



Europe in Discourse

2nd International Conference

Agendas of Reform

Summaries of the Thematic Panels



Table of Contents

Foreword.....	2
Panel 1: Values-based Reform, from Enlargement to Legitimization	3
Panel 2: Completing the EMU.....	6
Panel 3: Greece and the EU.....	9
Panel 4: The Franco—German Relationship	13
Panel 5: The Transatlantic Dimension	16
Panel 6: EU Security and Defense	20
Panel 7: EU and Islam	23

Foreword

The Second International Europe in Discourse Conference, which was held in Athens September 21 to 23, 2018, focused on “Agendas of Reform”. Unlike the preceding Conference in 2016, this second, more strongly interdisciplinary, conference featured various plenary panels where distinguished invited panelists from many different disciplines presented and discussed their views on a number of pressing socio-political and economic problems facing the EU today. We hope that the following summaries of the seven plenary panels will give readers an impression of the high-caliber presentations and discussions that took place during the three days of the Conference.

Panel 1: Values-based Reform, from Enlargement to Legitimization

Henri-Giscard Bohnet, Direktor, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

Evanthis Hatzivassiliou (Chair), University of Athens

Effie Pedaliu, London School of Economics

Franco Zappettini, University of Liverpool

Presentations

Effie Pedaliu

By way of introduction, the first speaker, Effie Pedaliu, listed the signs and symptoms of the current crisis not only in the EU but also globally: Brexit, Trump, austerity and its aftermath, the widespread rise in xenophobia and antisemitism. The EU was originally established as a common market after the end of WWII with the intention of guaranteeing peace, stability and economic prosperity for the population in its member states. Following the treaty of Rome in 1957, the first enlargement took place in 1973, the second one in the late seventies of the 20th century. (Greece applied as early as 1975 and was accepted as a member state in 1981).

Further enlargements occurred in 1981 and 1986 with several Mediterranean states becoming member states. In 1993 several former Communist states joined, and in 1995 Austria, Sweden and Finland were accepted as member states. The year 2004 saw the first consequences of this series of enlargement in the form of rising Euroscepticism due in particular to increasingly heavy flows of migration from Eastern Europe to Western European states. In 2006, Barroso claimed that the enlargement of the EU had not been conducted democratically, with the result that there now was a democratic deficit in the EU. In 2007, the economic crisis started, which was soon to be followed by austerity measures loaded upon certain European states that were particularly affected by the economic crisis. With this state of affairs, right-wing and left-wing demagogues raised their ugly heads. And when in 2015 an unprecedented wave of mass migration into Europe occurred, it became clear that the values of democracy had never really taken root in Eastern Europe. The rise in terrorist attacks brought this message home with a vengeance.

Enlarging the EU, without at the same time deepening its values, seems to threaten the unity of the EU. What is needed today is a strengthening of European civil society and European identity. Germany, as the economically strongest and long term politically stable member of the EU, should in the future accept a leading role in this undertaking and forget its fear of the past.

Franco Zappettini

The second speaker, Franco Zappettini, said at the beginning of his statement that the EU is now at a critical juncture of legitimacy. As reasons for this he listed the dangerous rise in populist discourse, the willful exclusion of others, the semantic ambiguity of people mobilized for exclusionary projects, the increase in the mediatization of people in public discourse, the rise in using terms such as “the British people” juxtaposed with millions of

people coming from elsewhere, collocations such as “the people have spoken”, Teresa May’s repeated reference to Brexit as representing “the will of the people”, or in German “das Volk”, “wir sind das Volk” (we are the people), now appropriated by right-wing parties. Such verbiage eventually leads to the dismantling of the EU.

What is needed here, the speaker argued, is a determined counter-discourse in the EU. But unfortunately, the EU has weak supranational structures: EU elections are widely regarded as unimportant, and the national discourse inside the EU has generally been much stronger. A symptom of this imbalance is the plan to redistribute the 23 British seats after Brexit nationally, not supranationally.

Looking forward, Dr. Zappettini said we need to strengthen the role of the European Parliament, talking about “citizens” rather than “the people”, promote citizenship, and move decisively towards transnationalization and deterritorialism.

Henri-Giscard Bohnet

The third speaker on this panel, Dr. Bohnet, started by referring to the panel title and asked: What reform? He noted that it is easy to push through reforms when people are happy and satisfied. Now, they are unhappy and dissatisfied. This is due to two crises: the financial crisis and the migration crisis. These crises have led to heavy infighting in the EU, and this in turn is destroying trust among members of the EU. Trust in the EU is lowest in Greece, but recently we also find negative associations with the EU in Germany, its largest economy and a country that has profited most from the EU. This state of affairs has also led to a destabilization of the mainstream parties in Germany. As concerns the enlargement of the EU, we should not forget that while some Western Balkan countries such as Serbia and Bosnia still want to join the EU, their patience is running out and serious disillusionment is spreading across these countries. Other issues relate to Russia and Turkey.

