I.

First legislative elections in the UK after the referendum for Brexit. Theresa May loses the absolute majority. In this program we analyze what could mean a possible agreement between Conservatives and Unionists in Northern Ireland.

The European Central Bank has revised upwards the growth of the Eurozone. The forecast for 2017 is now 1.9%, one tenth above the March analysis. We also look at the purchase of Banco Popular by Santander for 1 Euro.

In this edition: The European Union donates more than 50 million euros for the constitution of new African military force to combat terrorism.

II.

Welcome to the Europe Magazine

"Parliament in suspense". The British call it Hung parliament, which means that none of the political parties represented in parliament have an absolute majority.
This is the scenario in the UK, which went to the polls in the first legislative elections held in the country after the referendum of Brexit.
Prime Minister Theresa May won the vote but lost the parliamentary majority.
Elected 318 deputies, it was without 13 mandates.
In the face of the results, the leader of the Conservatives even made an apology.

Theresa May:
[I wanted to reach an absolute majority, but that was not the result we got and I'm sorry for all the hard-hitting party candidates and workers who did not succeed. I also especially regret the colleagues who were members of the parliament and ministers and who contributed so much to our country and who lost their places without deserving it]

But even without the parliamentary majority, May visited Queen Elizabeth II and proposed the formation of Government.
The novelty is that the Unionist Democratic Party of Northern Ireland has already said it agrees to support the future Conservative executive in parliament with the ten deputies he has elected.
As for the Labor party, headed by Jeremy Corbyn, it reached the second place, with the election of 262 mandates. It represents an increase of 30 seats compared to the last parliamentary elections.
For Corbyn, Theresa May lost the confidence of the British.

Jeremy Corbyn:
[The prime minister called for the elections because she wanted a mandate. The

mandate he received is the loss of conservative seats, loss of votes, loss of support and confidence. I think it would be enough for her to actually go out and make room for a government, really representative of all the people in this country.]

Meanwhile, the European Commission has already said that it is "anxiously waiting" for negotiations to begin for Brexit. Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European executive, said he hoped "there will be no further delays in the conclusion of the negotiations".
German Chancellor Angela Merkel also said that Berlin is ready to begin the round of negotiations.

Angela Merkel: [We want to respect the timetable for negotiations and therefore I do not believe that there is any obstacle at present to ensuring that these negotiations are not completed as it should be for the 27 members of the European Union and the European institutions. I did not hear the opposite from the UK]

On the telephone, from Brussels, we have the resident commentator of Magazine Europe, Victor Ângelo, an international consultant based in the Belgian capital.

ME: Victor, in relation to these legislative ones, it can be said that Theresa May won but not convinced?

Victor Ângelo: That's true. Theresa May comes out of these June 8 elections as a weakened, deeply contested leader, both within her party and with public opinion and the British electorate. And everyone says that Theresa May is a leader with a very short shelf life, that is, it is very likely that a new leader of the Conservatives will soon appear, and therefore a new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and very Likely new elections.

ME: The Unionist Democratic Party of Northern Ireland is the unexpected protagonist in this scenario, with a possibility of an agreement. What price will Theresa May have to pay to stay in the government?

Victor Ângelo: She will have to constantly strive for balance between the very controversial personalities who are the great personalities of her own party and, moreover, will have to come to an agreement with a party, which is the unionist party of Northern Ireland, The DUP, which is an evangelical party, a very traditional party, to some extent considered a racist and sexist party. It will probably have to make concessions with regard to the border area between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and certainly also in relation to other aspects related to the Brexit agreement with the European Union.

ME: In these elections, Labor was the one that grew the most. Is this seen as a victory for Corbyn and for European social democracy?

Victor Ângelo:
The people saw in Jeremy Corbin someone who was responding to the big questions that are currently being asked, such as health questions, what will happen to the health system, considerations about inequalities on employment issues and in particular youth employment and Issues of solidarity. He answered these questions in a clear and convincing way and to some extent this will convey to the European Social Democratic parties the idea that a new type of language is needed, a language very close to the daily concerns of the populations and also a language that allows Give hope and combat precariousness, lack of solidarity and lack of perspective.

