



EUROPEAN UNION  
Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe

## **Weekly Media Report of developments related to the Council of Europe** **11 - 15 January 2016**

The Weekly Media Report gives an overview of recent news in international media. Please note that the Report does not constitute a formal communication, does not represent the official position of the Delegation and does not commit the European Union in any way.

Ce rapport donne un aperçu de nouvelles récentes dans les médias internationaux. Ce rapport n'est pas une communication formelle, ne représente pas la position officielle de la Délégation et n'engage en aucun cas l'Union Européenne.

### **Turkey**

#### **[7 detained in Istanbul suicide bombing as new blast rocks Turkey](#)**

*14/01 – CNN / International*

Seven more people have been detained in connection with this week's suicide bombing in Istanbul's Sultanahmet Square, Turkish Interior Minister Ekan Ala said Thursday. The blast killed 10 German tourists and wounded several other people. "A detailed and sensitive investigation and analysis of the event is ongoing," Ala said. But just as officials tried to reassure nervous tourists, a new blast rocked Turkey -- an attack on a police headquarters in the Cinar district of Turkey's southeastern province of Diyarbakir, Turkey's semiofficial Anadolu Agency reported, citing local officials. At least five people were killed and 39 were wounded in that blast.



## Georgia

### [European rights body says worried by opposition crackdown in Georgia](#)

*12/01 – Reuters / International*

The Council of Europe told Georgia on Tuesday to improve its justice system, saying it was worried by allegations the authorities were abusing the law to conduct a politically-motivated crackdown on the opposition. The criticism from the pan-European human rights body comes at a sensitive time for Georgia as it seeks to boost its drive to move closer to NATO and the European Union after Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea in 2014. Georgia fought and lost a brief war with Russia in 2008 that ended with Moscow tightening its control over two breakaway Georgian regions and it is keen to court the West as a potential counter-balance to Russian influence.

## Azerbaijan

### [Government approves new NGO law](#)

*11/01 - The Economist, Intelligence Unit / International*

On December 4th the government approved legislation tightening the operating environment for non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The move has been criticised by international NGOs and by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). On December 8th the PACE released a draft resolution criticising Azerbaijan and the other former Soviet states that have introduced similar restrictions on foreign NGOs this year (Russia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan) stating that the policy had a "chilling effect" on civil society. Under the new legislation foreign donors who wish to provide financing to NGOs operating in Azerbaijan must apply to the government and secure the right to make the grant. Grant agreements concluded with the Azerbaijani government will be exempt.

## **Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)**

### [Czechs to sign convention to combat violence against women](#)

*12/01 – Prague Post / The Czech Republic*

Laws will have to be changed to offer more protection before the convention can be ratified. The Czech government this year should sign the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, according to Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Minister Jiří Dienstbier (Social Democrats, ČSSD). He said the government should sign by the middle of this year and complete ratification by 2018. "We're trying to process its implementation into Czech law as quickly as possible.



EUROPEAN UNION  
Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe

## European Court of Human Rights

### [Hungary anti-terror spy law breaches privacy: European rights court](#)

*13/01 – AFP - EurActiv / International*

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on Tuesday (12 January) rapped Hungary over its anti-terror surveillance legislation, saying a 2011 law could be used against "virtually anyone", trampling Hungarians' right to privacy. The Strasbourg-based court was ruling on a complaint brought by two activists from a human rights watchdog, who had unsuccessfully challenged the law before Budapest's constitutional court in 2013. The law permits a police anti-terror cell to intercept and record mail and other communications from suspects and also undertake clandestine surveillance and searches of property. The two complainants argued the legislation was a breach of privacy, a complaint upheld by the ECHR.

### [Europe rights court condemns Turkey for dissolving pro-Kurdish party](#)

*12/01 – AFP - Yahoo News / International*

Europe's top rights court on Tuesday condemned Turkey for dissolving a moderate pro-Kurdish political party in 2009 for alleged ties to PKK rebels, saying the party did not promote violence nor warrant such a severe sanction. The judges ruled that Turkey had violated the right to freedom of assembly and association by ordering the dissolution of the Party for a Democratic Society (DTP), part of the pro-Kurdish left-wing movement, which lost its seats in parliament, the European Court for Human Rights (ECHR) said in a statement. The Turkish government's reasons for dissolving DTP stem from its decades-long battle with rebels of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) who initially sought independence for the Kurdish-majority southeast, but over the years have narrowed their demands to greater autonomy and cultural rights.

