

The new US presidency – thoughts on EU concerns

After the US Presidential result here are some brief thoughts on some of immediate potential policy concerns of a Trump presidency from a European Union perspective. The points below are made with some very important caveats.

Firstly, we do not know what Trump intends to do in his presidency and everything he said during the campaign was directed toward winning the election. And as a few people who have been close to him have [suggested](#), Trump may not even know what he intends to do himself.

Secondly, governing is very different from campaigning for office, as Barack Obama also discovered with regard to, for example, closing Guantanamo. Probably the checks and balances in the system and the realities of governing will reign in Trump's wilder tendencies. The US Senate will also have a lot to say on the making and breaking of treaties.

1. EU defence and external security policy

This will be an area where the US is could be less engaged and present in future. Trump's isolationist tendencies and his [conditional support for NATO](#) may give the EU greater incentive to seriously develop its own foreign and defence policy doctrine. Following on from the post-Brexit [commitments made in Bratislava](#) by the EU27 in September, the European Council will meet in early December 2016 to discuss the detail of plans to "strengthen EU cooperation on external security and defence".

2. EU Multilateralism and TTIP

After Donald [Trump's attack on trade](#) and globalisation we could be entering a different EU/US trading phase, with the US adopting a far more "US centric" approach. If it didn't before, TTIP really does look dead in the water now. Beyond the problems that the EU would have in agreeing and ratifying a TTIP deal - as a "mixed agreement" ratification is no longer an exclusive EU competency and approval is required by all parliaments within the EU - the biggest problems may now come from the US side where a Republican Congress could quickly sink any deal; the lack of Presidential enthusiasm for TTIP will not help this. The EU will have to be more unified and find more compelling arguments to push a multilateral governance and trade approach.

3. The environment and climate action

[Trump thinks man made climate change is a fiction](#) and has said he would "cancel the Paris Climate Agreement and stop all payments of US tax dollars to UN Global warming programmes". This makes the future of the international COP21 agreement much more fragile. This is a difficult outcome for the international fight against climate change and from an EU perspective where the EU has long led on international climate action initiatives. Many experts say that the way in which COP21 agreement was formulated may prevent its cancellation – as could the US senate - but even if this is so, a lack of US presidential passion for the agreement could be very damaging to overall progress.