

The Bulletin



Joshua G. Honeycutt examines the precarious position of the Italian government in this week's top story.



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Matteo Renzi, former Italian Prime Minister and Senator for Florence
Credit: Flickr/Palazzo Chigi

ITALY'S GOVERNMENT IN CRISIS

BY JOSHUA G. HONEYCUTT

IN ITS ALMOST 73 YEARS OF EXISTENCE, THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC HAS HAD 65 GOVERNMENTS. THIS MEANS THAT ON AVERAGE GOVERNMENTS HAVE LASTED LESS THAN 1 YEAR AND 2 MONTHS.

THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT, THE CONTE II – IT IS CUSTOM TO NUMBER GOVERNMENTS UNDER THE NAME OF THEIR PRESIDENT – HAS LASTED 501 DAYS AND COUNTING BUT IS NOW UNDER THE NOT UNUSUAL PREDICAMENT OF UNOFFICIALLY NOT HAVING A MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT ANYMORE.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE ON OUR [WEBSITE](https://thenewfederalist.eu).

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Current Affairs

TAKING (FUNDAMENTAL) RIGHTS SERIOUSLY

BY GUILLERMO ÍÑIGUEZ

Is Europe witnessing, as Pech, Wachowiec and Mazur fear, 'the end of the rule of law in Poland?'. Recent developments seem to suggest so. Although concerns about the country's respect for the rule of law have been raised for several years – the EU's rule of law framework was first adopted against Poland in January 2016 –, 2020 saw an acceleration of the country's rocky road to authoritarianism. The consequences stretch far beyond Warsaw, and pose a grave threat to the European Union.

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THE EUROPEAN
COMMISSION -
CANNOT BE
RELIED ON TO
PROTECT THE
RULE OF LAW
WITHIN ITS OWN
BORDERS.



The Supreme Court of Poland (Warsaw).
Darwinek/Wikimedia Commons.



WHAT NEXT FOR THE CDU?

BY GUILLERMO ÍÑIGUEZ

On Saturday, 1001 CDU delegates, assembled both in Berlin and virtually, elected Armin Laschet to the party leadership, marking the end of two years of political uncertainty for the German Christian Democrats. Despite having lagged behind in the polls for much of the campaign, Laschet – viewed as the continuity candidate, and widely supported by the party establishment – defeated right-wing Friedrich Merz in the second round, having left centrist Norbert Röttgen behind in the first.

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Newly elected CDU leader Armin Laschet.
Source: DW / Flickr (CC BY-NC 2.0)

LASCHET'S ELECTION MARKS THE END OF A TWO-YEAR PERPETUAL ELECTION CYCLE FOR HIS PARTY. A CENTRIST AND STAUNCHLY PRO-EUROPEAN CDU LEADER IS GOOD NEWS FOR BOTH GERMANY AND EUROPE.





Europe in the World



EUROPEAN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY IN THE WAKE OF THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

By Balázs Sean Brandt

2020 has been a crazy year, especially for world politics. But even in our radically transformed lives, one event caught everybody's attention. After weeks and days of uncertainty, the next leader of 'the free world' was elected. Despite all the controversy surrounding the election, most have accepted Joseph Biden as the 46th president of the United States. His election led to a sense of relief within Europe as well.

Read the full article on our [website](#)



DESPITE PROGRESS IN EU-TURKEY TALKS, SEVERAL HURDLES REMAIN

By peksha Shetty

January saw communication between the EU and Turkey improving, but for future talks to succeed, both parties need to resolve several issues.

Recently, there has been an uptick in positive communication and improvement in the relations between the EU and Turkey.

Read the full article on our [website](#)



Social Fabric

TRUMPISM, INEQUALITY AND EUROPE



BY ELSIE HALDANE

After last week's dramatic events at the US Capitol, the existence of Trumpism can never be questioned. Although Trump is leaving the White House, the political and social ideology of Trumpism may stick around. This ideology is inherently linked to social inequality: it can only succeed in an already unequal society. Many who followed Trump were frustrated at an establishment that seemed to ignore their needs. Instead of addressing these inequalities, politicians like Trump use scapegoats to stir up hatred amongst voters, pit different groups against each other and depict themselves as the saviour of 'the people', therefore becoming a cause, effect, and exacerbation of social inequality. This is not a new tactic, nor an American one—it has been seen before in Europe, and will be seen again.

Read the full article on our [website](#).



French senate at Luxembourg Palace. Credit: Creative Commons

UNDERMINING HUMAN RIGHTS: IS FRANCE UPHOLDING LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ?

BY DANIEL RAYNOLDS

France has recently hit the front pages of newspapers across the world, but for reasons that are unexpected from such a liberal country. Under the leadership of President Emmanuel Macron, France has recently taken various steps to undermine human rights — something which has gradually spoiled the country’s image as the torchbearer of liberty and the defender of freedom of expression. The latest among these human rights blunders is a proposed amendment to French security law and the dissolution of a non-governmental human rights organization.

On December 2, the French government dissolved the ‘Collective Against Islamophobia in France’ (CCIF) in the Council of Ministers, an NGO that combats discrimination against Muslims. French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin tweeted that this organisation, and others that protect Muslims in France, are considered “enemies of the republic”.

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EU Institutions

PRESIDENCIES' PRIORITIES, PARALLELS, AND POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

BY ELIZABETH SADUSKY

Whereas the last two EU presidencies have been centered around the COVID-19 pandemic, with the vaccine being distributed and reforms initiated during the German presidency paving the road to recovery, the Portuguese presidency (which began 1 January 2021) can begin to focus once again on more long-term visions and agendas. The transition of the U.S. presidency on the 20th of January has put the future of the transatlantic relationship front and center of the agenda.

Read the full article on our [website](#).



THE UNITED STATES IS NOT THE ONLY ONE WHOSE DEMOCRACY AND RULE OF LAW IS CLEARLY UNDER THREAT.



Illustration: Liu Rui/GT



BREAKING THE SIEGE ON EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY

BY SEBASTIANO PUTOTO

“ It’s 6th January 2021, not a week into a year that we’d hoped would turn the page on a pandemic-riven and, frankly, dismal 2020. Our eyes are glued to flashing TV screens: live from Capitol Hill in Washington DC, the world watches in horror and disbelief as nothing short of an attempt on the very foundations of American democracy takes place. Could this happen in Europe?

Read the full article on our [website](#).



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