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The Lisbon Treaty: Europe a stronger partner in the world

The Lisbon Treaty, which came into force on 1 December 2009, makes the European Union **more democratic**, more **transparent**, more **efficient** and **stronger on the world stage**, contended Ambassador David Daly at the International Forum at the University of Sydney on 18 May.

The Lisbon treaty makes the EU more democratic and transparent by giving European citizens a greater voice through greater powers for the European Parliament and by giving Member State parliaments greater opportunities to be involved in the work of the EU. It makes the EU more efficient by streamlining it at the highest level, creating the function of President of the European Council elected for two and a half years (renewable once). On 1 January 2010, former Belgian Prime Minister, Herman Van Rompuy was chosen by EU Heads of State and Government as the new President, Chairman, of the European Council. His appointment replaces the six-monthly rotating presidency previously in place.

The Lisbon Treaty makes Europe stronger on the world stage as the EU's capacity to act works in both the internal and external spheres. "*Clearly, if we are better able to act internally as regards, say, climate change, then this also makes us a stronger partner on the external front in that area.*" said Ambassador Daly.

The Lisbon Treaty also gives the EU explicit streamlined instruments in the foreign affairs area, especially through the creation of the new position of the High Representative for the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (Baroness Catherine Ashton) that combines being also a Vice-President of the European Commission. This post enhances coherence and continuity and strengthens the Union's role in the international arena. [read full speech](#)

Europe Day celebrated in Canberra

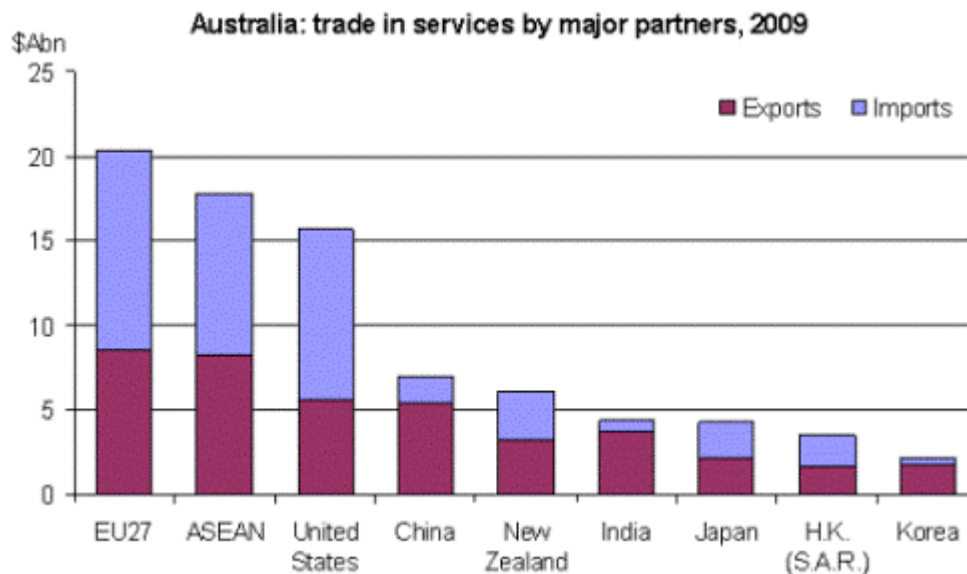


Ambassador Daly, in his speech on the occasion of Europe Day at Old Parliament House on 10 May, highlighted three things for which the European Union stands out: its history, its size, and its values. With its population of over 500 million, 7% of the world's population, the EU accounts for around **22% of global GDP**; it is the world's largest trader; it provides some **60% of all world development assistance**; some **28% of foreign currency reserves are held in the Euro**.

"The relative importance of Europe does not depend on size or economic weight alone, but rather on how these strengths are used. The European Union is founded on respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These are the values which inspire the EU's work with fragile states, ranging from Europe through to the Pacific, and which lead us to provide 60% of the world's development assistance. These are the values which mean we care about sustainable development and addressing the challenge of climate change and energy security. Thankfully, these values are not unique to the European Union. Since we share these basic values, it should come as no surprise that the EU looks upon Australia as a natural partner. And, it should come as no surprise either that

this partnership is flourishing." said Ambassador Daly. [read the full speech](#)

EU : Australia's largest trading partner in services



Data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on 14 May revealed that the EU remained Australia's largest trading partner in services in 2009, representing 19 per cent, or A\$20.3 billion of Australia's total services trade, ahead of the ASEAN economies, the United States and China. The EU was the most important export market for Australian services, worth A\$8.6 billion last year, while it was also Australia's largest supplier of services, at A\$11.7 billion. While the global economic downturn contributed to the value of two-way services trade between the EU and Australia falling by 3.1 per cent from 2008, services continue to form an important component of the EU-Australia trade relationship, comprising 26 per cent of total bilateral trade in 2009.

EU-Australia services trade is dominated by travel activity, with two-way trade totalling A\$10.4 billion in 2009. Other major sectors include transportation and professional, technical and other business services (broadly comprising legal, accounting, architectural and engineering services).

