



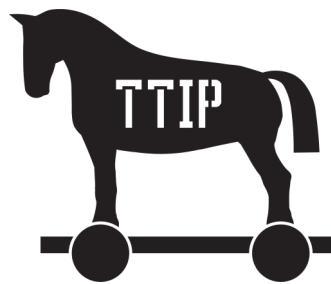
Will trade trump well-being?

In brief

The EU is negotiating a free trade deal called TTIP with the US and has finalised another with Canada. Both include provisions to protect investors through private tribunals - and it has also been proposed that TTIP include pre-screening of legislation by industrial representatives. However, our national governments should be much more concerned to promote citizens' well-being, including living wages and an economy which does not exceed the planet's capacity to support it.

The EU is promoting [free trade agreements](#) as a way of remaining a key player in a world with the majority of the population living outside of Europe. Two very large free trade deals are among those being negotiated or prepared for ratification. These are the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the US, and the recently concluded [Comprehensive Trade and Economic Agreement \(CETA\) with Canada](#).

The rationale given for removing trade barriers is that we will become wealthier, at least in terms of Gross Domestic Product per capita. Any prediction is only as good as the model used, and the models used by the European Commission have been questioned by independent economists. For example, a different assessment using the United Nations Global Policy Model published by [a research fellow at Tufts University](#) has come up with very different predictions, including job losses and reductions in wages in Europe.



TTIP: a Trojan horse
Openclipart by Worker

So, first of all, the driving assumption, that more trade will be a boon to Europe, may not hold true if competition brings down wages. And we must not forget that trade demands natural resources, whether metals or trees or energy in carbon. We know we cannot continue our high impact lifestyles on this planet - the only one we have - and yet this is exactly what the TTIP and CETA aim to promote.

Dirty fuels

Some of the work being done at the moment in the European Parliament (EP) includes reports which are being considered by various committees. The [Industry, Research, and Energy Committee](#), for example, has received a report that summarises: "TTIP will improve the EU's security of energy supply through adding liquidity and competition to the natural gas market". This all sounds good until one realises that the predicted export capability of the US gas producers is due to the expansion of shale gas extraction in parts of the US, and the report outlines that fewer shale wells are being developed because the price has dropped. Thus, the shale gas production in the US, associated with air and water pollution, is predicted to be re-stimulated by this agreement.

[A related report for the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee](#) notes that, although there are areas in which environmental regulations do not differ or differ due to the approaches to risk assessment (the EU uses the precautionary principle), areas such as those dealing with fuel and shale gas, are not under binding regulation and so it is expected that "convergences may be easier to achieve". For example, the EU's [Fuel Quality Directive](#) sets carbon-intensity reduction goals for fuel used in the EU. It has not been extended beyond 2020, and so it is vulnerable to being scrapped or weakened. We cannot hide from the fact that

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climate change is one of the most important issues facing us today. And yet, for some people, trade is sufficient reason for abandoning the steps already taken to incorporate consideration of carbon “cost” into fuel choice. At risk is our choice to refuse to support tar sands production and fracking: our choice to try to live sustainably.

Who has rights?

One of the consequences of the unbalanced promotion of trade, is that the investor may seem in need of protection. CETA, and the TTIP mandate, include [Investor State Dispute Settlement \(ISDS\) mechanisms](#) - private tribunals through which investors can sue for loss of expected profits due to legislation. Famous examples include claims against environmental treaties and cigarette packaging rules. [The arguments for ISDS are that governments may not give sufficient priority to the trade agreement](#) and ensure transposition into law. That is, that law may be designed for reasons beyond trade - like public health or environmental protection. Surely indeed that is why we seek to have governments we can trust to look after the public interest?

ISDS creates a special legal system for foreign investors, while domestic investors can only turn to the courts. And it is in stark contrast to the EU's stance on human rights in business: they are against a proposal for a legally binding instrument safeguarding human rights in business, saying voluntary principles are sufficient. Are we truly more concerned about protecting the rights of investors from governments than we are about ensuring corporations know they must safeguard human rights?

In 2014, the European Commission issued [a call for public input about ISDS](#). It is unlikely that they expected [150,000 responses](#) when European Commission consultations usually elicit some dozens of responses. Consultation responses came from a wide variety of people, including individuals, NGOs, trade unions, and businesses, and nearly all rejected ISDS. And yet this clear public statement seems to be at risk of being ignored. We are told that ISDS already exists

in other agreements. [This is true](#) - and one source of the knowledge that it is dangerous. A review of the Dutch treaties that include ISDS has come up with [many cautionary tales](#). Even the [EP Committee on Culture and Education](#) specifically requests that the

European Commission refrain from including the ISDS system in TTIP, noting that both parties - the US and the EU - have fully developed legal systems and procedures.

