ascertain how "intensely" way, times move on and times change. about their likelihood to support each their postal ballot. Attitudes and expectations alter. New and every party that will appear on the that any candidate worth their salt needs provided with a robotic and unread- Once you have exceeded your mathe somewhat problematic!

cionados, campaigning on the eve of poll or polling day itself is deemed unlawful. Then there's the mind boggling, and stifling, red tape vis-à-vis the relatively newly introduced GDPR regulations Just occasionally, one might be forgiven for feeling that precious little within our professed "democratic" electoral systems actually encourages active democratic participation and engagement. That consideration, though, is perhaps for another day. Currently, for better or worse, we are where we are.

So, take time to review the state of play in your own country. Ideally, you will want to have access to an electoral you actually need to do. Survey people, register (paper and/or digital copies), ask their voting intention this time and telephone numbers for each elector and move on swiftly to the next property. can, or cannot do, do not lose sight of the ing small handfuls of information that overall objective.

As a reminder, the "objective" is to politicians are unable to get elected.

ical formula which will calculate how not understand? your canvassing is reliable, and your attention to is postal voting. Postal vot-found the famed "magic money tree"! GOTV efforts are professional – your ing is abundant in some countries, other Setting up, organising and maintaincandidate wins. "Simples".

trying to reach a target level of support, need to be all over it like a rash. There ing comes easy."

first step!

Elsewhere, disobligingly for GOTV afi- mately useless, ideas and just do what



Managing Director of Communicatio info@csm-limited.com

nobody will ever use.

The other method that "experienced" elected. It is easy enough, based upon they ever won before? And, even if they need a volunteer to head up the organi

support for your candidate. And you primary watchword for politicians, can- whose sole purpose in life should be to can only hit that target if you actually didates and activists. Communication fund raise. Something, or someone, has speak to the voters and ask for their supally ear round - not just at election time. to raise the funds required to meet your port. Once you have reached your target, One area that the Campaign Team campaign expenses. Unless, of course,

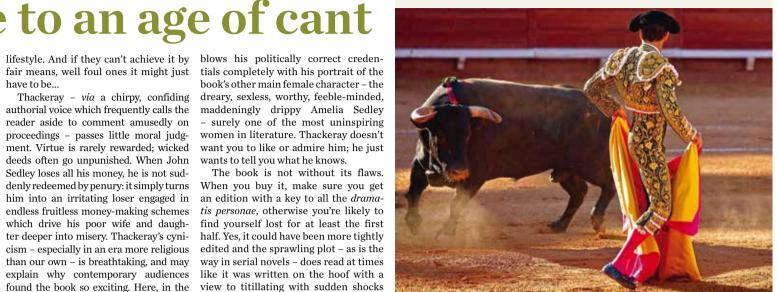
n the last edition, we spent considerable time pondering the role of and then wait for the result. Undenidelivering them a piece of persuasive litthe Campaign Team remit for the ably it is hard work and takes time and erature, if they have already voted early with the standard polling day in mind So, let's start with the vexed issue of 
This is an exceedingly demanding but the other with early postal voters as

One designated member of the Camvassing, or surveying, and asking people deal of assistance. What, though, some- paign Team should have the responwho they are most likely to support in times makes it harder is when "clever" sibility for ensuring that canvassed an election is as traditional and normal people try to complicate what should supporters if required, and if eligible as holding the election itself. It is just be a simple process. It is normally should be offered a postal vote. They what you do! In other countries, how- would-be "geniuses" who come up with should also ensure that registered posta ever, the practice is utterly alien. This impractical "modern" techniques such voters are contacted early in the campaign, before their ballot paper arrives. least perhaps, in some nations, because a voter feels about supporting a par- Such voters need to see the candidate's of comparatively recent political and ticular party. These "geniuses" start to messaging and their canvassers - ideally, governmental circumstances. Either require their volunteers to ask voters prior to them completing and returning