Dr. Bohnet then listed four conditions that candidates for joining the EU need to fulfil:

1. A free press with a pluralism of media and the presence of quality journals.
Tightening media laws is also necessary in some candidate countries.
2. A free market economy and the provision of affordable housing.
3. A strengthening of the social component.
4. A good educational system.

Discussion

The discussion following these three presentations was chaired and introduced by Prof Hatzivassiliou. He first presented his own ideas about the panel topic. Initially, he made the point that the presence of material affluence in an EU country supports the legitimacy of the EU, but that elites in many EU countries unfortunately despise their respective nations. This seems to be a strong feeling in all EU countries. However, the assumption that elites shape identities is completely wrong. Furthermore, the level of relativism is overall too strong nowadays. We are also in the midst of a security crisis, he argued, but leadership demands security. There are conflicts between national, international and transnational identities. Accurate knowledge is sparse, and good educational systems are needed. If educational systems fail, people will turn to outside sources.

The ensuing general discussion involving both members of the panel and the audience, centered first on the issue of migration and the refugees. It was suggested that we urgently need a debate on migration issues between the EU and the UN, not least in order to clarify the definition and use of terms such as naturalization. The next question raised was: How do we go about winning the hearts and minds of EU citizens in the member states? One answer was: Through 'meaning'. Nothing else will work. One member of the audience then asked whether the EU suffered from a lack of money. He claimed that the notion of free mobility in the EU was never properly explained to the people. The next issue discussed was related to Brexit, and it was suggested that it was not only those 'left behind' that voted for Brexit; resentment of the EU had existed in all layers of British society. Another participant bemoaned the preponderance of emotional politics which today is being superimposed on rational politics. The conflation of the terms "asylum seekers" and 'migrants' seems to be a sign of a general emotionalization of public life.

Rapporteur: Juliane House

Panel 2: Completing the EMU

Giorgos Moschovis, Deputy Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Greece

Kevin Featherstone, London School of Economics

Giorgos Pagoulatos, Athens University of Economics and Business

Giles Noblet, European Central Bank

Chair: Dr. Tzonis, Hellenic American University

Giorgos Moschovis

The first speaker began with the challenges and milestones recorded in the history and development of the euro. One of these achievements has been the European Security Mechanism, a mechanism of crisis resolution that provides financial assistance to countries facing severe financial problems. He also made reference to other systemic mechanisms that are central at the European level in addressing challenges facing the banking sector.

Although there is large consensus among economists and other stakeholders that a lot has been done to protect the euro area, at the same time, the speaker acknowledged that much remains to be done in the current setup of the EU. He cited the incomplete nature of the financial union as well as the “asymmetric nature of surveillance processes” as key challenges.

So, what is the Commission’s standpoint? The speaker noted that for the coming years the Commission proposes: i) a deepening of the EMU to increase accountability and transparency, and ii) the transformation of the European Stability Mechanism into an intergovernmental organization with a diverse scope to provide stable assistance to Eurozone countries. Another interesting point would be the establishment of a European Minister of Economy and Finance, who would have the democratic responsibility to represent the entirety of the European Union. This would be a mechanism to enhance the position of the EU globally. Also, for the banking sector, Mr. Moschovis stressed the need for risk to be shared across the EU countries.

Mr. Moschovis argued that it is in the Commission’s interest to push further reforms to promote stability across the euro area. In his view, the Commission believes that Europe does need to develop further stabilization mechanism after having made first steps in that direction in 2017.

Kevin Featherstone

For Professor Featherstone, it is important to look at how we have talked about the euro over the years; a discourse closely linked to topic of the Conference. Debates on the Euro and the Eurozone are often “trapped” in technical language but we can also find meaning in the debates amongst institutions and uncover the deeper values that have governed the construction of the euro and its future.

He introduced the “logic of a trilemma” as he termed it, concerning the euro and its incompleteness. This trilemma—conditionality, democracy and institutional weakness—is underpinned by an agenda to address the still unresolved need for a system of economic

governance that could help the euro deal with so-called “asymmetric shocks”. All this is played out in the diversity of policies that have traditionally existed in the EU.