Pre-legislative control

In addition to ISDS, there is also a [proposal to harmonise proposed regulation](#) prior to its adoption by the EU and the US. This “regulatory cooperation” may be a

further way in which investors are offered routes to protecting their interests instead of governments being able to legislate freely to protect their people.

What does your national government want?

The negotiating mandate for TTIP was approved by the European Council (heads of EU Member States' governments) in the summer of 2013 but [only published](#) after an own-initiative investigation by the [European ombudsman](#), who investigates allegations of maladministration in the EU institutions. Her intervention was very helpful: the Commission website now includes [many documents](#) that the public may find of interest.

It wasn't “Brussels” but rather the heads of the Member State governments who approved the TTIP negotiating mandate which included ISDS. And so it is the Member State governments whom we must ask to put the well-being of all citizens first, to refuse to free international trade from the “restraints” of human rights and environmental protection. Let us call for CETA with ISDS not to be ratified as expected by late 2016. Let us together develop economies which build a world for people, not just to help make the wealthy wealthier.

Alexandra Bosbeer

Read more about TTIP on the QCEA website
www.qcea.org/t/ttip/
 and on our blog at qceablog.wordpress.com/tag/ttip/

“...[T]he United Nations Global Policy Model ... incorporates more sensible assumptions on macroeconomic adjustment, employment dynamics, and global trade. We project that TTIP will lead to a contraction of GDP, personal incomes and employment. We also project an increase in financial instability and a continuing downward trend in the labor share of GDP.”
 – Tufts University economist Jeronim Capaldo



Armed drones and the European Union

In brief

Armed drones are remote-controlled flying robots that carry and fire weapons. To date, armed drones have mainly been used by the US, Israel, and the UK – although many other countries are developing this military technology. For more than a decade, the European Union (EU) institutions in Brussels have been supporting the development of armed drones by EU Member States. However, last year the European Parliament passed a resolution expressing serious concerns about armed drones. It is not yet clear whether this resolution will lead to a change in EU policy.

What are armed drones?

In recent years the armed drone has emerged as a technology capable of changing the way wars are fought in the twenty-first century. This technology was [previously discussed in *Around Europe in October 2012*](#), and yet it is important enough to be worth examining again.

A [drone](#) is a flying robot controlled remotely by someone stationed on the ground.⁽¹⁾ Drones are used for many purposes, including [aerial photography](#), [spraying crops with pesticides](#), and [military surveillance](#). However, the drones that are of most concern to QCEA are armed drones – drones that carry and fire weapons (normally missiles or bombs).



A drone firing a missile
Photo credit: Lance Mans

Armed drones of the kind that exist today were first [developed](#) by the US Air Force around the turn of the twenty-first century. A government that possesses these sophisticated, lethal flying robots can launch aerial attacks without risking the lives of its own combatants. The human cost of drone attacks is all but invisible to the population of the attacking country. This inevitably makes violence [a more attractive option](#) for armed-drone-possessing governments than it otherwise would be.

Who is using armed drones?

Apart from the US, only Israel and the UK use armed drones on a large scale. The US remains the country that makes the most use of armed drones, using them to kill suspected Islamist militants in countries including Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Syria, and Yemen. The US's [stated policy](#) is to target Al-Qaeda and allied Islamist groups, whether they are found in war zones or elsewhere. Israel also uses armed drones: for the most part, Israel has used them to fire on Gaza, as part of Israel's conflict with the Islamist militant group Hamas.

The UK uses armed drones in close cooperation with the US, also to kill suspected Islamist militants. As well as operating its own fleet of armed drones, the UK has been known to operate armed drones belonging to the US. However, the UK has never operated armed drones in as many countries as the US. The UK used armed drones to launch attacks in Afghanistan until withdrawing from Afghanistan last year, and since then the UK has been using them to launch attacks in Iraq. While the UK has also flown armed drones over Libya and (recently) Syria, there are no reports of UK-operated drones firing weapons in either of those countries.

Drone strikes have been widely criticised, not only by [peace activists](#) and [human rights organisations](#), but also by [the European Parliament](#), and (during the last few weeks) by [a committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe](#).⁽²⁾ Critics focus on the many civilian casualties of drone strikes, and on concerns that some drone strikes may involve serious breaches of international law (for example, breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which requires a distinction to be made between combatants and civilians). Apart from this, the long-term presence of armed drones flying over a country is [highly distressing for the inhabitants](#), producing a climate of fear that disrupts daily life.