ME: Can these results influence Brexit's discussions?

Victor Ângelo: Negotiations between the UK and the European Union on Brexit will start on 19 June, that is, within days. They will begin at a time when the political situation in Britain is extremely confused and, in addition, precarious, fragile. In other words, it will be very difficult for the European Union to have a clear-sided interlocutor on the other side of the table and this of course makes negotiation difficult for both sides.

And on Sunday the first round of the French legislative elections was also held. The movement "The Republic in March", the party of the newly elected president Emmanuel Macron won 32% of the vote.
In second place were the Republicans, following the National Front of Marine Le Pen.
Abstention was around 50%. It is the highest rate of the last fifty years.
The second round is scheduled for the 18th of this month.

III.

And the European Central Bank upgraded growth forecasts in the Euro Zone and lowered inflation expectations.
The institution chaired by Mário Draghi made it known that, by 2017, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the Euro Zone is expected to grow by 1.9% instead of the previous 1.8%.
Estimates for next year have already gone up to 1.8%, up one tenth from the previous forecast.
For 2019, it is expected to grow by 1.7% instead of 1.6.

Also according to the European Central Bank, changes in the inflation figures are also foreseen. For 2017, inflation is estimated at 1.5%. For 2018 it is 1.3% and in 2019 it is 1.6%.
In March, the European Central Bank had anticipated inflation of 1.7% for 2017, from 1.6% for the following year and 1.7% for 2019.

ME: Victor, we started with the forecasts of the European Central Bank. Further growth in the Euro Zone, a drop in inflation. They are good news?

Victor Ângelo: The European Central Bank has played a very important role in economic growth by facilitating the purchase of bonds from member states and large corporations, ie the European Central Bank has bought bonds at a rate of € 80 billion State and business. (...) The other comments that must be made are about the difficulties that still exist in the European economies. (...) One of them has to do with the financial health of the banks and what happened this week with Banco Popular shows that there is a problem with some of the big European banks. The second major issue is the question of unemployment, which continues to be at high rates, especially youth unemployment, and the third issue concerns political risks and in particular the fact that we are likely to have short-term elections in Italy and that the outcome of these elections could jeopardize European integration and in particular Italy's participation in the joint text.

ME: Mentioned Banco Popular ... The bank was on its way to bankruptcy and was bought by Santander for 1 euro. How do you view this acquisition?

Victor Ângelo: The Popular Bank is a clear example of how the construction crisis and poorly-timed loans invested in megalomaniac projects could lead to bank failure. Banco Popular was an important bank, had been created by Opus Dei, (...) based its operations on a network of influences, granted immense credits based on relationships, influences, friendships and evidently these credits were invested in projects Of civil construction that today if we pass through Spain and travel by car from one side to the other, we see hundreds and hundreds of these projects. And when I say hundreds, I'm not exaggerating, half built and totally stuck. That is, this is what led Banco Popular to go bankrupt.
The purchase by Banco Santander was a bold purchase, but in reality allows to continue to operate the network that was linked to the Banco Popular and that allowed above all to introduce an element of calm in the Spanish banking markets.

IV.

And with the theme of terrorism on the agenda ... The European Union will donate more than 50 million euros to a new African force in the Sahel region. This force will be made up of about 10,000 soldiers and police officers and is expected to be operational by the end of this year. Journalist André Jegundo.

The European Union will donate about 50 million euros to the creation of a military counter-terrorism force in the Sahel region.
The new joint force of some 10,000 troops will also serve to combat transnational organized crime and illegal immigration. This was highlighted by EU diplomat Federica Mogherini in the capital of Mali.

