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EDITORIAL

By Isabelle Ioannides

Taking the necessary tough decisions

Developments in the eurozone this past couple of weeks had us all sitting on the edge of our seats. But commitment to the euro and European perseverance to exit the crisis ensured that an agreement was reached on a financial assistance programme for Cyprus to help the Cypriot people rebuild their economy. To support these efforts, President Barroso – with President Anastasiades' consent – announced the creation of a Commission Task Force for Cyprus, which will provide technical assistance to the Cypriot authorities, with a strong focus on employment, competitiveness and growth.

The question of competitiveness was also at the centre of discussions at the last European Council – which this issue of the *BEPA Monthly Brief (BMB)* mainly examines. The Council pointed out that improving competitiveness will increase growth and jobs, and can be a means for driving prosperity and sustaining European living standards. In response to the financial crisis, the European Commission has acted decisively through a number of initiatives to restore the stability of the financial system. Its reform agenda has been broad. While it

has particularly focussed on the banking sector, which has been at the epicentre of the crisis and in need for urgent reforms, as events in Cyprus reminded us, it has also aimed at tackling the social implications of the crisis. In this context, the Commission has acted to support job opportunities for young people and to help SMEs access finance, initiatives which need to be deployed on the ground quickly.

On another note, Russia, a key strategic partner for the EU, also featured in the discussions of EU leaders. It was followed on 21-22 March by the executive-to-executive talks in Moscow between the European Commission, led by President Barroso, and the Russian government, led by Prime Minister Medvedev, in an effort to move from a relation of opportunity to a 'partnership of choice'. A wide range of topics was discussed, from trade to transport, from energy to mobility, from science to good governance and the rule of law. Particular highlights included trade as one of the pillars of EU-Russia cooperation and the adoption of the EU-Russia Roadmap for Energy Cooperation until 2050. In light of these meetings, the *BMB* presents two complementary points of view on EU-Russia relations – one from Russia and one from the EU – analysing the deep changes of a 'stirring Russia' and the potential as well as openings for engagement with this important neighbour.

1 A renewed partnership for European competitiveness

By *Baudouin Regout**

Competitiveness is the key to exiting the crisis and building sustainable growth

Few economic concepts are talked about this much and at the same time this loosely defined. We all seem to roughly understand what competitiveness is, while this notion is not defined precisely in economics and business handbooks. Is it another case of “I recognise it when I see it”?

When one actually looks deeper into the meaning of “competitiveness”, one rapidly discovers how crucial competitiveness is for European sustainable growth, for the resolution of the crisis, as well as for our living standards and social model. Competitiveness is often used to talk about “external competitiveness”, that is, the ability of European businesses to sell their goods abroad (exports) and fend off external competition on the domestic market (imports). Alternatively, competitiveness is often used as a synonym of or the key driver for growth.

These notions are quite different, but strikingly they have one major well-defined component in common: productivity. Productivity is the ability to do more and better with less. As such, it is the most virtuous source of growth: it does not rely on increased debt and has sustainability, which refers to higher resource efficiency, embedded into it. Moreover, the more productive a person, a business or an economy is, the higher their income and wages can be. Therefore productivity refers to how Europe can maintain its living standards and social model, while facing heightened competition from new international low-wage competitors such as China, India, Brazil and Russia. Europe’s answer must be to increase its productivity, not to lower its wages. Europe can maintain its competitiveness if it increases its productivity while maintaining high relative wages.

The European Union already has a strategy to boost productivity: the Europe 2020 agenda.

Indeed, productivity is the result of innovation in products, services, new production processes, game-changing business models, investments in machines, research and infrastructure, new technologies, education and skills, to name a few. All these elements are at the heart of the Europe 2020 agenda.

Europe’s apparent strong competitiveness hides uneven and weakening performance

Europe includes globally competitive economies and businesses. For instance, five of the top eight countries in the latest World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Index are EU member states and others from outside the EU but within the European space. The “2012 Fortune global 500” companies count 148 European-based firms (i.e. 29 per cent) against 146 based in the United States. The EU’s share of global companies has been stable over the last decade.