(1) The term "drone" is also sometimes used for other kinds of mobile robot (land-based drones, underwater drones). However, in this article the term is used in its most usual sense, to mean "flying robot".

(2) The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is an international body consisting of members of national parliaments from forty-seven European countries. The Council of Europe is completely independent of the EU.



There is a lack of transparency as to the effects of the use of armed drones, especially when it comes to civilian casualty figures. A 2013 United Nations report found that the US's drone strikes had killed at least 400 civilians in Pakistan alone since 2004, but that this figure was probably an underestimate. The same report stated that there had been “many” civilian casualties from Israel's drone strikes on Gaza, but it did not give an exact figure. We have no reliable civilian casualty estimates for Afghanistan or Iraq, so we do not know how many civilians have been killed by the UK's drone strikes.

In addition to the three main armed-drone-using countries, Iran announced in September last year that it has armed drones in its arsenal. In the same month, the Shiite Islamist militant group Hezbollah attacked Sunni Islamist militants with armed drones, which Hezbollah may have obtained from Iran. Hamas has also claimed to have armed drones. This may be a taste of the future – armed drones are expected to proliferate. According to a report published last year by the RAND Corporation (a think tank with links to the US military), 23 countries have armed-drone development programmes. Moreover, some experts are warning that we may soon see the development of fully autonomous armed drones. With a fully autonomous armed drone, a computer would decide where and when to fire the drone's weapons.

Armed drones and EU politics

At present the EU is promoting the development of armed drones. It is difficult to know the full extent of the EU's involvement in this – the details are kept secret, and it is important to remember that not all research into drone technology relates to armed drones. However, the evidence points to extensive EU involvement.

Much of the initiative here has come from the European Defence Agency (EDA), the semi-independent EU body set up to facilitate military cooperation between EU Member States. The EDA has been promoting the development of drones ever since

Countries with armed-drone development programmes

China	France	Germany	Greece
Italy	India	Iran	Israel
Lebanon	North Korea	Pakistan	Russia
South Africa	South Korea	Spain	Sweden
Switzerland	Taiwan	Tunisia	Turkey
United Arab Emirates	United Kingdom	United States	

Source: Lynn E. Davis et al. (2014) *Armed and Dangerous?*, RAND Corporation

2004, the year of its foundation. There is evidence that so far the EDA has facilitated drone development costing more than 100 million euro (mostly paid for out of national military budgets). In November 2013 the EDA oversaw the creation of a so-called “drone club”, consisting of France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, and Spain. These seven countries agreed to work together more closely on drone development. The following month a meeting of the European Council (that is, a meeting of all the EU national heads of government) publicly endorsed the EDA's plans to continue to promote drone development.



Protesting against drone strikes

Photo credit: Debra Sweet

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At the same time the European Commission has been using EU research funds to subsidise arms companies' drone research. Technically, EU law prohibits the use of EU research funds to subsidise military research, but there is a legal loophole that allows the Commission to subsidise what is called “dual-use research”: research that has both

military and non-military applications. For some years (going back at least as far as 2001) the Commission has been using this loophole to justify subsidising arms companies' research into drone technology. It remains unclear exactly how much EU money has been spent in this way.

However, not everyone in EU politics supports the EU's current policy on armed drones. On 27 February 2014 the European Parliament passed, by an overwhelming



majority, a [resolution expressing serious concerns about armed drones](#). In this resolution, the Parliament called for certain restrictions on the use of armed drones, for a complete ban on fully autonomous armed drones, and for the EU to support multilateral drone disarmament. The Parliament also asked the Council of the EU (a body consisting of ministers from EU national governments, meeting together in Brussels to make joint decisions) to adopt a formal policy statement on armed drones. Apart from this, the Parliament asked the European Commission to be open with MEPs about the use of EU funds to subsidise drone research, and to conduct a formal human rights impact assessment before subsidising any more drone research.

Looking to the future

As of the time of writing neither the Council of the EU nor the Commission has made any public response to the Parliament's resolution. This is of great concern, for if the matter is not followed up appropriately then the resolution may be quietly “forgotten”.

Since the resolution was passed last February some of the key decision-makers in Brussels have been replaced: there were elections for a new Parliament last May, and new European Commissioners took office

last November. It is unclear what position the new Commissioners will take on armed drones, or whether the new set of MEPs will pursue the concerns expressed by the previous set of MEPs.