Professor Featherstone talked about the different shifts in the discourse on economic and monetary union since 1970. He traced the historical specificities of economic governance in the EU and talked about the current agenda that is being put forward by European leaders such as President Macron, who is promoting ideas such as the acceptance of a European Finance Minister. Again, as he mentioned, the ideas reflected in current agendas are not all that new, as they have been present for some decades now.

In concluding, he noted that a new agenda of the European Union could perhaps involve a shift towards a more federalist model that would further deepen the integration.

George Pagoulatos

Professor Pagoulatos opened his remarks by noting the urgency of unfinished business regarding the completion of the monetary union. He presented a brief “shopping list” of what did not go well in the economic and monetary union, pointing out weaknesses such as the absence of coordination or the failure to address imbalances at the macro level. He stressed the spillover or contagion effect between the sovereign sector and the banking sector but also between countries.

Professor Pagoulatos went on to discuss the so-called “procyclicality” as a major weakness in dealing with the crises that emerged. This was an indication, he noted, of a failure of fiscal rules that left many economies to stagnate during the financial crises.

Of course, the speaker noted, through the years of the crisis the Eurozone has adjusted in different ways and with different policies, but in a very costly fashion as it lacked instruments for a more symmetric adjustment of the cost across the center and periphery countries. Prof. Pagoulatos emphasized the fact that the financial crisis was a systemic crisis but was largely dealt with by the European Central Bank without really deploying centralized fiscal instruments.

Professor Pagoulatos went on to detail a list of factors that could lead to a workable currency union with efficient market integration, risk sharing, and the integration of political and economic institutions. He also pointed out the different channels available for economic integration and risk sharing, the fiscal one the most important. In his view, the ESM could evolve to offer the Eurozone a more robust fiscal capacity.

Gilles Noblet

Mr. Noblet began by noting that much has been done to reduce risk since the onset of the crisis, notably the establishment of the ESM. In his view, a lesson can be drawn from these developments which tells us that shocks from such crises cannot be dealt with by each sector or country separately as they have little fiscal space to stabilize their economies.

Mr. Noblet acknowledged that the deepening of the EU remains a top priority and that there needs to be a line of defense against crisis. He stressed the successful effects of structural reforms, which often boost economies. Although nation states need to assume a large share of this task, the EU as a whole also needs to deploy its full potential to address such challenges.

There are certain drivers for the economy such as innovation, the digital economy and the union of capital markets which can potentially drive reform, create growth and form a first line of defense. These can work as stabilizers in the face of a precarious economy. Finally, Mr. Noblet noted that different layers of defense are indispensable in the Eurozone, which is also largely an economy of the banking sector. Domestic policies are necessary but not sufficient to prevent crises but mechanism such as the ESM, internal stabilization mechanisms and employment insurance mechanisms are also needed.

Rapporteur: Themis Kaniklidou

Panel 3: Greece and the EU

Panelists

George Katrougalos, Alternate Foreign Minister for Foreign Affairs

Kostis Hatzidakis, Vice President, New Democracy party

Anna Diamantopoulou, President, DIKTIO – Network for Reforms in Greece and Europe

Discussants

Jens Bastian, Independent economic consultant

Kevin Featherstone, European Institute, London School of Economics

Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, University of Athens

Chair: George Prevelakis, Panthéon-Sorbonne University

The Chair opened the panel by offering two different kinds of discourse about Greece and the EU. In his view, the predominant discourse, reinforced in the recent years of crisis with the EU's provision of massive financial support to Greece and the country's subjection to externally imposed measures of austerity, sees Greece as a dependent periphery on the broader territory of Europe. Another, less broadly perceived discourse, sees the EU not as a territory but as a space or network communicating with other such spaces. In this latter discourse, Greece serves as an interface, an important point—or indeed center—where Europe can influence these other countries, drawing upon assets Greece can offer, such as its Diaspora, merchant marine and religious network.

Presentations

George Katrougalos

For the first speaker, Greece in the last decade represents a mirror for a possible future of Europe, an “experiment” in which “extreme recipes of neo-liberalism” were tested out in a vacuum of democracy. This was followed by a subsequent experiment that began in 2015, in which a radical government of the left sought to deal with the challenges of austerity and a hostile economic environment.

Minister Katrougalos stated that Greece and Europe are facing the same political dilemmas and challenges, such as the emergence of anti-systemic forces on the extreme right and radical left. For the speaker, however, the growing importance of identity politics or the role of the social media in polarizing political discourse, while describing facets of our current reality, are but the results of the crisis. The root cause, Min. Katrougalos said, is to be found instead in the gradual dismantlement of the post-war social welfare state. This historic compromise, the speaker noted, has broken apart under the growing pressure of globalization and with the acceptance on the part of both right-wing and social democratic parties of the inevitability of market dominance and the undermining of structural labor mechanisms such as collective labor agreements. Citing the European Commission's White Paper on the Future of Europe, the speaker noted that we now have the first generation of Europeans who fear that their children will be less well-off than themselves.