Moreover, immediately prior to the crisis, some aspects of Europe’s competitiveness were improving contrary to conventional wisdom. For example, the growth of GDP per capita between 2000 and 2008 even in “old” Europe (EU15) was greater than that of the US, creating over 3 million jobs more than in the US during this period. This situation flowed from the benefits of ambitious structural reforms that some EU member states had undertaken, and which are analysed later in this article.

The reality, however, is that Europe’s aggregate and average performances masked a very uneven performance and ultimately a more generalised loss of competitiveness. First, performance is very uneven from one EU member state to another. While half of the top-10 countries in the World Economic Forum competitiveness ranking are EU member states, as noted above, eight are ranked below 50, that is, below countries like Indonesia, South Africa, and Mexico. Inside the Union, our best performing member states are twice as

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productive as the worst performing. Secondly and more broadly, Europe's productivity growth has slowed down, especially when compared to global competitors such as the United States or China. Europe has faced a drop in innovation and a host of indicators have taken a downturn, similar to the needle on a barometer before a storm. EU productivity is now 25 per cent lower than US productivity. EU global companies represent only 21 per cent in market value as compared to 41 per cent in market value for US companies, reflecting their relatively smaller size and lower growth prospects. Among the "Forbes 25 most innovative companies", 17 (56 per cent) companies are based in the USA, four in China, three in India, and only three in Europe (12 per cent).

Europe's economy, social model and place in the world cannot afford lower and uneven competitiveness

Not only is this weakening and uneven competitiveness a terrifying missed opportunity in terms of growth and jobs, but it has also been a significant contributor to the emergence of the sovereign debt crisis facing the euro area. The need to exit the crisis, combat unemployment, reform our economies, reduce debt and ensure future growth is already a major task. But the long-term systemic challenges confronting Europe render stronger competitiveness and productivity even more necessary. Europe must deal with its aging population, increasing energy costs, the rise of global competitors, and the impact of climate change, to name but four of the most pressing issues.

Europe has proven it can boost its competitiveness, but needs a renewed relationship between the EU and its member states

Faced with a challenge of this magnitude we can draw comfort from the fact that recent experience has shown that Europe can boost its competitiveness by engaging in structural reforms and learning from each other. Before the crisis, we saw that some member states – Germany, but also the Netherlands, and across

Scandinavia, and to some extent in Spain and Italy – implemented fundamental reforms and reaped the benefits. To give just one example: as a result of reforms in the education system and the labour market, youth unemployment in the Netherlands fell by 34 per cent between 2004 and 2008.

Since the crisis, we have seen a credible commitment to fundamental reforms and the impact is starting to show, notably in the spectacular improvement of the trade balances of Ireland, Spain and Portugal, for instance. However, to successfully implement the reforms we need a different Europe, a new type of relationship between the Union and its member states – and also between the EU and its citizens.

Many benefits can still be gained from the Single Market and closer economic integration, but these will increasingly depend on actions taken by the member states rather than regulation agreed upon in Brussels. This can be achieved, for example, by making the local service sector more competitive or improving the local regulation for network industries (e.g. broadband). We have seen the boost that better regulation of the retail sector has brought to the Swedish economy, and the broader value of the liberalisation of the taxi market in Dublin.

There are also a host of other measures that can be taken in labour markets, pensions, public administration reform and education – to name but a few sectors – where real advantages will come about only if reform is undertaken by member states in cooperation with and with the support of the EU. Through this partnership, competitiveness will be identified and reforms that are specific to and right for each country will be boosted. The enhanced system of EU economic governance provides the way towards such a new model. The increase in powers, however, will also need to ensure an increase in accountability. For this reason, the Blueprint for the deepening of economic and monetary union, which the European Commission adopted last year, identifies the need to move towards a political union in parallel to full economic and monetary union.

2 Responding to the Russian awakening

By *Dmitri Trenin**

The EU's Russia policy requires a rethink. It should take account of the changes in Russia under way since late 2011. These changes include: a fledgling multi-directional societal awakening after two decades of post-communist/post-imperial readjustment; a shift toward social conservatism in the government's policies; and an emphasis on Eurasian integration as the main thrust of Russia's foreign policy. Europeans need to understand these changes and their implications to ensure that the EU has a successful policy toward its biggest neighbour. Above all, Europeans need not be frustrated by the vicissitudes of Russian domestic developments and should take instead a long-term view.

