



---

## BRUSSELS THINK TANK DIALOGUE – STATE OF THE UNION 2014

### THE EU'S NEW LEADERS: KEY POST-ELECTION CHALLENGES

New EU leaders who take over after next year's European Parliament elections will face enormous challenges. The Union's democratic legitimacy may be further questioned if – as predicted - populist and protest parties emerge as the main winners in the polls. Issues like the British EU referendum in 2017 or the completion of Economic and Monetary Union could spur more debate about necessary treaty reforms. However, cumbersome negotiations on the Banking Union clearly illustrate the shrinking determination or capacity of national governments to make a collective push for ambitious reforms. And while the European Council in December will discuss a common EU defence policy, only hardened optimists expect a significant outcome. Meanwhile, without serious efforts to enhance the EU's role as a foreign and defence policy actor, the threat of EU marginalisation in the world will become a reality.

Ten leading Brussels-based think tanks will look at these key challenges at the fifth Brussels Think Tank Dialogue (BTTD) on 28 January 2014.

Jointly organised by the [Bertelsmann Stiftung](#), [Bruegel](#), the [Centre for European Policy Studies](#) (CEPS), [Confrontations Europe](#), the [Egmont Institute](#), the [European Policy Centre](#) (EPC), [Friends of Europe – Les amis de l'Europe](#), the [Institut français des relations internationales](#) (Ifri), [Madariaga – College of Europe Foundation](#) and the [Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik](#) (SWP), the Brussels Think Tank Dialogues are annual policy forums for critical reflection on the state of the EU and the joint development of analysis and recommendations to improve EU policies. The Dialogues are designed to address pressing political concerns as well as to offer recommendations on specific issues.

Next year's BTTD will take place on

**28 January 2014**

**at Résidence Palace, Rue de la Loi 155, 1040 Brussels.**

Our fifth Dialogue will comprise four sessions which will provide cutting edge policy analysis and hammer out recommendations through open discussion. The first three topical sessions will focus on ways how to strengthen the legitimacy of European policymaking by improving the interplay between the EP and national parliaments, how to achieve a genuine Economic and Monetary Union and how to conceive a new EU foreign policy. In the concluding session, key arguments and findings from these debates will be wrapped up by the directors of some of the think tanks jointly organizing the annual BTTD conference.