If this is the reason for the malaise, the Minister continued, the solution is to reaffirm what made Europe Europe—the commitment to the welfare state compatible with the challenges of globalization, as is successfully practiced, he said, in Scandinavia. According to the speaker, a social majority for this undertaking exists, but the challenge is to forge a political majority. In his view, this can be done through forces of the left, including the Green parties and social democrats, whose identification with neoliberalism has proved detrimental to their countries and their party's very existence.

Kostis Hatzidakis

The second speaker first outlined the “unprecedented existential threats” facing Europe today: the growth of Euroscepticism, Brexit, and the emergence of populist parties who have assumed political power and formed governments on platforms that question core European values. Compounding these political challenges, Europe is at risk of becoming a “weak link” in the world economy, as it loses competitiveness as whole, manufacturing jobs shift to Asia and its population ages—a process of which Greece, he noted, is the most characteristic example. At the same time, Europe has not been prepared to deal with the security and humanitarian challenges of the migration crisis, and while in theory the Eurozone crisis has been overcome, there are doubts that the stability mechanisms in place may not be sufficient to address a subsequent one.

Despite doubts about the future of Europe, the speaker believes that there is no alternative for Greece but Europe, especially given the challenges above but also particularly the instability of its neighbors. But it is not enough that Greece is a member of the EU and the Eurozone. In his view, the country must have its own reform agenda and claim ownership of this agenda, drawing upon European best practices. The economy needs to become more competitive, public administration more efficient, the judicial system more flexible, and the educational system more international. For the speaker, the key word is trust. Many measures of fiscal adjustment and structural reform have been adopted in Greece, some in vain, and Greece needs to restore investor confidence.

In his view, Europe is the “new reality”. Common defense and security policies are being proposed that may serve as model to forging a truly united Europe, one based on solidarity. For the speaker, this is likely be a multi-speed Europe, as there are member states who are unable or unwilling to pursue deeper integration. The challenge for Greece, he concluded, is to be at the forefront of this process, and for this, it needs to be credible in Brussels.

At this point, Minister Katrougalos intervened briefly to note that his government has expressed its support of a “Europe of many choices”, particularly in the direction of a more social Europe, but not the model proposed by [former German Finance Minister] Wolfgang Schäuble of a Europe of many speeds based not on willingness but on capacity.

Anna Diamantopoulou

The speaker began her intervention with a map depicting the recent shift in the world's center of economic gravity toward the East. Europe, in her view, must meet this challenge and become more competitive so that its dream of the modern welfare state, human rights and democracy can thrive. Like the previous speakers, she noted that the problems Europe faces today threaten its very existence. None of these problems, she argued, can be solved at the

national level. The migration crisis, the decline in economic competitiveness, security and defense and underinvestment can be met only through European policies.

Migration will continue to be an issue, she argued. By 2050 Africa's population will have grown by 1.35 billion people. With no change in policies, Europe can anticipate massive flows of migrants in the years to come. As a gateway to Europe, Greece will be one of the countries at the center of the migration crisis, and migration policies will have a significant impact on the country. European policy in this area needs to be comprehensive and address issues of foreign policy, the economy and social inclusion.

Europe, the speaker argued, will need to invest in Africa. Private investment is not enough; public investment in physical infrastructure, education and health is needed as well. The member states of Europe, even poorer ones such as Greece, will need to devote part of their wealth to such investments. At the same time, more will need to be done to protect the EU's external borders; the additional 10,000 guards the Commission has recently promised to send to Frontex are not sufficient and cannot take the place of stronger common defense, foreign and asylum policies.

In the speaker's view, Europe also needs to reshape a coherent multicultural inclusion strategy. Arguing for the need for common standards, she pointed out the following paradox: Austria and Bavaria have among the highest measures of social inclusion of refugees and at the same time, an "aggressive" anti-migration discourse. Greece, on the other hand, has the worst inclusion standards, despite the "friendly rhetoric" of the country's mainstream political parties.

Finally, the speaker argued that Europe will need to invest much more heavily in R&D, education and the modernization of industry to meet the challenges of the 4th Industrial Revolution, which is rapidly changing fundamental notions of work and capital investment.