State responses to a stirring Russia

The Russian awakening is the result of Russian society's relative success in first surviving amid the debris of the Soviet system without slipping into a civil war, and then in achieving a measure of freedom *and* prosperity never enjoyed before in Russian history. Socio-political – rather than purely economic – development are likely to play the leading role in Russia's future evolution. The stirring of society should not be mistaken for a 'Russian Spring', much less for the death knell of the existing regime. The awakening covers the entire waterfront: from liberals and libertarians to nationalists and fundamentalists. Much of it has no political or ideological affiliation; some of it is distinctly religious, whether Christian Orthodox or Islamic. Russia is stirring, but not yet moving.

The Russian government has responded to the society's awakening with a combination of token concessions, targeted repression, and a clear conservative shift. So far, the Russian government has been able to repel the challenge from its opponents. However, the Kremlin has taken the threat to its rule seriously. In response to the potentially lethal charge of wholesale corruption in high places it has ordered investigations of high-level cases on the

embezzlement of state funds. It is also in the process of disciplining echelons of the elite, restricting, for example, their freedom to keep their money abroad.

The authorities have also come up with a version of Russian official nationalism grounded in Orthodox Christianity and the traditional values that it supports (e.g., the sanctity of traditional family and respect for authority). The Russian Orthodox Church has already become an overt partner of the Russian state. The state itself is represented by a strong centralised leadership which rules with the consent of the majority. It is legitimised through elections, where opposition is depicted as anti-national: either Communist or pro-United States. The unity of the bulk of the Russian people in this scheme of things is necessary for Russia to escape being subjugated by foreigners, particularly the United States.

The shape of a Russia to come

The reality of the Russian awakening means, however, that interests are increasingly entering the public debate challenging the official scheme. The Kremlin has vast resources and much resilience in the face of the continuing change, but the next few years are likely to be anything but dull. Barring unforeseen developments, elections will drive the political process. By the time Russians are due to elect their new Duma (2016) and take part in another presidential vote (2018), in which Putin intends to present himself again, society will have evolved. Russia will be more interesting, but is unlikely to become overly chaotic: for most people, too much is at stake.

As an international player, Russia sees itself as a great power. This means that Russia does not accept much control over others; rather it seeks freedom from anyone else's control. Russia's new official nationalism has a distinct anti-American flavour. Moscow's relations with Washington are at a low ebb, even in the absence of a significant clash of interests. The global recession and the eurozone crisis have pushed

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Moscow toward more emphasis on Eurasian regionalism. Since 2009, Moscow has been prioritising integration with Belarus and Kazakhstan within a customs union and then a single economic space, leading to a full-fledged economic union by 2015. From a geopolitical perspective, Russia seeks to strengthen its position vis-à-vis its main neighbours: the EU and China. While choosing to see the relative decline of the West as a welcome sign of global power rebalancing, Russia is trying to adjust to the rise of Asia and especially that of its neighbour, China. Moscow has been trying – so far, not with much success – to find a formula to launch the economic revival of its Siberian and Far Eastern regions.

Engaging with Russia

For the outside world, dealing with Russia in the next few years will mean dealing directly with President Putin. Many will find this situation unpleasant and call for actively opposing the Kremlin's authoritarianism. Following the US Congressional example, some Europeans are calling for adopting Europe's own versions of the Magnitsky Act, thus applying real pressure on the people who rule Russia and their allies.