### [Private messages at work can be read by European employers](#)

*14/01 – BBC / UK*

Employers can read workers' private messages sent via chat software and webmail accounts during working hours, judges have ruled. The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) said a firm that read a worker's Yahoo Messenger chats sent while he was at work was within its rights. Judges said he had breached the company's rules and that his employer had a right to check on his activities. Such policies must also protect workers against unfettered snooping, they said. The judges, sitting in the ECHR in Strasbourg, handed down their decision on Tuesday. Countries that have ratified the European Convention on Human Rights, which include Britain, have agreed to abide by the ECHR rulings that involve them. The impact on domestic courts differs. Under UK human rights laws, judges must take into account the ECHR's decisions but are not bound by them.



EUROPEAN UNION  
Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe

## **Poland's new media law**

### **[Pologne : manifestations pour défendre les médias publics](#)**

*11/01 - Itele / France*

Varsovie, Gdansk, Wroclaw, Cracovie, Poznan... Dans toute la Pologne, des dizaines de milliers de Polonais sont descendus dans la rue samedi 9 janvier pour protester contre la loi sur les médias publics, promulguée jeudi. Un texte qui soumet la télévision et la radio publiques au contrôle du gouvernement conservateur, victorieux des législatives d'octobre. Dès vendredi, soit 24 heures après la promulgation de la loi, le ministre du Trésor polonais Jacek Kurski a remplacé les dirigeants de l'audiovisuel public. Pour l'opposition polonaise, toutes tendances confondues, ce texte est une étape supplémentaire dans la prise de contrôle des leviers du pouvoir par les conservateurs. Le commissaire aux droits de l'homme du Conseil de l'Europe Nils Muznieks ainsi que plusieurs organisations internationales, dont Reporters sans frontières, avaient appelé à ne pas promulguer cette loi.

## **Germany**

### **[Germany to speed up deportations after Cologne attacks](#)**

*12/01 – Reuters / International*

German ministers outlined plans on Tuesday to speed up the deportation of foreigners who commit crimes, responding to sexual attacks on women by migrants in Cologne which have deepened doubts about the country's open-door refugee policy. The assaults on New Year's Eve, which are the subject of an ongoing investigation, have emboldened right-wing groups and unsettled members of Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative party, raising pressure on her to crack down forcefully on migrants who commit crimes.

## **France**

### **[Council of Europe sees French state of emergency risks](#)**

*12/01 – AFP - Yahoo News / International*

Strasbourg (France) (AFP) - France's decision to install a state of emergency following the deadly November 13 attacks in Paris could constitute a "threat" to democracy, a European Council human rights observer said Tuesday. "We are looking very closely at what is happening" in France, Council human rights commissioner Nils Muiznieks said. "There is a risk that these measures could sap the system of democratic control," if for instance police armed with executive rather than judicial orders carry out searches, Muiznieks told France Culture radio. "We are seeing a certain drift," he added, citing concerns over ethnic profiling of suspects facing police searches and the "forces of repression."



EUROPEAN UNION  
Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe

## Net Neutrality

### [Council of Europe Sets Out Net Neutrality Guidelines for Broadband ISPs](#)

*14/01 - ISP Review / International*

The Council of Europe has today issued a set of “network neutrality guidelines” that call for mobile and broadband providers to treat Internet traffic equally, without discrimination or restriction, and for member states (e.g. UK) to support this via the “development of national legal frameworks“. The new guidelines follow last year’s agreement to introduce a new Net Neutrality law (here), although this time around the language appears to be somewhat stricter. Never the less there are still some caveats, such as to allow Internet security services (anti-spam/virus filtering etc.), support websites blocked via court orders and for general traffic management measures (when needed to tackle network congestion).

**You can receive this newsletter by email if you subscribe to our mailing list.** To subscribe / to unsubscribe from the mailing list, please send an e-mail to [DELEGATION-STRASBOURG-1@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:DELEGATION-STRASBOURG-1@eeas.europa.eu)

**Vous pouvez recevoir cette lettre d'information par email si vous vous inscrivez sur notre liste de distribution.** Pour s'inscrire / se désinscrire de la liste, il suffit d'envoyer un courriel à [DELEGATION-STRASBOURG-1@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:DELEGATION-STRASBOURG-1@eeas.europa.eu)