Discussion

Jens Bastian

The first discussant, Jens Bastian, approached the panel's topic through three aspects of Greece's current and future relationship to and with the European Union. One is Greece's status as a former "program country". Bastian noted that Greece's exit from the macroeconomic adjustment program was accompanied by a discourse marked by key terms such as enhanced surveillance system, strict monitoring and an early warning system. This discourse, he stated, does not describe a relationship of equals, adding that no other former program country is or will be subjected to that level of scrutiny by the European Commission and the European Stability Mechanism. It will be accompanied by decades of commitment to exceedingly high—and in his eyes, unrealistic—primary budget surplus targets, strict revenue targets from privatization and pension cuts.

The second concerns China's ever growing economic and investment footprint in Greece, as evidenced, for example, in its significant investment in the gateway port of Piraeus. Bastian pointed out that broad consensus has emerged among the major political parties in Greece welcoming this investment. At the same time, he noted, concern has been raised by signs that Greece, like other countries such as Slovenia, Croatia and Hungary, are not prepared to follow the lines of EU policy initiatives vis-à-vis China.

The third aspect is Germany. Arguing that the relationship between Greece and Europe is determined by the quality of the relationship between Athens and Berlin, the speaker pointed to the “repair work” that has been done to return this relation to one of constructive dialogue, in which confrontation has been replaced by cooperation. This “reset” in German-Greek relations, evidenced, for example, in Fraport’s recent investment in Greece and the return of German tourists, is good not only for bilateral relations but also for Greece’s relations with the EU, even when, as he noted, Greece is a long way from returning to normalcy.

Kevin Featherstone

For the second discussant, Greece poses all the “big questions” about Europe—who we are, what Europe is for and how we should decide things. He pointed out parallels between Greece and the UK, noting that both countries have had defensive, populist narratives of the EU as “other”, a threat, and both misread what Europe, especially Germany, was willing to provide them.

Europe, he claimed, was supposed to be inclusive, liberal and progressive; now it stands for the imposition of austerity and stopping others from coming in. Who would have thought, he asked, that we would be dealing with the rise of illiberalism in Europe?

The challenge, Prof. Featherstone argued, is to make Europe seem more inclusive, to get Europeans to see Europe as “we” instead of “them”. One cannot sell the EU on terms of loving the single market or the ESM. These are opaque and distant. To reset perceptions of Europe we must “get the policy mix right” and return to a Europe of growth and job creation. But, it also means ensuring opportunities for political engagement. The speaker noted that Europe has already deepened in terms of policy commitments, doing far more now than it did in the past, but we are “stuck with the model of a Europe of ‘coal, steel and the price of tomatoes.’”

For the speaker, the litmus test of any club, the EU included, is how it deals with the diversity of its members, particularly those that have undergone crisis. In this test, he argued, Europe has shown that it has a lot to learn in terms of inclusivity, solidarity and participation.

Evanthis Hatzivassiliou

The third discussant opened his remarks with a reference to Greece as “a European country that has discovered a forest in the former airport of Athens in order to stop an investment.” While acknowledging that he agreed with the points Minister Katrougalos raised during his intervention, he argued that much more fundamental things are needed.

As a historian, he sees that Greece has been trying to join the developed world for 200 years, largely through what he called “short bursts of exceptional effectiveness” set in motion by great leaders such as Eleftherios Venizelos and Konstantinos Karamanlis. These bursts of effectiveness were enough to enable us to join Europe but not enough for us to remain.

For Prof. Hatzivassiliou, the years of crisis have made clear that a major change of paradigm is needed. Greece, he argued, is not a poor country trying to enter the developed world but is a part of this world. What it needs is nothing short of revolutionary: the creation of a system based on procedures “without the touch of a mythical, magical charismatic leader.” Without this system, Greece will not be able to remain a member of the developed world.

Rapporteur: Stephen Bacigal

Panel 4: The Franco—German Relationship

Hans-Jürgen Heimsoeth, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Kingdom of Sweden

Daniel Schlosser, Université de Sorbonne

Karin Liebhart, University of Vienna

Chair: Juliane House, Hellenic American University

Presentations

Hans-Jürgen Heimsoeth

The first speaker began his presentation by stating that the Franco-German relationship has been at the heart of every major step that Europe has taken towards greater integration since its very inception 60 years ago, even when, as he noted, this process would not have been possible without the concurrence of all its members. The question is, can the Franco-German “couple” still be a driver of European integration?

For the speaker, the answer must be seen against the backdrop of the major challenges Europe faces today, including the “massive discontinuity” in American policy towards Europe ushered in by the new US administration on the one hand and the geopolitical aspirations of China and Russia on the other. Migration, Brexit and weaknesses in the EU’s economic mechanisms are also testing its unity. Signs of what the speaker called a “rollback” towards less integration are already apparent in Europe. Given these challenges, the speaker claimed, Europeans must take their fate into their own hands. French-German agreements in areas such as security and defense, the deepening of the monetary union and migration policy will be a necessary, if not sufficient, condition to move Europe ahead in this direction.