And then, of course, there is the whole generations of voters emerge. The fact is ballot paper. Volunteer canvassers are topic of getting out the vote (GOTV). to know where their electoral support able canvass sheet script which is mean matical target of pledged supporters resides - and why. If they don't actually to yield a 1-10 response from the elec-you then need to encourage them to ask the direct question, they will never tor. Most canvassers hate it. The voter actually go and vote. And there are so know. That then in turn, self-evidently, certainly gets bored and irritated and it many reasons people (where abstenmakes getting out the vote (GOTV) takes so much volunteer time that you tion is allowed) say they will support a only get to meet relatively few residents. candidate and then, subsequently, fail Let's be pragmatic, though. Elec- This sort of nonsense idea pops up from to do so. There are any number of reatoral laws and traditions are different in time to time and is created by "arm-sons such as, they are away from home every country. For example, some councilar warriors" who obviously need to on election day and needed a postal vote tries do not have a freely available elec- "get out more". My advice? Ditch any (if available). Each time you find one of toral register for campaigners to utilise. such superficially cunning, but ulti- these, your Campaign Team Postal Vote supremo will have "failed"! But there are other reasons for people not turning out. Perhaps your arguments have no been persuasive enough; it's raining or it is too cold; they are too elderly to go out without a family member to assist; they are watching the football or, most likely they just plain forgot. All these reasons and more mean that, within the rules of whatever your own country's election law states, your GOTV plan has to be prepared well in advance and most be exceptionally thorough. If you end up losing by one vote - and it has happened many times - you will forever kick yourself. The person in charge of GOTV on the Campaign Team occasionally to have highlighted street maps, to have who they supported last time - and then to ramped up until late in the election. to be able to campaign right up to close Time is short in a campaign. You have to and GOTPV (Get out the Postal Vote) of poll. Whichever of these things you reach your target not waste time glean-operations can make all the difference between success and failure. The grassroots Campaign Team roles

we have examined here, and in previous speak regularly with the electorate and campaigners swear by is to not go out editions, are unquestionably the most engage with them. Without voter partic-canvassing at all. This method is nor-essential of all the key tasks that necessipation after all, in most circumstances, mally deployed because a small minority tate colossal focus. There are other roles of candidates arrogantly feel that voters such as someone on the Team who will At the start of any campaign, the should come to them, rather than the find highly visible poster sites from sup-Campaign Team should appoint a vol- other way around. They also believe that portive and willing land owners. Indeed, unteer member to be responsible for they already know what people think whether it is a site along a large stretch canvassing/surveying. That person and so there is no need to ask them. of farmland or the upstairs window of needs to ascertain as a priority, based on Finally, you also regularly hear the somebody's apartment - it all adds posthe electoral system in use, how many refrain, "well we have never done it that itively to the campaign's visibility. Inevvotes their candidate will require to be way before". Well, maybe not but have itably, the Campaign Team will also previous results and estimated per- have, which part of the representative sation and deployment of regular street centage turnout, to create a mathemat- democratic engagement process do they stalls around the constituency. Equally, many voters are needed to pledge their Communication should always be the business alongside another colleague assuming your calculation is correct, should potentially pay extremely close your party has belatedly and surprisingly

states have strictly limited absent vot- ing an efficient volunteer Campaign And actually, it genuinely is - simple. ing, whilst in many it is not legal at all. Team takes time, patience and hard What could be simpler than having a If you are contesting an election with work in spades. But remember Theodore list of voters, going and talking to them, postal voting, your Campaign Team Roosevelt's words - "Nothing worth havNext weekend in



ullfighting is an ancient tradi- 20,000 encierros per year. Since the tion in Spain, which goes back economic crisis ended bullfighting in one form or another to the has recovered and has grown 12 per-Roman amphitheatres. In its mod-cent following the end of the recesand sword. Over the years, the tradi-

close with his cape, was introduced nean some 10,000 years ago. These and popularised in the mid-20th cen- often are considered the jewel of tury by the famed Juan Belmonte. In 2013, after decades of crititime calling bullfighting a "desperate [...] industry to secure the future preserve almost 45 million hectares. of this dying industry [...that is] outdated and has no place in a modern

tutional Court overturned Cataluña's ban on this particular pastime. ing fans have won both in the legisla- powerful wine sector. Such numbers ture and the courts against a coalition are large enough to support close to of international animal protection 185,000 jobs, a workforce not much organisations including the Humane smaller than the automotive industry. Society International, World Society defend this is deeply rooted tradition. tain swamps, and prevent poaching. The demonstration turned political According to official data from the

bullfighting is a dying industry. benefits the most from this tradition. carries no cost to the taxpayer. Although attendance at bullfighting One of the reason for the success of events declined during the economic Vox is that the party has had the courcrisis, popular festivities involving age to contradict the animal rights bulls kept growing in spite of the lobby and openly support hunting and

