

Eurozone crisis tops debates at Davos

The shrieks and cries, the swish and swirl of winter sports are the normal sounds which echo across the mountains which surround Davos. Recently, it was the anguished debate on how to tackle the Eurozone debt crisis which was resonating through the ski resort.

It was the top of the political and business leaders' agenda at the World Economic Forum in Davos. Solutions, growth, belief and the legacy for future generations were in the mix.

"We have to have austerity measures, we have to cut back this rocketing budget deficits, because it is not only a problem for this generation; it is a load on the next generation. And we have to do that also by showing to the people that there is light in the tunnel, that there is a hope, that there is a way out. And the biggest wealth Europeans have is this huge market of 500 million potential consumers," said Viviane Reding, European Commission Vice President.

"The Great Transformation — Shaping New Models" was the banner text for this year. Perhaps the words of Jean Monnet would be more appropriate. The Frenchman, considered one of the founding fathers of European unity once predicted, "Europe will be forged in crises, and will be the sum of the solutions adopted for those crises."



Occupy protesters make noise clanking pots in front of the main gate to Davos congress centre

Omnipresent in the background of the World Economic Forum in Davos was the sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone.

The great challenge was to find the ideal balance between on the one hand the necessary fiscal restraint, and on the other, the necessary



EU gets tough on Internet data protection

EU unveils tough new rules on protecting Internet users personal data that have far-reaching implications for Web giants such as Google and Facebook

The proposals would significantly boost regulators' data protection powers. Companies could be fined up to one percent of their global revenues for violating the rules.

Justice Commissioner Viviane Reding said, "Citizens will have to know how their data is processed. Second: a consent to use data will be necessary, to be given the explicit consent by the citizens." The EU said the new system would boost business by simplifying current, diversified rules. The new regime will need to be approved by national governments and the legislative process is likely to take at least two years, so the rules could yet be changed.

Apple shares soar on profit jump

Apple returns to form and adds more lustre to its high tech-crown with quarterly profit that almost doubled

In the run up to Christmas, it sold over 37 million iPhones — its flagship product — and 15.43 iPad tablet computers, doubling from a year earlier. The results removed any doubts about the ability of new Chief Executive Tim Cook to lead the company that Steve Jobs built: Mr. Jobs died in October from cancer.



A customer visits the Apple Store

With quarterly net profit of just over \$13 billion, Apple's shares shot up to a fresh record and the results gave a boost to the technology sector in the US and Europe. Analyst Fidel Helmer of Hauck & Aufhäuser said, "Well, Apple has all these new innovations like the iPhone and the iPad, and people get crazy about these. That's why the Apple share price skyrocketed recently. And that helps our markets and share prices of our IT sectors in Europe."

Sales in the United States were particularly strong, with revenue rising 90 percent in the Americas region. Sales in Europe were up 55 percent despite the debt crisis and low consumer confidence in the region.

Ceausescu memorabilia goes under the hammer

Symbols of corruption and opulence in the final years of communism in Romania put up for auction

The list includes trinkets and lavish gifts given to the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu before his overthrow in 1989. The auction is billed the 'Golden Age', in reference to how communist officials tried to portray what was an era of abject poverty for most Romanians. Auctioneer Mihael Stomff said, "It's an age in Romania's history that cannot be passed over and go unnoticed. We all

passed through it, we all lived it and it's normal to try to remember it as a stage in Romania's development." A bronze yak, presented to Ceausescu by China's Mao Tse Tung and a collection of silver doves — a gift from the Shah of Iran — were among the items due to go under the hammer in Bucharest. Ceausescu was soon to suffer an even harsher fate than the ousted Shah, who died in exile. The Romanian leader's life of luxury came to an abrupt and violent end when he was driven from power and executed on Christmas Day in 1989.

Alex Salmond sets out Scottish referendum test



A woman walks past a tourist shop

Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond outlines his plans for an independence referendum despite opposition from Westminster

There will be a straightforward 'yes' or 'no' question but also a third

option of increased autonomy. And Mr. Salmond wants young people to vote, too.

"If a 16 year old in Scotland can register to join the army, get married and pay taxes, surely he or she should be able to have a say in this country's constitutional future. In our Constitution, we are therefore seeking views on our proposal to extend the right to vote in this referendum to 16 and 17 years olds who are eligible to be included on the electoral register," he told Scottish parliamentarians in Edinburgh.

Recent polls suggest only between 30 and 40 percent of the Scottish electorate support it breaking away from Britain. Others say they are happy for the Scottish Nationalists to lead a devolved government, especially if they can wring more powers from Westminster.



Egyptian people continue to demonstrate in Tahrir Square

Post-revolution Egypt still not at peace with itself

Thousands of Egyptians packed into Tahrir Square to mark the first anniversary of the revolt that brought an end to the three decades rule of Hosni Mubarak

The revolution has exposed divisions in Egyptian society, with each faction laying claim to ownership of the uprising. Youth groups called for the end of military rule, while the Muslim Brotherhood celebrated its recent success in the country's most democratic elections since 1952. Still, Egyptians from across the political spectrum turned out to re-

member the events of January 25th, 2011.

"We are here to celebrate last year's Egyptian revolution and to honour our martyrs," said one man. For one woman the revolution goes on, "I am not here to celebrate; I am here to continue the revolution, because as yet nothing has changed."

In an attempt to appease the crowds, the ruling Military Council pardoned some 2,000 people convicted in military courts since the fall of Mubarak and announced a partial lifting of a 30 year state of emergency.