As the speaker noted, the leaders of France and Germany, both pro-European victors in recent elections, have recently presented a joint reform agenda for deepening the European Union in a broad spectrum of policy issues. French and German ministers have already agreed on an ambitious outline of cooperation in defense and security and numerous projects are underway in the context of the Permanent Structured Cooperation and the European Defense Fund. During the sovereign debt crisis, the speaker noted, Germany and France took the lead in developing compromises for reform in areas such as the banking union and the ESM. Although Germany and France see the monetary union from “very different angles”, in the speaker’s view, French President Emmanuel Macron’s proposal for the strengthening of the monetary union is crucial for strengthening European competitiveness and fostering greater economic and social convergence. In migration, too, the leaders of both countries have made it clear their wish to make migration an opportunity, not a concern, and address the waning of European enthusiasm for solidarity and the fair sharing of burdens.

The speaker noted that while the nation state will remain the “homeland of identity”, there can be no national answers to the challenges Europe faces today, only European ones. In finding these answers, both France and Germany are committed to forging consensus for shaping a single EU entity of common political and economic interests. But it is a process that will require the participation of all member states.

Daniel Schlosser

The second speaker agreed that Europe is facing a crisis—in his view, the most serious in the last 45 years. He argued that we have not yet fully overcome the economic crisis of 2008, nor are there signs that an economy of growth is approaching. Europe is facing new threats: China's new-found confidence and power, migration and terrorism, and Brexit—"a treason to Europe" in his words—and the resurgence of populism, which has seen the share of votes for populist parties in Europe rise from 5% to 25% from 2001 to 2018 and which we can expect to impact the upcoming European elections in 2019.

For Prof. Schlosser, it is impossible for Europe to make any progress without the French-German relationship. However, this axis of partnership has been marked by a lowering in what he called its EQ. The new generation of political leaders, not only in France and Germany but throughout Europe, are further removed from the roots of Europe—notably the 80 million people who died during the two World Wars—than their predecessors. This history, which the speaker illustrated in the story of his grandparents in Alsace, a region that changed hands between France and Germany four times in their lives, is "a part of us"; "this is our verticality."

Prof. Schlosser then referred to another, older verticality, Lotharingia, the middle of the three kingdoms carved out of the Carolingian empire. Comprising a broad arc of territory reaching from the Low Countries to northern Italy and encompassing parts of France and Germany, the region, along with southeastern England, is now responsible for 60% of European GDP and, as the speaker demonstrated with a satellite map of Europe at night, discernible from space. For the speaker, this verticality offers great opportunities for development beyond the region into the Mediterranean and down into Africa, opportunities that require visionaries—with a greater degree of EQ—in order to be realized.

Karin Liebhart

The third speaker reported on a research project in progress that uses qualitative content analysis and critical discourse analysis to investigate the strategic use of images in political communication. Images, she noted, influence the construction of social realities. They convey messages on their own, while also serving as projection screens for desires, anxieties or identity constructs.

During her intervention Prof. Liebhart focused on the visual representation of Franco-German relations as found in images culled from quality newspapers and social media.

The speaker noted that the Franco-German relationship is traditionally described as unique. It is seen as both stable and challenging. Furthermore, it is a relationship with special meaning for the European Union, particularly since it has been responsible for very real achievements in the process of European integration.

The special character of this relationship can be seen in various images of historical significance and political meaning, and the speaker made reference to two in particular. One is the historic embrace between Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle. This image has served as a blueprint for future photo opportunities, as in the embrace between Angela Merkel and François Hollande and again between the German Chancellor and Emanuel Macron. The most recent instances of the historic embrace suggest that there is more closeness between the two countries, a closeness, the speaker noted, reflected in the

views of the majority of French and German youth aged 14-18, who see the positive relations between their two countries as something quite natural.

The second image is the so-called “geste de Verdun”, a photograph showing French president François Mitterand and German chancellor Helmut Kohl, standing somewhat apart but holding hands at the site of the Battle of Verdun. This powerful image was not only reproduced, as Prof. Liebhart illustrated, in remembrance coins (among other items), but served later to announce commemoration events in 2014. When the image was re-instantiated with Presidents Hollande and Gauth, who met at the same cemetery, it would become among the most widely shared political memes of the time.