While the Parliament has no direct control over military affairs, it could still exert an influence – not only through moral pressure, but also through its powers over the EU budget. The Commission is [planning](#) to launch a new research funding scheme (probably to start in 2017) specifically to fund military research, but would require the Parliament's approval to go ahead with this. MEPs could use this as leverage to push for changes to the EU's policy on armed drones.

There is a great deal at stake here. This is not only about the EU institutions' attitude to an increasingly important military technology – it is also about the broader issue of what the EU stands for. In spite of the fact that European integration was originally a [peace project](#), in recent years the EU has become [increasingly militarised](#). Over the next few years, we will see whether the EU institutions continue to pursue a purely militaristic policy on armed drones, or whether they are willing to take account of widely shared concerns.

Tim Harman

QUAKER HOUSE DIARY

9 December: Andrew spoke to students from Dutch and French universities about European Union security policy and our peace advocacy.

16 December: QCEA hosted members of the Human Rights and Democracy Network and EU officials for their Christmas party and networking event.

9 January: Alexandra attended briefings about Israel and Palestine at the European External Action Service, the European Union's foreign service.

19 January: In coordination with the Quaker United Nations Office, Andrew presented a Quaker perspective to EU officials as they prepared their contribution to the UN peace operations review.

21 January: Alexandra and colleagues from the Human Rights and Democracy Network launched an informal 'friends of human rights' group with MEPs who had signed the [stand4humanrights.org](#) pledge.

26-30 January: Alexandra represented QCEA at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) international non-governmental organisation forum and was interviewed for a podcast by the Council of Europe.

30 January: Tim participated in a meeting of the Brussels Group on Arms Transfer, known as BeeGees.

Staff at QCEA: Alexandra Bosbeer, Tim Harman, Andrew Lane, Gordon Matthews, George Thurley.



“Everyone should sit for half an hour a day in silence, unless they are too busy, in which case they should sit for an hour.” – Zen proverb

Hate crime: what if only 1 in 4000 is reported?

In brief

Criminal acts in which the perpetrator is thought to have been motivated by a hatred for people of a particular characteristic are known as hate crimes. These crimes are usually either violence or criminal damage. Victims can be targeted because of the perpetrator’s perception of their disability, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other characteristic. These are very personal parts of a person’s identity. It is not surprising that hate crime can have a big impact on victims, who sometimes live in fear of being targeted because of a characteristic which they should not have to hide, and often cannot. Recent examples of hate crime in Europe include [violence toward Jewish people on their way to the synagogue](#), and [a man with a visible disability being attacked in the street and suffering brain damage](#).

In the European Union 63,158 hate crimes were recorded by officials in 2013, the most recent year for which data is available. However, it is widely known that most victims do not report the crime to the police or any other organisation. This can be because the characteristics for which a victim is targeted often means they will be part of a social group that is marginalised in other ways. For example, their social group may have a long history of being ignored or mistreated by officials, and they may associate the police and criminal justice system with prejudice and violence.

Population surveys are a more reliable way of gathering information about how much crime takes place, but they are rarely undertaken. Every year the United Kingdom conducts [a crime survey of England and Wales](#), using a large sample size of 50,000 people. It consistently estimates that 278,000 hate crimes take place each year amongst the 56 million people living in England and Wales. If similar levels of hate crime take

place across the European Union then we might estimate 2.5 million hate crimes each year. Different demographics and different social attitudes across the EU’s 28 Member States make it difficult to generalise, but if the UK has an average level of hate crime for an EU country, it could be that only one hate crime in every four thousand is reported.

It is clear that the number of hate crimes recorded is very different from the number that occur. For example, [Hungary only recorded 48 hate crimes in 2013](#), a country (of 10 million people) where the far-right Jobbik party came second in last year’s elections and local civil society groups report [widespread abuses](#). Similarly, [Greece reported only 109 hate crimes](#), which is nevertheless a significant increase compared with the previous four years, when a total of only five hate crimes were recorded.

What is the EU doing?

In November 2013 EU Member States agreed [“Council \[of the EU\] conclusions on combating hate crime”](#). Member States agreed to encourage victims to report hate crime to officials and to implement accurate recording of hate crime. In response to these Council Conclusions the EU’s [Fundamental Rights Agency](#) has established a Working Party on Improving Reporting and Recording of Hate Crime in the EU. It involves 27 of the 28 Member States, the European Commission, and other international organisations. Member States send officials with responsibility for hate crime from government ministries, prosecutors’ offices, and police trainers.

