

## European Council 17-18 December 2015 in Brussels

The European Council will start at 16.00 on Thursday 17 December with the traditional exchange of views with European Parliament President Martin Schulz.

At its first working session the leaders will discuss **migration**.

Over dinner the heads of state or government will discuss the issue of a **United Kingdom in/out referendum**.

On Friday morning the European Council will reconvene at 10.00 for the second working session. With the participation of ECB President Mario Draghi, leaders are first expected to return to the five Presidents' report on completing the **Economic and Monetary Union** before discussing the fight against **terrorism, Syria, internal market** and the **Energy Union** with a forward-looking **climate** policy.

### Indicative programme:

|           |         |  |
|-----------|---------|--|
| Thursday: | 16.00   | Exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament  |
|           | 16.30   | Family photo   |
|           | 16.45   | First working session  |
|           | 19.00   | Working dinner   |
|           | (ttbc)  | Press conference by Presidents Tusk and Juncker  |
| Friday:   | 10.00   | Second working session   |
|           | ± 13.00 | Press conference by Presidents Tusk and Juncker and Prime Minister Bettel of the outgoing Luxembourg Presidency. |

### [Full media programme](#)

### [Invitation letter](#)

- Media accreditation: [www.consilium.europa.eu/](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/)
- Press conferences by video streaming: <http://video.consilium.europa.eu/>
- Video coverage in broadcast quality and photos in high resolution: <http://tvnewsroom.consilium.europa.eu>

<sup>1</sup> This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

## **Migration**

The European Council will discuss the ongoing refugee crisis. The debate is likely to focus mainly on implementation of the various actions and tools that have been put in place aimed to better manage the migratory flows.

Leaders are expected to address shortcomings and call for urgent action on external border control, hotspots, the registration process, relocation, resettlement and return. The European Council is also expected to call for implementation and operational follow-up to the High Level Conference on the Eastern Mediterranean - Western Balkans route, the Valletta Summit and the EU-Turkey Action Plan.

The European Council is also expected to call on the Council to rapidly examine the Commission proposals of 15 December 2015, including on a European Border and Coast Guard and the Schengen Borders Code.

[Council website: EU response to migratory pressures](#)

## **UK (in/out) referendum**

On the basis of the letter by Prime Minister Cameron and the subsequent assessment set out by President Tusk in his letter of 7 December 2015 the European Council will have a substantive political debate on all aspects of the UK (in/out) referendum. Leaders are expected to give guidance for further work before reverting to this issue at their next meeting in February.

[Letter by President Tusk on the UK in/out referendum](#)

## **Economic and Monetary Union**

Following the five Presidents' report on better economic governance in the euro area and the subsequent Commission proposals, the European Council is expected to give further guidance on completing the Economic and Monetary Union. Leaders are expected to have a thorough debate and call on the Council to take work forward particularly on more effective economic and fiscal governance, the euro area's external representation and the Banking Union. The President of the European Central Bank will also participate in the debate.

[Council website: Completing Europe's Economic and Monetary Union](#)

[The five Presidents' report](#)

## **Internal market**

The European Council is expected to call for the implementation of the Commission's roadmap to strengthen and deepen the Single Market. In particular leaders are expected to invite all relevant institutions to accelerate the implementation of the Digital Single Market and call on the co-legislators to reach a rapid agreement on the early actions of the Capital Markets Union, including on securitisation.

## **Energy Union and climate**

The European Council will welcome the first-ever global and legally-binding climate agreement reached in Paris. It is expected to invite the Council and the Commission to assess the results of COP21 in view of the 2030 climate and energy framework. Leaders are also expected to assess progress in the Energy Union in all its dimensions. In particular, focus is likely to be on the optimal use of infrastructure, reduction of energy dependency as well as diversification of suppliers, sources and routes.

[Council website: Energy Union](#)

[Council website: Tackling climate change](#)

## **Fight against terrorism**

In the light of the Paris attacks of 13 November, the European Council will discuss the EU's and its member states' fight against terrorism. Leaders are expected to call for the urgent implementation of the measures agreed at the Special European Council in February 2015. The heads of state and government should also underline the importance and urgency of improving information sharing. In this context, focus is likely to be on the effective and systematic use of various European and international databases. Furthermore, leaders are expected to call on the Council and the Commission to identify and examine further ways to combat terrorism, including on terrorist financing and banning of high-powered semi-automatic weapons. Leaders should also ask the EU to strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation with partners. The recent agreement between the co-legislators on the use of passenger name record (PNR) data is likely to be welcomed.

[Council website: EU fight against terrorism](#)

[Statement by the members of the European Council on the fight against terrorism, 12 February 2015](#)

## **Syria**

Finally, the European Council is expected to express support for the efforts of the International Syria Support Group to end the conflict in Syria, and the efforts of the Global Coalition to defeat the global threat posed by ISIL/Da'esh.

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