In the speaker’s view, both countries share a broad common vision of Europe and see their partnership in the service of the EU “to move Europe forward.” The relationship is one that has “fragile dimensions”; it is under permanent challenge and cannot be taken for granted and needs to be continually cultivated. This cultivation, in turn, entails a significant amount of political communication that does not depend solely on references to the past.

Discussion

Ambassador Heimsoeth led off the Q&A period by noting that while the emotional dimension of the Franco-German relationship is important, later members of the EU did not join because of the 80 million who perished in the wars. History matters, he said, but it is also important to demonstrate how Europeans benefit from the EU, citing Erasmus as one of the Union’s greatest achievements. In this respect, Brexit and the recent Swedish elections are “eye-openers” that raise the question of what we stand to lose. “We must see the sharks,” he said.

How should Europe react to the “shock”, as a member of the audience termed it, of the change in US stance toward Europe? Does furthering European self-reliance risk accelerating the emergence of oppositional regional blocs and the loss of the trans-Atlantic link?

Ambassador Heimsoeth noted that while Europe should not lose patience with the US, with which it still shares strong common values, the challenges ahead are not only ones prompted by President Trump but include, for example, China’s preparations for a multi-polar world. Europe, too, will need to do the same, he argued. His comments were echoed by Prof. Schlosser, who noted that, Europe needs to nurture its relationship with the US, with which it has a “community of values” and seek to understand the source of American frustration. At the same time, however, President Trump’s agenda is also an opportunity to prod Europe to deepen the political integration of the EU and to move forward with European defense.

Panelists also discussed the relevance for Eastern Europe and Russia that the Franco-German relationship and the verticality Prof. Schlosser outlined in his talk, particularly its extension into Africa, pose. For Prof. Schlosser, however, Germany’s integration of the former DDR, a process based on co-development, co-construction and co-location, provides a non-domineering model on which such large-scale vertical agreements can be elaborated. Amb. Heimsoeth also downplayed the disk of Franco-German dominance, noting that there have always been counter-balancing tradeoffs within the relationship itself, with bold French proposals for greater European integration being met with initial German reluctance. In the absence of proposals from central or northern Europe, he continued, how can Europe accomplish things if not with Franco-German cooperation?

Rapporteur: Stephen Bacigal

Panel 5: The Transatlantic Dimension

Ino Afentouli (Chair), NATO Public Diplomacy Division

Alexandros Dimitrakopoulos, NATO Public Planning Unit

James Ellison, Queen Mary University, London

Michal Krzyzanowski, Oerebro University, Sweden and University of Liverpool

Vassilis Nedos, Journalist, *I Kathimerini*

Presentations

After introducing the panel, the Chair, Ino Afentouli, pointed out that there are alarming signs in the current state of transatlantic relations. She referred to former Foreign Secretary Albright, who in her recent book has warned of the rise of a new fascism, and pointed to the recent series of articles in *Atlantic Monthly* that explores the question: Is Democracy Dying? There are also extremely alarming signs of what is happening now between the EU and the US, and concerns about the 2019 EU elections, given the rise of right-wing populist parties.

Alexandros Dimitrakopoulos

The first speaker, Alexandros Dimitrakopoulos, made initial reference to Jean-Claude Juncker's recent State of the Union Speech, in which he painted a very gloomy picture of current transatlantic relations. For the EU, the transatlantic dimension is about security and is both a political and military alliance. Although we now find ourselves in a fluid, largely unpredictable environment, with growing threats from Russia and terrorism. NATO has been strengthened and is in its best shape in years. Cooperation among NATO partners, as for example in Afghanistan, is working well. The speaker emphasized the need for strong NATO-EU cooperation and dialogue with Russia. He then turned to the issue of defense spending and the US demand that NATO partners spend more on defense, i.e., 2% of their budgets by 2024. He then discussed the charge that there is unnecessary duplication of defense between the EU and the US, an allegation he challenged. Defense spending, including nuclear spending, in the US is high, with taxpayers being burdened substantially. In summing up, the speaker emphasized again that NATO delivers well on its core mission. What remains to be tackled is the new challenge of cyber warfare.

James Ellison

The second speaker, Prof. James Ellison, presented an academic perspective on the issue of the EU's transatlantic relations. He emphasized the necessity to defend the liberal international order in the face of somebody like Mr. Trump, who is the personification of the crisis in the transatlantic relations. In Europe there are now voices that are demanding greater European independence from the US. Arguing that the transatlantic dimension will change with Trump and never be the same after him, the speaker went on to ask: How do people think about this? Why should Europeans stay committed to the transatlantic relation? What are its challenges? What do Europeans have to do to retain their partnership with the US?

As a response to these questions, Prof. Ellison stated that we need to look at the existing political treaties and the geopolitical role which Europe used to play in 1949, when it was not in a position to defend itself, and at current demands that the defense burden be shared.

