

European Council 20-21 October 2016 in Brussels

The meeting of the European Council will begin with the traditional exchange of views with the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, at 16.00 on Thursday 20 October.

The first working session will be devoted to **migration**, with a focus on border protection and partnership frameworks ("compacts") with African countries. Prime Minister Fico, representing the Slovak Presidency of the Council, is also expected to update his colleagues on the progress made in the Council on the issues contained in the **Bratislava roadmap** and set out the next steps of implementation.

Over dinner the heads of state or government will have a strategic discussion on the EU's overall relations with **Russia**, including Russia's role in the Syrian conflict.

There should also be three information points at the dinner. Prime Minister May will be invited to provide a short update on **Brexit**, Prime Minister Rutte is expected to give an update on the situation in the Netherlands with regard to the **referendum on the Ukraine AA/DCFTA**, and President Tusk intends to present new ideas on the **working methods of the European Council**.

On Friday the heads of state or government will reconvene at 10.00 to discuss **trade policy, including the agreement with Canada (CETA)** and adopt the conclusions on other **global and economic issues**.

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 (ttbc) Press conference by Presidents Tusk and Juncker

[European Council 20-21 October 2016](#)

- Media accreditation: 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>

Bratislava follow-up

Prime Minister Fico, representing the Slovak Presidency of the Council is expected to report to his colleagues on the state-of-play of the Bratislava Roadmap. It will be the first occasion for heads to take stock of the results so far, which include the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on climate and the launch of the European Border and Coast Guard. It will also be an opportunity to set out expectations on the implementation of the other priorities in the roadmap, including where possible timelines, to ensure that they are all delivered by the time of the Rome summit in March 2017.

[Reflection on the future of EU](#)

[Bratislava declaration and roadmap](#)

Migration

The European Council will take stock of implementation and the latest developments in the EU's comprehensive migration policy.

The debate is likely to focus on the external aspects, and particularly on reducing the number of irregular migrants along the Central Mediterranean route (see annex 1), which is now the main migration route to Europe. Leaders are expected to recall the importance of improving and strengthening cooperation with individual countries of origin and transit including through the establishment of partnerships with key countries. The idea behind these so called 'compacts' is to tackle the root causes of migration, and to provide practical support to the countries concerned to help them prevent illegal migration and importantly improve return rates.

The heads of state are also expected to return to the issue of the implementation and support for efforts to end migration along the Eastern Mediterranean route (see annex 2). They are expected to call for more returns from Greek islands to Turkey, further assistance to Greece (mainly through the provision of experts) and for further progress on the commitments in the EU -Turkey statement of 18 March 2016. The European Council will welcome work done on establishing partnerships with Jordan and Lebanon, implementing the commitments made at the London Conference on "Supporting Syria and the Region Conference" (February 2016) and on the "EU- Afghanistan Joint Way Forward on migration issues" agreed on 2 October 2016.

Leaders will welcome the entry into force of the European Border and Coast Guard regulation on 6 October and call for systematic controls on all travellers crossing EU external borders (revised Schengen borders code). The European Council is also expected to look forward to a forthcoming Commission proposal for setting up a European system (ETIAS) to allow for advance security checks on visa-exempt travellers, and will call on the Council to establish its position on an entry/exit system by the end of the year. The European Council is expected to call for work to be continued on the reform of the Common European Asylum System, including on how to apply the principles of solidarity and responsibility in the future.

[EU response to migratory pressures](#)

[EU Turkey statement 18 March 2016](#)

[Partnerships with Jordan and Lebanon](#)

[EU- Afghanistan Joint Way Forward on migration issues](#)

Russia

Over dinner on Thursday evening, the European Council will have a strategic debate on the EU's overall relations with Russia. The debate is intended to provide the opportunity for a wide-ranging discussion on both Russia's relations with the EU and its role in the neighbourhood region, including Ukraine, Syria and the Balkans. Other topics expected to be covered include counter-terrorism efforts, disinformation and cyber attacks. The heads of state or government might also discuss the possibility for re-engagement.

[EU response to the crisis in Ukraine](#)

Trade

At their second working session on Friday morning the European Council will have a comprehensive debate on trade policy. Leaders are expected to reconfirm their commitment to free and fair trade, underlining the benefits of open markets for job creation and growth. In the EU 1 in 7 jobs depend on exports, which means that more than 30 million jobs are dependant on international trade (see annexes 3 and 4). At the same time leaders are expected to emphasise the concerns expressed by citizens and underline their commitment to fully protect and promote the social, environmental and consumer standards that are central to the European way of life.