Yet, opposing Russia, or simply ignoring it, will carry a price. Russia is, and will continue to be, for the Russians themselves to fix. Russia is not part of the EU Brussels-leaning neighbourhood, where conditionality can be effectively employed. Outsiders can influence Russian developments only on the margins, and not always positively. Western values need to inform Western interests, not to replace them. Europeans need to approach the Russians on their own terms, but they should not expect the Russians always to conform. Unlike the EU approach practiced toward Turkey and Ukraine, the issue for the EU should not be what the Europeans want Russia to be or to become, but what they want or need from Russia. The basic needs include:

- ensuring peace and stability on the continent of Europe, where the EU and Russia are the biggest units;
- expanding and deepening trade while avoiding EU overdependence on Russian energy supplies;

- exploiting investment opportunities in Russia, as the Russian investment climate warms up;
- broadening and thickening humanitarian contacts between EU and Russians citizens;
- achieving greater harmony of values, norms and principles between the EU and Russia.

That said, more European engagement with Russians at all levels and in all fields (economy and business, culture and the arts, tourism and exchange programmes) will materially contribute to Russian society's onward transformation, including in the realm of values. Isolationist trends in the Kremlin's policies can be effectively countered by opening Europe even more widely to Russian citizens. Phasing out visa restrictions is the most effective way for the EU to use its soft power with respect to Russia.

Europe's soft power will increase still further when the EU emerges from the present financial crisis and re-launches growth. As it strives for more internal coherence, the Union should avoid its Russia policy being the lowest common denominator of national attitudes. It should also avoid a situation where the EU appears in the Russian eyes to stand for restrictions, while the bilateral relationships with individual EU member states seem to offer opportunities.

Finally, Europe should not succumb to the new stereotype that Russia will become increasingly irrelevant in the 21st century world and simply lose interest. If Russia continues to decline, its problems may seriously affect Europe. If it eventually emerges as a more important player, Europe will have missed important opportunities. That said, Europeans need to pay close attention, and seek to use their soft power to build a special relationship with their neighbour. Putin's vision of a "greater Europe" as a compact between the EU and the yet-to-emerge Eurasian Union should challenge the Europeans to come up with a vision of their own.

3 La relation UE-Russie : un nouveau souffle ?

Par Eric Peters*

En matière de relations étrangères, les relations UE-Russie bénéficient en ce début d'année 2013 d'un calendrier particulièrement chargé. Outre les deux sommets semestriels de décembre 2012 et de juin 2013, la rencontre bisannuelle du collègue et du gouvernement russe s'est tenue le 22 mars à Moscou, avec pas moins de 15 commissaires qui ont fait le déplacement. Cette visite intervenait quelques jours après une série d'échanges de vues avec les Etats membres sur les relations UE-Russie dont le point d'orgue a été une discussion du sein du Conseil européen des 14-15 mars derniers.

Cette actualité dense est l'occasion de faire le point sur des relations riches et complexes, qui, comme l'a rappelé récemment le Président Barroso dans son discours prononcé le 21 mars dernier à une conférence à Moscou, nécessitent d'être régulièrement nourries et renouvelées.

Etat des lieux

Force est de constater tout d'abord la vigueur de relations commerciales bilatérales dont le dynamisme a déjà surmonté la crise financière. L'UE reste le partenaire commercial principal de la Russie qui est elle-même le troisième partenaire de l'UE. En 2012, les échanges bilatéraux sont montés à 336 milliard d'euros, près d'un milliard par jour. Il y a plus d'investissements européens en Russie qu'en Chine et en Inde réunis. Ces investissements, 120 milliards d'euros, représentent 75 pour cent des investissements étrangers en Russie. Ces échanges restent toutefois très asymétriques, avec un poids dominant des exportations énergétiques russes et des importations qui pour l'essentiel sont des produits industriels transformés. 80 pour cent des exportations de pétrole, 70 pour cent des exportations de gaz et 50 pour cent des exportations de charbon russes sont destinées au marché européen. A l'inverse, les produits manufacturés représentent plus de 80 pour cent des exportations européennes. Enfin, la vigueur de nos relations concerne également les mouvements de personnes: la Russie est, de très loin, le pays auquel l'UE

octroie le plus de visas, plus de 5,2 millions en 2012, soit plus de 14.000 chaque jour.