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (5368.0.55.004)

European Economic Update



The Council of the European Union meeting on Economic and Financial Affairs on 18 May, issued a press release outlining the main conclusions. The Council agreed a mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament on draft EU rules for entities engaged in the management of alternative investment funds, such as **hedge funds** and private equity.

The draft directive is aimed at establishing a framework for monitoring and supervising the risks posed by alternative investment funds, whilst allowing fund managers to market their funds throughout the EU single market, subject to strict requirements. The negotiations with the Parliament will aim to enable adoption of the text in first reading.

The Council took note of additional consolidation measures to be introduced by Spain and Portugal in their 2010 and 2011 budgets, in accordance with the conclusions of its extraordinary meeting on 9 May, which led to a EUR 500 billion package of measures to preserve financial stability in Europe. It also adopted conclusions on **financial stability and crisis management**; budgetary frameworks for **exit strategies** with regard to measures taken during the economic and financial crisis; the **unwinding of government guarantee schemes** for the financial sector; and the financing of fast-start measures in developing countries to tackle **climate change**. [Read Council Conclusions](#)

World Economic Forum for Europe 2010



European Commission President Barroso at the World Economic Forum for Europe 2010 stated *"we will do whatever is necessary to defend the stability of the euro. The lesson from this crisis is that if you want a monetary union, you should also promote an economic union."*

The agreement reached at the extraordinary summit by the ECOFIN ministers - finance and economic ministers of the European Union - *"shows the determination of the whole of the European Union to stand behind any of its Member States when they are seriously threatened with severe difficulties caused by exceptional circumstances beyond their control."* said President Barroso.

EU priorities for June G20 Summit in Toronto

José Manuel Durão Barroso, President of the European Commission, on 13 May presented to European Council President Van Rompuy, and to President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek, five key G20 deliverables which he believes should be at the heart of a strong EU position for the upcoming G20 Summit in Toronto on 26-27 June. The key points were:

Setting out **general guiding principles for exit from the crisis**; making progress towards the **Framework for Growth**; implementation of the **Financial Stability Board remuneration principles** and accounting standards convergence; making substantial progress towards agreeing on an ambitious package on **IMF reform** in order to conclude by November; building up momentum for the **UN Millennium Development Goals Review Summits** on climate change.

Trade matters : get our news!



International trade is an essential part of the EU economy. Together the EU accounts for a fifth of global trade and negotiates as one internationally, through the European Commission. Keep up to date with the latest on EU trade policy via our weekly electronic newsletter,

European Trade News. To register, go to: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/eutn>

Emissions trading: EU ETS emissions fall more than 11% in 2009

Emissions of greenhouse gases from EU businesses participating in the EU Emissions Trading System fell 11.6 % in 2009 compared with a 2008. Climate Action Commissioner Connie Hedegaard said: *"Due to the crisis the significant drop in emissions does not come as a surprise. The EU has a functioning trading system driving emission reductions even during a recession. We should not hide that the recession has significantly weakened the price signal. The carbon market can and should be a stronger driver for low-carbon investments. And we must also realise that because of the crisis it suddenly became easier to reduce emissions and that is good."*

Verified emissions of greenhouse gases from all installations in the EU ETS in 2009 totalled 1.873 billion tonnes of CO₂-equivalent. 2009 were about 11.6 % lower than the 2008 level. The second trading period of the EU ETS began on 1 January 2008 and runs for five years until 31 December 2012. This period coincides with the period during which industrialised countries must meet their Kyoto Protocol emission targets. <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ets/>

Water scarcity and droughts : a major concern for many areas in Europe



The balance between water demand and availability has reached a critical level in many areas of Europe. Water scarcity and droughts have emerged as a major challenge, and climate change is expected to make matters worse. The European Commission on 18 May published a report indicating that despite more rainfall in southern European countries in 2009 than in previous years, greater efforts are needed to stop and reverse the over-exploitation of Europe's limited water resources. An effective water pricing policy, water efficiency and water saving measures are

essential to ensure that Europe has enough good quality water to meet the needs of users and to face the challenges of a changing climate.

As in Australia, some EU regions have begun to suffer permanent scarcity, and the problem is not limited to Mediterranean countries. A 2009 Commission-led report showed that the introduction of mandatory requirements on water using devices under the extended Eco-design Directive could bring significant savings. If all domestic water using products were included this could lead to a 19% reduction in total water consumption – a 3.2% reduction in the total annual EU water abstraction. The full report is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/quantity/eu_action.htm#2009

Progress on EU-Turkey relations



The EU-Turkey Association Council met on 10 May to assess the state of bilateral relations. The Union welcomed progress achieved by Turkey as part of the EU accession process; 12 chapters of the 35 have now been opened but the Union encouraged Turkey to continue its work in terms of democracy, rule of law, human rights and minorities and to implement the necessary reforms with regard to the civil service, the legal system and the fight against corruption.

pictured: Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, receives Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs and Eğemen Bağış, Turkish Minister for European Affairs.