The [Working Party](#) met for a [preparatory seminar in April 2014 in Greece](#) and agreed its priorities as: (1) “Encouraging victims to report and improving recording of hate crime”; (2) “enhancing multi-agency partnerships”; and (3) “training for law enforcement and criminal justice staff”.

Sign up for our action alerts!

QCEA occasionally issues calls to take action to influence European policy on peace, human rights, Palestine and Israel, sustainability, or economic justice. We provide background information and a model email or letter. Consider signing up for our action alerts! Email your topics of interest and country of citizenship (and country of residence if different) to Gordon at office@qcea.org.



(1) Encouraging victims to report and improving recording of hate crime

As mentioned above, there is a real absence of trust in police and criminal justice officials among minority communities. Solving this problem will require major changes in the way communities in Europe are policed and how their criminal justice systems operate. We must work for a cultural shift away from militarised forms of policing that are evident in many European countries, toward a social service style of policing that works in cooperation with the community. Police services that include people from all parts of the community and involve the community in their daily work will be better able to recognise a hate motive when recording and investigating crimes. Police services that work with the community to prevent crime and meet minority communities on a regular basis are also more likely to be trusted by victims of hate crime. Together this should help to improve the reporting and recording of hate crime.

Awareness-raising campaigns are also important: they indicate that public services will take hate crime seriously, influencing potential victims, witnesses and officials alike. For example, [Poland's online campaign](#) informs minority communities how to report hate crime. Similarly, in 2015 a national radio, television and social media campaign will be launched in the Netherlands to encourage the reporting of hate crime.



Photo credit: judylcrook

Recent QCEA publications

- A [background paper](#) on the European Institute of Peace (available at www.qcea.org).
- An action alert asking Quakers to ask their MEPs to support the recognition of Palestinian statehood.
- An action alert asking Quakers to [write to the European Commission](#) to ask them not to scrap their own good work on proposals to make the economy less wasteful.

(2) Enhancing multi-agency partnerships

The inaugural meeting of the Working Party took place in November 2014 and gave special attention to “third-party” reporting mechanisms – through which victims of hate crime can report a crime to a trusted civil society organisation. These mechanisms are useful as a means of providing a safe way for victims to access the police. However, the Working Party should consider whether to recommend more radical criminal justice reform to EU Member States. European policy makers and advocates often seek to promote enhanced penalties for perpetrators to Member States. However, we should consider whether restorative justice approaches would meet the needs of victims better.

Restorative justice is an alternative to retributive criminal justice policies, such as prison. Restorative justice places the victim at the centre of a process which asks the perpetrator to be accountable to the victim, and can involve making reparations or undertaking voluntary work for the victim. These approaches are also more beneficial as regards the rehabilitation of the perpetrator, who avoids the damage caused by prison, but who also has to face up to what he or she has done.

(3) Training for law enforcement and criminal justice staff

The Working Party's third priority will encourage training for police and criminal justice officials to recognise hate crime. Officials will need knowledge and skills, but there will also need to be a change of culture within police services. [QCEA's previous work on racism in policing](#) suggested that police officers should themselves be asked to teach about human rights to minority communities and schools. A similar approach



could be taken to hate crime training, to encourage police to feel some ownership of efforts to address hate crime, whilst simultaneously providing an opportunity for contact and bridge-building between police and potential victims of hate crime.

"The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail."
– Article 2, Treaty on European Union

Conclusion

We must not assume that hate crime does not occur in our communities: it will often be invisible. More effort is needed to encourage EU Member States to conduct victimisation surveys to learn about hate crime and what can be done to prevent it. The EU Fundamental Rights Agency should be congratulated on the surveys they have done on assessing the extent of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of hate crime, and we encourage them to continue their efforts.

During Europe's economic crisis there has been an increase in political groups seeking to marginalise parts of society. The EU institutions were formed to help Europe avoid the nationalism of its past and build inclusive societies. Creating a broad coalition against division and hatred in society is important to challenge those politicians who exploit or incite xenophobic fears and prejudices.

Andrew Lane

Did you see our recent background paper on the European Institute of Peace?

The European Institute of Peace was launched in May 2014. It is backed by nine European governments, and its main purpose is to organise mediation and dialogue – including engagement with militant groups. QCEA is pleased to welcome this initiative, and yet we also have some concerns about possible unintended consequences. In particular, there is a risk that the establishment of this new organisation could lead to the diversion of political and financial support away from other, equally important peace initiatives.

To find out more, read our [background paper at www.QCEA.org](http://www.QCEA.org).



Around Europe

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