The heads of state or government will discuss the modernisation of the EU's trade defence instruments. In order to tackle unfair trade practices, ensure fair competitions and consequently safeguard European jobs, it is important that the EU's trade policy and instruments are effective globally.

Leaders are expected to discuss progress in on-going free trade agreement negotiations with key partners such as Canada, Japan and the US.

[EU trade agreements](#)

Global and economic issues

Finally, leaders are expected to adopt short conclusions welcoming the EU's ratification of the Paris Agreement on climate change, reconfirming their commitment to single market strategies, the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and to fighting youth unemployment.

[Paris Agreement timeline](#)

[European fund for strategic investments](#)

Migration flows: Irregular arrivals in Italy

131 860
total arrivals
in 2016

Irregular arrivals in Italy per month

Border crossing by sea, from January 2014 to September 2016



Source: UNHCR

Irregular arrivals in Italy per country of origin

Top nationalities, January - August 2016

Number and % of total arrivals

- 1 Nigeria - 19% (22 329)
- 2 Eritrea - 13% (15 043)
- 3 Sudan - 7% (8 066)
- 4 Gambia - 7% (7 750)
- 5 Cote d'Ivoire - 7% (7 676)
- 6 Guinea - 6% (7 468)
- 7 Somalia - 5% (6 025)
- 8 Mali - 5% (5 954)
- 9 Senegal - 5% (5 884)
- 10 Bangladesh - 4% (4 508)



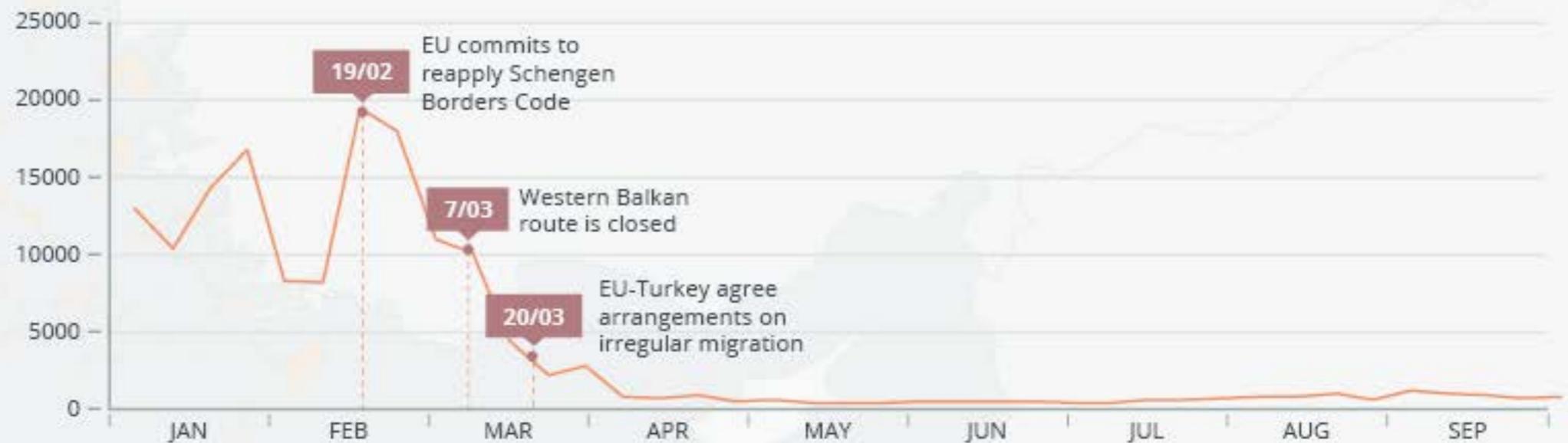
Source: UNHCR



Migration flows: Irregular arrivals in Greece

Irregular arrivals in Greece per week

Border crossing by sea from January to September 2016



Source: UNHCR



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

© European Union, 2016.
Reproduction is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged

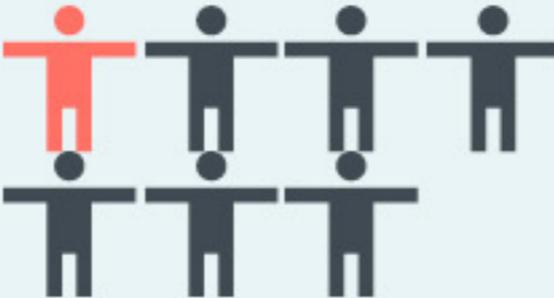
Trade & jobs

European Union exports support:

31,000,000
jobs in the EU

this means

1 in 7 jobs
depend on exports



Source: European Commission

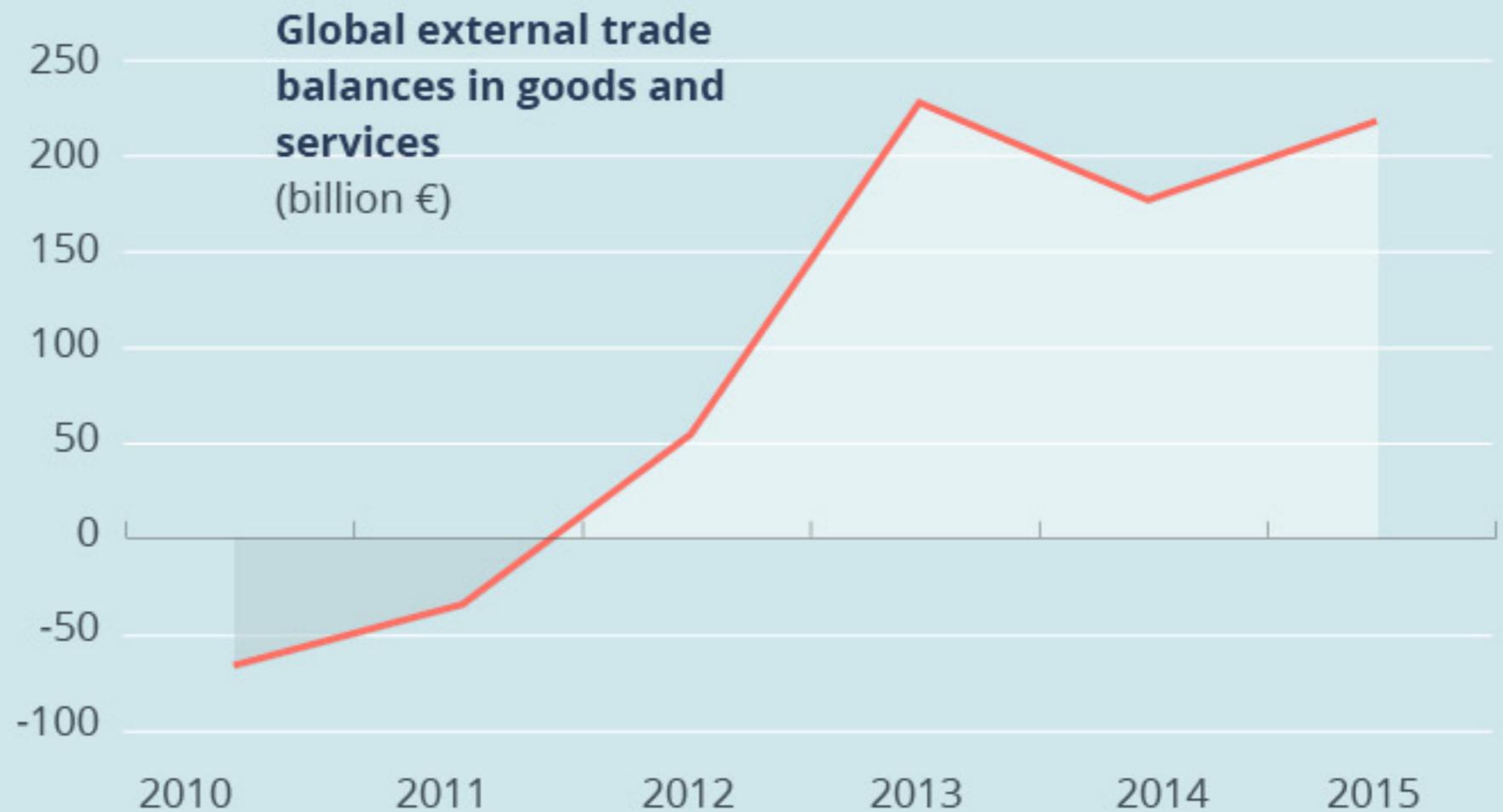


Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

© European Union, 2016.
Reproduction is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged

Trade & economy

Trade
in goods and services
34.1%
of GDP
in the EU in 2015



Source: Trade statistical guide
European Commission



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

© European Union, 2016.
Reproduction is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged