



## Has the last trump sounded for the transatlantic partnership?

by Ian Bond  
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Donald Trump's combative attitude to America's European allies and partners, and his hostility to international institutions that have underpinned Western stability and prosperity for 70 years, threaten to do lasting damage to the transatlantic relationship. European leaders should try to nudge the US president in more constructive directions, but both sides should also look to reinforce the relationship by intensifying exchanges at other levels. That is the key recommendation in a new paper by the Centre for European Reform which assesses the state of US-Europe relations since Trump entered the White House.

The US and Europe's long running partnership has survived many troubled periods, from the Suez crisis to the invasion of Iraq. But Trump's predecessors were acting in an international context where economic, security, and social factors were pushing Europe and the US closer together. Other factors, such as China's growing international influence, are now helping to widen the Atlantic divide.

In a new policy brief '[Has the last trump sounded for the transatlantic partnership](#)', the CER says that European leaders should not give up on Trump. While they have not yet changed his mind, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel are right to try to sway him, with flattery if need be. Prime Minister Theresa May will have her chance in the summer. Europe and the US also need to reinforce the relationship for the long term, regardless of who may be in the White House. They could do more to invest in educational exchanges, build up links between legislatures, and develop more extensive contacts beyond their respective capitals. They also need to emphasize the importance of transatlantic trade and investment, and to strengthen transatlantic defence in all its forms. At the same time, Europe would be wise to build stronger ties with like-minded democracies and pro-trade countries as a hedging strategy, in case Trump's approach does indeed herald a more permanent shift in US foreign policy.

*"It would be a disaster for Europe and the US if people forgot about enduring interests because they were distracted by the Trump phenomenon. We all need to remind ourselves of the values that bind us together"* said Ian Bond, the director of foreign policy at the CER and author of the paper.

### Note for editors:

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