L'année 2012 a été aussi marquée par la volonté de la Russie de jouer tout son rôle dans le système multilatéral. A cet égard, l'adhésion formelle de la Russie à l'OMC – après 18 ans de négociations difficiles est un véritable *game changer*. Outre le fait que cette adhésion renforce indéniablement le système multilatéral, elle va permettre le développement des échanges, grâce à une réduction du tarif moyen appliqué par la Russie à 7,8 pour cent, soit près de 2 pour cent de moins que la Chine, selon l'OMC (2012), et grâce aux engagements pris dans 11 secteurs de services. La prise en charge de la présidence du G20 (puis du G8 l'an prochain) illustre la volonté du gouvernement russe de faire preuve de leadership pour favoriser l'émergence de solutions aux défis globaux actuels, que ce soit en matière de lutte contre le protectionnisme, de réforme du système financier, de politique énergétique durable ou d'agenda pour renforcer la croissance mondiale.

Enfin, l'Europe reste le partenaire privilégié de la Russie pour la modernisation de son économie. Des progrès significatifs ont été possibles dans le domaine du partenariat pour la modernisation, qui comporte plus de 300 projets avec à la clé une contribution financière européenne de 60 millions d'euros et un prêt de 200 millions de la BEI pour l'internationalisation des PME. La coopération dans le domaine des sciences et des technologies est aussi au cœur de notre relation comme l'atteste la décision de l'UE et de la Russie de déclarer l'année 2014 « année de la science ». Même dans le domaine réputé difficile des relations en matière d'énergie, l'accord récent sur la feuille de route conjointe pour l'énergie d'ici 2050, montre que l'UE et la Russie peuvent se doter d'une vision commune de long terme.

Malgré ces succès et d'autres à venir notamment dans le domaine de la sécurité, l'UE et la Russie ne sont pas encore parvenues à hisser leur partenariat à un niveau permettant de réaliser tout le potentiel culturel, politique et

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économique de leur relation. Des efforts sont encore nécessaires pour réduire les divergences en matière de modèle énergétique ou pour adopter enfin un nouveau cadre de coopération commun, dont les négociations piétinent depuis plusieurs années.

Un pas en avant

Le Président Barroso a ouvert des pistes pour parvenir à le faire lors de sa visite des 21 et 22 mars à Moscou : il faut faire de ce partenariat fondé sur la nécessité, un vrai choix réciproque. Ce choix doit s'appuyer sur le respect des engagements pris – que ce soit à l'OMC ou au sein du Conseil de l'Europe – et sur des objectifs bilatéraux concrets et pragmatiques de moyen terme. A ce titre, un nouveau cadre institutionnel global qui comprenne une dimension commerciale, énergétique et de facilitation des mouvements de personnes, est essentiel.

La mise en œuvre d'une telle approche politique sera facilitée par un travail d'analyse des causes profondes qui expliquent les divergences actuelles. S'agissant d'une relation chargée d'émotions, il y a très certainement beaucoup à faire pour améliorer la manière dont chacun perçoit son partenaire. Si l'histoire commune est une richesse pour notre relation, elle pèse aussi par les visions du passé qu'elle fait émerger sous forme de clichés et de caricatures, que ce soit celui d'une Russie menaçante ou au contraire en perte de vitesse, d'une Europe prédatrice ou à l'inverse affaiblie par la crise. L'UE et la Russie ne pourront se tourner ensemble vers l'avenir qu'en développant une image plus juste de ce que chacun d'eux est vraiment dans ce XXI^{ème} siècle. Ce ne sera pas aisé, ne serait-ce parce que l'UE et la Russie sont soumises à des mutations profondes.

L'avenir du partenariat UE-Russie

C'est bien dans cette volonté de mieux comprendre notre partenaire russe que s'inscrit la quatrième édition du forum organisé conjointement par le BEPA et Carnegie Europe à Bruxelles, le 28 février dernier. Comme les éditions précédentes, ce forum a donné lieu à un échange de vues entre des représentants des institutions européennes et des experts

rassemblés autour de l'équipe du Carnegie basés à Moscou sur l'évolution du contexte social et politique en Russie.

