



# Recommendations from members of the TEPSA network to the Latvian Presidency

The Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA) has the tradition to formulate recommendations to the incoming Council Presidency. These recommendations have been prepared by the following members of the TEPSA network: **Iain Begg** (TEPSA Board, London School of Economics and Politics, London), **Gianni Bonvicini** (TEPSA Board, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome), **Gunilla Herolf** (TEPSA Board, Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences, Stockholm) and **Michal Koran** (Institute of International Relations, Prague). They do not necessarily represent the view of TEPSA or its partner institutes.

Michal Koran will present the recommendations to the incoming Latvian Presidency at the occasion of the TEPSA-LIIA Pre-Presidency Conference "Moving the Union forward: Involvement, Growth, Sustainability" on 4th of December 2014 in Riga. The conference is organised by the Latvian Institute of International Affairs (LIIA) in cooperation with the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA), the THESEUS Project and the Latvian Presidency of the European Council of the European Union and with the support of European Commission Representation in Latvia, Fritz Thyssen Stiftung and the European Parliament Information Office in Latvia.

**November 2014**

## **Justice and Home Affairs Council**

The EU's member states regularly deplore the human tragedies visible every day among people seeking asylum. Yet despite a longstanding commitment to establish a common asylum system, it remains unfinished business. From both a moral and a practical perspective, we urge the Latvian government to do its utmost to achieve agreement on this contentious issue.

## **Economic and Financial Affairs Council and Competitiveness Council**

The Europe 2020 strategy should adopt a new strategic guideline calling on Member States to undertake far-reaching reforms of public administration, complementing initiatives to achieve better regulation and more disciplined public finances.

The high profile €300 billion investment package announced by the Commission has the potential to be part of a solution to economic stagnation in many Member States, but immediate actions are also needed. To give a rapid stimulus to construction while simultaneously improving energy efficiency, a programme to boost renovation of housing to reduce energy loss should be launched during the Latvian presidency, with co-funding from the EU budget.

## **Foreign Affairs Council**

Geopolitical developments are manifestly calling into question many of the core assumptions of EU foreign and security policy and have exposed the shortcomings of the European Neighbourhood Policy, and ambitions to have strategic partnerships with third countries (starting with Russia) have not been realised. In addition, the concept of a comprehensive

approach in the field of external security has proved to be unworkable in the absence of a sufficiently credible military component.

It should also be emphasised that the scope of European foreign and security policy is not purely regional. On the contrary, the EU has to engage with other parts of the world, not just as a trade power but as a constructive and effective security actor. To reflect these new, hard realities, we advocate a European Global Strategy (EGS), instead of one primarily focused on the neighbourhood.

Therefore, we call on the Latvian Presidency to:

- support the newly appointed High Representative in the drafting of a new EGS (European Global Strategy);
- set a target for the planned June European Council meeting to agree a new EGS.

Threats affecting cyber space have been identified by the European Council as of growing concern, and cyber security must unavoidably be strengthened if the digital agenda component of Europe 2020 is to succeed. In view of its extensive experience in the field of digitalization and cyber security, the Latvian Presidency is encouraged to bring forward specific proposals for improving cyber security at the EU level

To avoid sending the wrong signals to Russia, the EU should make clear that it welcomes the outcome of parliamentary elections in Moldova as fair and democratic and should regard outside attempts to destabilise development after the elections as acts of aggression. The EU Presidency should be ready to assist the new government to come to carry out all necessary reforms.

## **General Affairs Council**

The increasing prominence of the European Council in the EU's decision making, particularly in specific economic policies, risks creating divisions between poor and rich, northern and southern, big and small countries, and also undermines the Commission's agenda-setting and leadership roles. In the interests of rebalancing the institutional mix and taking into account that the issue has been highlighted by the Presidents of the Commission and the European Parliament, we propose the development of a series of inter-institutional agreements among the main organs of the EU (including the ECB, the Court, etc.), with the purpose of rendering the whole system more legitimate and accountable.