**Spain's favourite pastime** 



ern iteration, bullfighting is generally sion. In terms of tax revenues, no dated to 1726 when Francisco Romero other cultural industry generates as began fighting on foot with a cape much VAT as bullfighting events. Furthermore, the ranches, dehe tion has slowly changed and became sas, that specialize in breeding fighta cornerstone of Spanish culture. For ing bulls preserve 250,000 hectares example, to prevent bull or fighter of pasture lands and preserve genetic from being unfairly cornered bullrings strains of the fighting bull which are were introduced. The modern school the living genetic heritage of ances of bullfighting, the now common tech- tral bovine species that lived in the nique of the matador drawing the bull Spanish Peninsula and the Mediterra-

Spain's livestock. The politically left-leaning anicism of the practice of animal rights mal rights groups have also started groups, and the introduction of bans attacking hunting. Hunting of course in certain regions, a Spanish congres-goes back to the beginning of humansional commission made the decision ity itself and is a pastime that is to protect bullfighting by declaring enjoyed by a large part of the populabullfighting part of Spain's Cultural tion. The number of hunting licenses Heritage. This did not prevent conhas kept climbing in recent years and tinued lobbying by the animal rights is now close to 715,000. There are groups from trying to outlaw the pas- more than 32,000 estates that hold hunting activities and these estates

According to Deloitte, a consulting firm, hunting activities in Spain cresociety". More recently, the Consti- ate a very significant economic value. Annually, coursing traditions generate 6,5 billion euros of economic Despite the fact that the bullfight- activity, a figure akin to that of the

for the Protection of Animals. CAS managers of hunting grounds allo-International, League Against Cruel cate 285 million euros per year to Sports, and Peta, continue to make ensure proper conservation of their it hard to practice. In a long overdue fields. Investment in reforestation and response to these left-wing animal environmental preservation is as high welfare groups tens of thousands of as 233 million euros annually. Also, demonstrators took to the streets of more than 54 million is budgeted Madrid at the beginning of March, to every year to prevent wildfire. main-

as it was attended by political lead- Ministry of Agriculture, the annual ers from different parties. It also has number of animals that are slaughcalled in to guestion the claims that tered for food around the country is as high as 4,300 million. In compar-The more than 1,500 corridas that ison, hunting ends the life of around take place each year are an integral 20 million animals. And, while food part of the Spanish economy. Experts farms maintain an industrial-like estimate that corridas add value to approach to breeding, hunting allows 100 different industries, with tour- for the preservation of wildlife in a ism perhaps being the business that sustainable and ecological way that

economic crisis and is now close to bullfighting aficionados.



# William Makepeace Thackeray's VANITY FAIR BULLFIGHTING AND HUNTING Antidote to an age of cant

anything so trite as a happy ending.

the smiling author refuses to countenance gives it its exuberance and vitality: that

All this makes Vanity Fair a partic- his powers, bursting with so much prof-

ularly refreshing antidote to our own ligate talent he can't help squandering it

Vanity Fair is indeed a magnificent

novel and a great, rollicking read,

surprisingly modern in its tone and

style, and refreshingly free of the

earnest moralising we have to endure

in contemporaries like Dickens.

JANUARY

PEN AND PENCIL SKETCHES OF ENGLISH SOCIETY

BY W. M. THACKERAY,

PUBLISHED AT THE PUNCH OFFICE, 85, FLEET STREET.

S. MENSIEW, EDINDURGE; S. M'LLOID, CLASONW; S. M'GLASHAN, DUBL

sense you get of a writer at the height of

"Very good indeed, beats Dickens out

wrote Jane Carlyle to her philosopher husband Thomas, as William Make- proceedings – passes little moral judg- women in literature. Thackeray doesn't peace Thackeray's serial novel Vanity ment. Virtue is rarely rewarded; wicked want you to like or admire him; he just Fair was beginning to catch fire in the deeds often go unpunished. When John wants to tell you what he knows. Victorian public's imagination.

Tolstov's War and Peace.

Hence its subtitle: A Novel Without A

cession of richer men.

well on nothing a year".

to improve their finances, status and

who has written for publications

lifestyle. And if they can't achieve it by blows his politically correct credenfair means, well foul ones it might just tials completely with his portrait of the of the world," Thackeray - via a chirpy, confiding dreary, sexless, worthy, feeble-minded, authorial voice which frequently calls the maddeningly drippy Amelia Sedley reader aside to comment amusedly on - surely one of the most uninspiring

Sedley loses all his money, he is not sud-

Until then – it was serialised in Punch magazine in 1847/8 - Thackeray was just him into an irritating loser engaged in an edition with a key to all the dramaa modestly successful jobbing journal- endless fruitless money-making schemes tis personae, otherwise you're likely to ist, critic and author, "writing for life" to which drive his poor wife and daugh- find yourself lost for at least the first feed his wife and three daughters. By the ter deeper into misery. Thackeray's cynihalf. Yes, it could have been more tightly book's close he was an overnight sensa- cism – especially in an era more religious edited and the sprawling plot – as is the tion, hailed by Charlotte Brontë as "an than our own – is breathtaking, and may way in serial novels – does read at times intellect profounder and more unique explain why contemporary audiences like it was written on the hoof with a than his contemporaries have yet rec- found the book so exciting. Here, in the view to titillating with sudden shocks ognised", hugely sought after by society, raw, is an almost Godless universe where and cliffhangers. But that's also what and was subsequently an influence on

Vanity Fair is indeed a magnificent novel and a great, rollicking read, surprisingly modern in its tone and style, age of cant and virtue-signalling. Were now and then. There are longueurs, yes. and refreshingly free of the earnest mor- he writing today, Thackeray would no But also passages of such vivid colour alising we have to endure in contemdoubt be hailed by feminists for havporaries like Dickens. Perhaps its most ing such an empowered, feisty, psychobefore Waterloo; Becky's brief apothedaring experiment is its almost com- logically plausible woman as his main osis as a society queen - that they will plete absence of likeable characters. protagonist. Except he then goes and stick in your memory forever.

It does have a heroine of sorts, though, in the form of the amoral adventuress Becky Sharp. Becky is cynical, manipulative, shallow, acquisitive, deceitful and treacherous. By the end – spoiler alert – she has even added murder to her list of crimes against the social order. Sometimes you root for her, sometimes you don't, but you're never in any doubt where she is coming from. Born the daughter of an impoverished artist and French dancer, Becky has the chameleon social skills, accomplishments and aspirations of a proper English lady. But not, unfortunately, the financial security to keep herself in the style she would prefer. Her only real option, therefore, is to ensnare a suc-

Money is the driving force not just for Becky but for most characters in Vanity Fair. (Just as you might expect of a book which takes its title from the licentious centre of commerce in John Bunyan's allegory The Pilgrim's Progress.) Thackeray, who himself gambled away his inheritance, writes with feeling and insight on the subject: how to make it; how to spend it; how to lose it. One of the chapters is famously titled: "How to live

Though the book is set in Regency England (and Europe) and written for a Victorian audience, the pecuniary preoccupations of its cast of characters will never date. Then, as now, everyone wants to get a foot on the ladder



### James Delingpole

is a conservative columnist and novelist including the Daily Mail, Daily Express The Times, The Daily Telegraph, and editor of Breitbart London. His latest book is Watermelons.

@jamesdelingpole

# Having been the Capital of Poland for over 500 years, over 500 years ago, Krakow historically is truly the center of attention culturally, academically and economically. Krakow dates back to the 7th century and

When to go? Winters in Poland are very cold to say the least. If you are into snow and have one or two big coats then I wouldn't uggest against it because in the Winer Krakow takes its charm and charisma to a whole new level, just be ready for some winds that bite. As the outdoor travel ideas might not be on

the top of the 'Winter Picks' list, some would suggest staying inside and drinking Hot Chocolate but really it's the outdoor Winter experience that makes Krakow so exciting in Winter. Getting involved in the ice-skating in the various ice rinks across the city is one way to take advantage of Winter. Another is the Christmas markets - found all throughout the city but especially prominent is the Old Town Market Square, where you can find artisan businesses with their little wooden stalls selling everything from handmade clay is the Misteria Paschalia Festival, classical music concerts are held in bird callers, and replica armourers, to smoked meat, and mulled wine.

Spring is a lovely time to go as the New Year really starts to come upon the city and allows it to bloom after the harsh Polish winters. A nate enough to visit Krakow during the summer months, there are a recommendation of locals from this time of year is the Easter fair that variety of outdoor options that you can enjoy. I know that a popular is setup on the Mariacki side of the Sukiennice on the main square,





which takes place in March - typically somewhere from the 10th onwards. not just strictly around Easter. This is a fantastic opportunity to spend time amongst the locals who come out in full force to take part in the activities and market. Pisanki, or painted Easter eggs, are one of the hallmarks of the fair. If this is too early and cold for you, another great time to be in Krakow is April. Temperatures are on the rise and outdoor trips through the gothic and medieval arch itecture are much more viable. One incredible thing to

is the second largest city in Poland making it truly the top pick for history and culture lovers.

take advantage of in Spring in Krakow

the various venues around Krakow during Holy Week. The summers are equally a fantastic time to visit. If you are fortulocal choice is spending time on the banks of the Wisla river, sun bathing, walking, riding or rollerblading. Along the river are fixed barges housing bars and restaurants, which are a great option for a lunchtime stop. A stone's throw away from Wawel castle and not too far from Grunwaldzki bridge is Krakow's hottest summer spot, Plaza, an artificial beach, bar, restaurant and swimming pool on the banks of the river. This is a great spot to relax and enjoy the sun. If you're happy to go further afield then take a taxi to Kryspinow. Here there is another artificial lake which attracts the younger crowd - a popular spot for a barbeque and a beer. The Lake is also home to a wakeboarding club so you can try your hand at this extreme sport should you want.



In the mid range is WM Hotel Svstem in Pradnik Bialy, roughly 5km from the city centre. Beautifully designed and subtly modern, this otel is a perfect choice if you're not looking to splash out.

Those with a taste for luxury will find nowhere better than Bonerowski

Where to stay?



On the other side of the spectrum is the Intro Hostel, whose cozy atmosphere and cute balconys serve as a nice retreat. Perfectly located to be tucked away and yet close to the action, this is the perfect pick if you're looking to save money.

# What to do?



### **Wawel Castle**

Wawel Castle was constructed during the 14th century. It's really impressive to look at on top of its hill and it was home to the unsuspecting main Market Polish Monarchs for centuries. You can pay for a tour of almost dedicated to Krakow's medieval all of the rooms, which contain an exquisite collection of art and decors. Admission is free on history. Cleverly, the museum Mondays from April to October.

## The Underground Museum The Royal Road

incredible overview of how the city came to be what it is today.

One of the more interesting spots in Krakow is actually directly underneath the feet of Square tourists. This museum is past through well-preserved foundations, artifacts and city makes use of 3D technology and simulations to fuse an interactive experience with Krakow. a classic one. It gives you an



The Royal Road stretches from St. Florian's Gate to Florianska, across the Rynek Glówny, and all the way through Grodzka to the Wawel Castle (thus a good combo with number one on our list). This was once the route taken by medieval kings as they made their way through the city center and it is a way to relive the historical past of



### Auschwitz

gas chambers.

A much more sobering pick now. Auschwitz-Birkenau is the infamous German Nazi concentration and extermination you'll know exactly what this center during World War II. Not for the faint of heart but certainly eye opening and moving. Over 1.1 million people died here, and you do not need to be told that to feel it. As a visitor, you can tour the grounds. including the barracks and the



## Schindler's Factory

If you've ever seen the fantastic 1993 Spielberg classic, 'Schindler's List' then place it. Located in the actual factory itself, this fantastic museum is an incredibly thorough journey across the history of Poland through World War II.



### **Salt Mines** The Wieliczka Salt Mines were

used all through Krakow's history, dating back to the Middle Ages, to produce table salt, one of the city's largest industries. It has been a museum since 2007. It's pretty incredible to see the statues, chandeliers, cathedrals and chapels carved from salt by the old miners. A four-hour guided tour is available for a price with transportation to and from Krakow.





















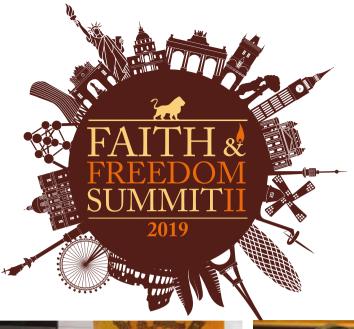








































































# EUROPE'S FASTEST GROWING POLITICAL MOVEMENT

THE CONSERVATIVE