Ending homophobia - stopping discrimination



Catherine Ashton, High Representative, issued a statement on behalf of the European Union on 17 May, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, reaffirming the principle of non-discrimination which requires that human rights apply equally to every human being regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

"The European Union rejects and condemns any manifestation of homophobia as this phenomenon is a blatant violation of human dignity. It considers that discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity is incompatible with the basic principles on which the EU is founded. The European Union is deeply concerned by violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms based on sexual orientation or gender identity wherever they occur." said Mrs Ashton. [read full release](#)

European Qualifications Framework

The first issue of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) Newsletter has just been published. This Newsletter will be published three times a year and aims to reach and inform a broad audience of stakeholders and to encourage and support discussion and debate on the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework at the national and European levels. The EQF is designed as a translation device between qualification systems and frameworks, to improve the understanding, comparability and portability of qualifications across Europe. Its implementation relies on the voluntary participation of countries (EU/EEA Member States and candidate countries) that are invited to relate their national qualifications frameworks or systems to the eight reference levels of the EQF. If you wish to subscribe or contribute in English, French or German to the EQF Newsletter, please register by sending an email to the following email address: eac-eqf-newsletter@ec.europa.eu.

Academic news and events

Presentation by Marin Dikanovic, Masters Student and Intern at the Monash European and EU Centre : *The European Union: interning at the European Commission*. This presentation will look at the application process for the European Commission Traineeship, and how to improve your chances of being selected as a trainee. A short insight about the tasks and life of a trainee at the European Commission and the European Anti-Fraud Office will also be given. Date and Time: Monday, 31 May 2010 from 2pm to 3pm. All welcome – No charge. RSVP by 26 May to

patricia.arnold@general.monash.edu.au

EU tube: Youth in Action



EU Tube: Youth in Action - Get involved! - <http://ec.europa.eu/youth> Youth in Action is the EU programme for all young people. It aims at mobilizing young Europeans' potential and at fostering their active citizenship, solidarity and tolerance by supporting a large variety of youth projects and activities. The ultimate goal is to provide an increasing number of young people with the unique chance to get involved in highly enriching, non-formal learning experiences. Youth in Action is also for you: Be a part of it! - <http://www.youtube.com/user/eutube#p/a/F574F6AEE69225C5/1/VE0mRmTRbfY>

[see EUtube](#)

European Union Delegation: publications available online



The following publications are available from our website. If, however, you would like to receive hard copies of any of these publications, please send an email to delegation-australia@ec.europa.eu specifying the name of the publication(s) and the number you would like to receive.

[Study in Europe 2010](#)
[Key Facts 2010](#)

[EU Insight: Education](#)
[EU Insight: Lisbon Treaty](#)
[European Union Australia Partnership Framework](#)
[EU Insight: Climate change](#)
[EU Insight: Economic relationship](#)

Upcoming events: Australia

Open Day at Australian-German Institute Inc. on Saturday 22 May 2010 from 1.00pm to 4.00 pm in the Griffin Centre, First Floor, Genge Street, Canberra City. Coffee and home baked cake for afternoon tea. **Das Zentrum** is a cultural community organisation providing a library and information service for the Canberra community. The emphasis is on German language and the German-speaking regions of Europe. Das Zentrum offers a wide range of classic literature in German and English, modern German novels, current German magazines, movies on video and DVD in German with and without subtitles, informative videos, reference and information material and German language courses by qualified native speakers. Come and see for yourself what Das Zentrum has to offer! For more information contact Das Zentrum during office hours or visit our website www.daszentrum.org.au

Touring French Film Festival 16 April - 18 July 2010, venues and dates, AF Geelong 21 - 23 May, AF Hobart 28 - 30 May, AF Wagga Wagga 4 - 11 June, AF Sunshine Coast 2 - 4 July, AF Cairns 16 - 18 July. Also screening in Tamworth (18 - 20 June) and Orange (25 - 27 June). Refer to Alliance Francaise websites for full details <http://www.alliancefrancaise.com.au/>

Eurovision song contest – Sunday 30 May, 7pm start. Glam up and join us with friends for a night of glitz, music and fun – Eurovision style! Ticket price of \$30 includes light meal, Eurovision on a big screen, and stand up comedy during the break. Contact Teatro Vivaldi on 02 6257 2718 to pre-purchase or make group bookings. \$5 from each ticket sold will be donated to the National Breast Cancer Foundation. Prizes for best outfit of the night! Raffle prizes! **Poster**

Winter Lantern Walk – a German tradition held in Glebe Park, Canberra, hosted by Spielwelt German Parents Association. Sunday 20 June 6 to 7.30pm. Email spielwelt@homemail.com.au

Spanish Film Festival: Melbourne 12-23 May, Adelaide 13-16 May, Brisbane 20-30 May. www.spanishfilmfestival.com

[More events](#)

Upcoming events in New Zealand

Gateway to the EU in New Zealand <http://www.eu.org.nz/>

For more information on the items covered in news@eu, contact Roger Camilleri +61 2 6271 2744 roger.camilleri@ec.europa.eu or Jan Skorich +61 2 62712747 jan.skorich@ec.europa.eu .

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