Consisting of a contingent of Mauritania, Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso and Niger, known as the Sahel G5, this force is expected to start operating by the end of the year.
The Sahel region is home to several Islamist groups, some in line with al-Qaeda.
More than 3,000 French and 12,000 UN troops have been stationed in Mali since 2013, when there was a military insurgency in the north of the country.
The militants would eventually be defeated, but the region remained the scene of sporadic assaults on peacekeepers in the northern and central regions.
This is one of the most dangerous missions the UN has at hand, with about 115 members dead in four years.
Violence has also spread to border areas .... to Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire, with tourists being targeted by the attacks.

ME: Victor, EU diplomat Federica Moguerini, said that "the stability and development of the Sahel region is not only crucial for Africa, but also for Europe". What impact could such a force have on the European continent?

Victor Ângelo: The Sahel is a neighboring region of southern Europe. A region very close to Italy, very close to Spain (...) and has also been an area where immigration candidates who try to cross the Mediterranean, ie from the point of view of neighborhood and the point of view Of migration, the Sahel is a particularly important area for the European Union.

ME: The European Union that has been involved in the stabilization of Mali for many years in one of the organization's most dangerous missions. In practical terms, what contribution has Europe made in this country?

Victor Angelo: The situation in Mali led to the intervention of European forces not only in Mali but also in the Sahel. (...) We have witnessed, in spite of the presence of European forces, a worsening of security conditions throughout the Sahel, especially in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and now Mauritania and southern Sudan. Algeria, without forgetting the serious situation in Libya. This worsening of the situation led Europeans to think that a European presence in the region would not suffice. It was important to build an armed force from the countries of the region and so there is now a very strong effort on the part of Europeans to bring together Mauritania, Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso and Niger together A number of military personnel and constitute an operational force capable of combating terrorism.

ME: And what are the difficulties of this new project?

Victor Ângelo: This project is an extremely ambitious project and, to a certain extent, for those who know the region well, a project with many difficulties to succeed, since the majority of the military in these countries do not have operational conditions, they have no motivation , Have no means of combat, are not organized as they should be, have no military preparation, that is, everything must be done from scratch and this

will require a very large investment.

ME: And how is this combat organized in the desert? What means have been used to have positive results?

Victor Ângelo: There are two ways that are fundamental at the moment, but they are not enough. These two means are the use of drones, on the one hand, and the use of helicopters. Both are strongly in the hands of Europeans and especially in the hands of the French. (...) The transfer of the operational possibility of them to use drones and helicopters is not very big, because they do not have the financial conditions to fly the helicopters at the moment ... and the drones demand high costs. (...) On the other hand, we still have the idea that many of these terrorist groups operating in the Sahel operate in the desert and the inhospitable mountains that separate northern Mali from Algeria, for example, but the reality is that There is at present a very large infiltration of radical and extremist elements in the areas south of the Sahel, that is, in areas where populations are sedentary. We see in these zones the penetration of radical preachers who have settled among the populations, that is, it will be very difficult to distinguish between these preachers and the populations and this requires a work of intelligence, a police work, which at the moment is not Foreseen in this operation, in this project that the European Union is going to work.

V.

And we closed today's issue with a cultural note:
The exhibition "Bread and Roses", a partnership between the European Trade Union Institute and the Meta-Morphosis Editions, opens its doors this Thursday in Brussels.
This is a selection of imaginary union posters from the years 2036 and 2037. The works are part of a book of the same name, also to be released on that day.
To understand this name, it is necessary to retreat until New Year's Eve of 1912, when textile workers from Lawrence, Massachussets, went on strike. A few days ago a new law passed reduced working hours from 56 to 54 hours for women and under 18. There was also a wage cut.
The action was known as Greve 'Bread and Roses'. "Bread" which means bread, symbolized the labor law, "roses" means roses - represented the demand for better living conditions.
The book Bread & Roses tells the story of the Belgian trade union movement. It is divided into two parts: the history of social and union struggles in the country. It is also an exercise in imagination, which has led 40 Belgian and other artists to fantasize the future of union posters.
The exhibition will be held until 7 July at the Documentation Center of the European Trade Union Institute.
See you next week.

[Datasheet]

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