



EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

When we began planning this issue in mid-August last year, the third bailout package for Greece had just been approved and Europeans were on tenterhooks about the “euro crisis”, a term that had come to symbolise the financial and debt crisis. Hardly anyone would have thought at that time that the EU could enter an entirely different crisis within just a few weeks – a crisis of unprecedented magnitude, a crisis that has since almost eclipsed all other topics, a crisis that many consider the greatest challenge the European Union has ever had to manage.

When “Europe in Crisis” figures in the title for this issue, this consequently refers first and foremost to the so-called refugee crisis. This is the subject addressed in an interview about the current situation in Europe with the Chairman of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Dr. Hans-Gert Pöttering, as well as in a “Mood Barometer” reflecting the current state of the situation in different European countries and the partially different ways in which the individual countries are handling the crisis.

When reference is made to the European crisis in the title for this issue, this also still means the financial and debt crisis. As Susanna Vogt explains in her article, Greece in particular is still in an extremely fragile fiscal and economic state and nowhere near leaving the crisis behind for good. Somewhat different is the situation in Spain. In his article, Thomas Stehling paints a picture of a country that has at least turned the corner and has left the “intensive care unit”. It is therefore all the more important for the country to continue on its present course of reforms after the recent parliamentary elections.

Since at least Russia’s annexation of Crimea in contravention of international law – which Claudia Crawford und Dimitrie Weigel deal with in their contribution for the “Mood Barometer” – and the terror attacks in Paris, which Nino Galetti refers to in its article on France, a security component is added to the existing challenges for Europe. In this context, fighting the causes that compel people

to flee countries in crisis such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan is as important as securing the EU's external borders and a fair sharing of the burdens across Europe.

The host of economic, social and security challenges Europe is currently facing can only be overcome if the Western community stands shoulder to shoulder. This also applies to the United Kingdom, which – as Hans Blomeier reports – might vote on a “Brexit” in 2016, as well as for the United States, which – according to Lars Hänsel and Nikolas Ott – is looking upon the crisis-stricken partner across the Atlantic with concern. Konrad Adenauer's foreign policy maxim to do everything in one's power to ensure that the unity of the free peoples of the West appears as solid as a rock is therefore still as pertinent today as it was 50 years ago.

I wish you a stimulating read.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Gerhard Wahlers". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name "Gerhard" and the last name "Wahlers" clearly legible.

Dr. Gerhard Wahlers
Deputy Secretary General

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