Ce millésime 2012 a confirmé le diagnostic identifié lors de l'édition précédente d'un « réveil russe », et a permis d'en approfondir l'analyse et les conséquences, notamment sur les relations bilatérales. Un des faits les plus marquants est la volonté politique assumée par le gouvernement russe de faire émerger un « modèle russe », c'est-à-dire d'un système de valeur et d'un mode d'organisation des forces politiques, sociales et économiques propres et distincts du modèle européen. Cette évolution est illustrée par le recentrage gouvernemental autour de valeurs conservatrices, voire nationalistes, et la volonté d'ériger la Russie en soft-power, organisant autour d'elle un pôle eurasiatique pour peser entre l'Europe et la Chine.

Pour l'UE, cette possibilité d'une Russie qui assume durablement ses différences de valeur et d'organisation constitue un nouveau défi, en particulier à l'égard de notre objectif de promotion d'une société démocratique et d'une économie de marché ouverte. Devrait-elle conduire l'UE à revoir son approche comme le suggère Dmitri Trenin? Voilà une question qui ne manquera pas d'animer les débats à venir au sein de l'UE.

En attendant, il pourra être utile de se rappeler deux faits simples. Premièrement, la nouvelle donne russe résulte d'abord d'une évolution endogène sur laquelle l'UE aura d'autant moins d'influence qu'elle ne présentera pas un modèle attractif. La priorité pour l'UE, y compris pour les relations avec la Russie, est une sortie de crise rapide. Deuxièmement, le renforcement des échanges commerciaux, des flux de services et d'investissement des mouvements de personnes est un puissant moteur de changement. Dans un contexte international complexe et incertain, c'est peut-être l'approche du pari pascalien qu'il conviendrait d'adopter. L'UE peut en effet faire le pari que toutes choses égales par ailleurs, c'est d'abord grâce à une circulation accrue des biens et des idées que le vent de réformes libérales pourra souffler un jour en Russie.

4 Think Tank Twitter

Think Tank Twitter (TTT) aims to provide regular information and updates on what is produced by think tanks and research centres across Europe (and beyond) on EU policy issues. As an analogy to the original Twitter, each summary – or tweet – does not exceed 140 words, rather than characters. Those who wish to signal new publications for possible inclusion can send them to the email address bepa-think-tank-twitter@ec.europa.eu

Walking a Thin Line: The role of think tanks in Arab transition and foreign support

The author analyses EU efforts to find a balance between the necessary support for an emerging civil society in the Arab world and the avoidance of external interference. Many Arab think tanks were created following the ‘Arab spring’ and an “awakening of thought”. The author calls on Arab think tanks to: promote a culture of informed citizenship; convene exchanges between government officials and society; and advocate policy solutions. Since the ‘Arab spring’, the EU has put civil society at the centre of its policy towards the Middle East and North Africa. The author proposes to deepen this engagement by encouraging relations between political and social spheres, promoting regional Arab networks, and simplifying the bureaucracy associated with the Calls for Interest/Tenders for EU funding.

http://www.euromesco.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1823%3Abrief-51-walking-a-fine-line-the-role-of-think-tanks-in-arab-transitions-and-foreign-support&catid=62%3Aeuromesco-briefs&Itemid=49&lang=fr

The Shale Gas Boom: The global implications of the rise of unconventional fossil energy

The switch from coal to shale gas in the US – and its subsequent boom – has led to significant US emission reductions. However, the global impact of shale gas is different: coal has become cheaper and long-term prices for oil could drop significantly with a substantial effect on climate policies. Cheap fossil fuels discourage investment in energy efficiency and render policies promoting renewables more expensive. The author advises the EU to restore the ability of the European Emissions Trading System to guide investments, setting adequate emission caps for the post-2020 period to prevent a ‘coal renaissance’. The landscape of the global energy market is changing, shifting towards more competition and fragmentation: the importance of the Middle East may decline and Russian grip on gas markets weaken.

<http://www.fia.fi/en/publication/319/the-shale-gas-boom/>

Scenarios for the Agricultural Sector in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean

The EU is the most important trading partner for Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries (SEMC). However, the agricultural sector, employing a large part of the region’s population, was marginalised in the association agreements signed with the EU. Rather, selective protection was applied to individual SEMC producers. The author introduces four scenarios on the future agricultural performance in SEMCs: “business as usual” (the trend observed over the last two decades continues); “Mediterranean – one global player” and “the EU and SEMCs as regional players on the global stage” (production rises, imports and exports increase, and all value chains are absorbed); “the EU-Mediterranean area under threat” (production, absorption and exports decrease, revenue performance and employment generation remain low, while imports continue to increase).

<http://www.ceps.eu/book/scenarios-agricultural-sector-southern-and-eastern-mediterranean>

The Sixth EU-Brazil Summit: Business beyond the usual?

The expected intensification of cooperation between Brazil and the EU following the signature of a strategic partnership in 2007 has not happened. A new positive spirit of cooperation and mutual trust emerged after the recently held 6th EU-Brazil Summit in Brasilia, which aimed at assessing the current situation of the partnership and identifying possible areas for closer cooperation between the two partners. Consultations covered four areas: security issues; cooperation on development and governance; global economic governance; and trade and investment. The latter was largely dominated by the economic crisis. While cooperation is still advancing very slowly on a practical level, a very concrete outcome is the establishment of a high-level dialogue on security matters, which provides the testing ground for closer coordination between the EU and Brazil.

<http://fride.org/publication/1106/the-sixth-eu-brazil-summit-business-beyond-the-usual>

The Baltic States' Success Story in Combating the Economic Crisis: Consequences for regional cooperation within the EU and with Russia

The global economic crisis has severely affected Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. The reason is primarily that the rather new and comparatively small EU member states depend largely on foreign direct investment and are thus very sensitive to external market changes. The three states decided to tackle the crisis through an internal devaluation strategy. These similar approaches have, however, had quite different results in the countries due to socio-political circumstances and the level of adaptability of the three states. Despite the different results, the cooperation amongst the Baltic states became closer and their links to Russia slightly stronger. Their pro-European conviction remains unchanged. Their anti-crisis strategy can be considered as a success as all of them have growing economies again.

http://www.pism.pl/files/?id_plik=13084

The Migration-Development Nexus: Time for a paradigm shift

The author argues that EU performance in the migration-development nexus is perceived critically, despite the EU's recognition of the importance of the issue. The author holds that EU policy on external migration can neither offer a coherent approach to development nor an efficient approach to migration. Accordingly, she suggests that the EU reviews its priorities and shifts from a security-based approach to a rights-based approach. This concretely means addressing the issues that lead to illegal migration while supporting legal migration (e.g., more labour mobility in low-wage sectors). Human rights and asylum obligations need to be taken into consideration when cooperating with third countries. Circular migration streams must be acknowledged and the potential of diaspora communities utilised. The author recommends that the HR/VP and the EEAS play a stronger role in this area.

<http://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ruby-publicat3.pdf>

The Accessibility Act – Using the single market to promote fundamental rights

The European Accessibility Act (forthcoming in the summer of 2013) aims at providing a growing number of disabled persons with accessible goods and services. For this undertaking to be successful, the author asks for a user centric and broad definition of accessibility within the act. Furthermore, the potential of the single market needs to be exploited. This is beneficial to both the completion of the single market and better accessibility to goods and services. As solutions to accessibility problems are also found in Asia and the US, the EU must act in a global context to benefit from these approaches. Accessibility requirements and standards should be developed, lowering costs but not hindering innovation. Finally and most crucial for success, the EU should raise awareness for disability issues among stakeholders.

http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_3393_the_accessibility_act.pdf

Strengthening EU Presence in Global Financial Reform

Numerous legislative initiatives have been undertaken to respond to the global financial crisis, most of which can be considered as soft law. Nonetheless, despite its immense market power, the EU struggles to influence international regulatory negotiations. To strengthen the EU's regulatory capacity, the authors propose three measures: firstly, the EU should form a coherent position within the European Supervisory Authorities (ESA) and then represent this view in global financial regulatory negotiations. Second, the newly-designed European banking supervisory authority must take into account the dimension of EU external representation in the global banking regulation. Finally, the traditional public-private dichotomy needs to be overcome. Governance structures that complete the ESA should therefore be compatible with global financial regimes.

<http://www.notre-europe.eu/media/globalfinancialregulation-katsikaschatzistavroutirkides-ne-jdi-mar13.pdf>

5 BEPA News

Arrivées

Le BEPA accueille deux nouvelles stagiaires à partir du 5 mars pour une période de 5 mois : Inês Russinho Mouga, diplômée d'un Master en sciences économiques fait partie de l'équipe Analysis, et Nathalie Spath, titulaire d'un diplôme en relations internationales intégrera l'équipe Outreach.

Événements

Le 5 mars, le BEPA a organisé un atelier portant sur le thème « Raising European Commission awareness for systemic risks and Global Resilience ». La conseillère scientifique en chef du Président Barroso, Anne Glover, a présidé l'événement. On comptait parmi les participants des chefs de cabinet, des directeurs généraux, et des représentants de grands conglomérats et d'ONG internationaux. L'événement visait à sensibiliser le public et le préparer en cas de perturbation du système socio-économique mondial. Les sujets abordés ont inclus des scénarios prospectifs, l'examen des conditions menant à une intervention d'urgence, et les prochaines étapes possibles.

Le 7 mars, le Président Barroso a accueilli le Président israélien Peres pour un échange de vues sur les défis globaux auxquels l'Europe fait face. Cette réunion a permis un échange substantiel sur les relations entre l'UE et Israël, le processus de paix au Proche-Orient et les tendances mondiales de l'avenir.

Le 8 mars, le site interinstitutionnel ESPAS (<http://europa.eu/espas/>) a été lancé. Il s'agit d'une première étape qui permettra le développement ultérieur, plus ambitieux encore, notamment la création d'un « global repository » rassemblant les principales études prospectives publiées dans le monde.

Le 19 mars, le Groupe Européen d'Éthique (EGE) s'est réuni afin de continuer l'élaboration de son Avis sur les technologies de sécurité et de surveillance.

Le 21 mars, le Groupe Inter-service sur l'Éthique – créé afin de faciliter l'échange d'information entre les services de la Commission qui travaillent sur des sujets ayant une dimension éthique – s'est réuni pour discuter l'Avis n° 27,

récemment adopté, sur un cadre éthique pour accéder à la recherche, la production et l'utilisation de l'énergie.

Activités à venir

Le 10 avril, le STAC (Science and Technological Advisory Council) se réunira pour la deuxième fois. Le STAC est un groupe indépendant et informel composé d'experts en science et technologie provenant du milieu universitaire, de l'entreprise et de la société civile, couvrant un large éventail de sujets et réunissant l'expertise de tout l'espace européen de la recherche. L'objectif premier du STAC est de conseiller le Président Barroso sur la création d'un environnement propice à l'innovation en façonnant une société européenne qui comprend la science, la technologie et l'ingénierie. Le Conseil travaillera, *inter alia*, sur les thèmes suivants: science et société ; la science en tant qu'opportunité; les sciences humaines; l'intégration de la science dans la vision de l'Europe et au-delà.

Le 22 avril, le BEPA, l'EAFT (European Association of Free Thought) et l'Egale (Égalité Laïcité Europe) organisent conjointement un séminaire dialogue sur le thème « Ré-enchanter l'Europe des citoyens ». Une centaine de spécialistes de la Commission européenne et de ces deux associations y participeront et auront l'occasion de débattre des défis actuels et des transformations institutionnelles nécessaires pour que l'Europe se rapproche davantage de ses citoyens.

Le 30 avril, Anne Glover, conseillère scientifique en chef du Président Barroso, et Robert Madelin, le directeur général de la DG CNECT, organisent une réunion sur le thème du calcul intensif. L'objectif est de réunir des universitaires et l'industrie afin d'identifier les défis de ce secteur ainsi que les actions concrètes à entreprendre pour renforcer ce domaine stratégique pour l'Europe. Des personnalités de haut niveau viendront éclairer le débat, tel que le directeur général de Bull, du European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, le directeur R&T de l'Agence Européenne de Défense, et le directeur de la stratégie et des programmes du Centre d'Énergie Atomique et des Énergies Alternatives.