From the time of NATO's creation there has been conflicts between the EU and the US, one reason being that the EU never actually got confirmation that they would actually be protected. The conflict was exacerbated by de Gaulle's demand that the EU "should not be the US's daughter", and French voices in the '50s and '60s who spoke out to demand greater EU independence from the USA. After 1989, with the end of the Cold War, the USA emerged as the only world power able to go to war on its own. From the Yugoslav war in 1992 Europeans learnt the lesson that the USA does only what is in its own interest.

With President Trump, we have entered a new phase of the transatlantic relation. Europe is preoccupied with Brexit, Russia and migration. In the speaker's view, what we need is:

- To reaffirm our values
- To reconsider our defense budgets
- To better manage the European-Atlantic theatre
- To reach security arrangements with the UK after Brexit

Despite everything, to continue working together with President Trump as well as other US players and look to a better USA.

Michal Krzyzanowski

The third speaker was Prof. Krzyzanowski. As a discourse analyst, he looked at the discourse of transatlantic relations. He emphasized key discursive traits that have characterized relations between Europe and the US relations, especially since the early 1970s. He noted that there have been consistent problems of volatility and changing directionality in these relations (with/against each other) and with problems of identity on 'both sides', reinventing themselves constantly.

A milestone was the 1973 Declaration of European Identity. In the context of the 1973 oil crisis, this amounted to a redefinition of Europeaness, as well as an attempt to break with post-war discursive traditions of (Western) Europe as an economic and geopolitical entity dependent on the US. Defining European identity involved reviewing the common heritage, interests and special obligations of the Nine. It also meant assessing the degree of unity so far achieved within the Community and evaluating the extent to which the Nine are already acting together in relation to the rest of the world and the responsibilities which result from this, taking into consideration the dynamic nature of European unification. One of the essential aims of the Nine, the speaker pointed out, was to maintain peace. Those of the Nine who were members of the Atlantic Alliance considered that there was no alternative to the security that was provided by US nuclear weapons and the presence of US forces in Europe. They agreed that in light of Europe's military vulnerability, Europeans should hold to their commitments and make constant efforts to ensure that they have adequate means of defense at their disposal.

The early 2000s, Prof. Krzyzanowski noted, were marked by the advent of many new member states in the EU. The period shows deep anxieties about EU unity and divisions among EU members including, prominently, their views on the Bush Administration's "War on Terror" and the invasion of Iraq in 2003. EU members were deeply divided on this issue, with the UK, Poland, Denmark and Italy supporting the US, and Germany and France against it. Cheney started a discourse about the division of Old vs New Europe.

In the early 2010s, the EU embarked on arguments about its “global leadership”, shopping for policy areas where it was at the forefront, such as climate change. But Europe sought to become not only a global leader in climate action but also a moral leader, with better values and true commitment. In the late 2010s, there were no more questions asked about the unity of the EU in the context of right-wing populist politics across Europe and the divisive UK politics that culminated in Brexit. The speaker identified as the most critical issues today the seemingly unstoppable rise of right wing populism, particularly in Eastern Europe, and the open servitude of Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic to President Trump, culminating in their security appeals.

In conclusion, the speaker warned against right-wing populism and its openly anti-European discourse that now divides Europe. With respect to the transatlantic dimension, he noted that 9/11 has been perceived very differently in the US and the EU, a difference that in the speaker’s view has been a divisive factor in transatlantic relations.

Vassilis Nedos

The last speaker on this panel was journalist Vassilis Nedos from the Greek daily newspaper *I Katherini*. He introduced a Greek perspective on the transatlantic dimension. He emphasized the fact that in contrast to other EU member states, Greece actually spends more than 3% of the national GDP on defense. The reason for this can be seen in what he termed the serious threats to Greece today especially those related to Turkey and migration. In his view, the pressing question for Greece is how to counter global challenges. Greece has large natural gas resources, and it would therefore be in a position to compensate for Russian gas deliveries to Denmark, Poland and Germany. He argued that Greece can be regarded as a good example of how small states balance shifts towards the US given their geo-strategic role. Greece is a maritime nation that has long supported a greater US presence in the Mediterranean to fend off greater Russian and Chinese influence. But there is obviously a natural divergence of interests between the EU and the US. The global players are now the US and China. The EU has diverse internal issues to handle, such as conflicts between Germany and Greece on debt and austerity.

Discussion

Hellenic American University President Koskos started the discussion by asking: What is NATO’s identity and perception of itself? Prof. Hatzivassiliou noted in response the importance of NATO for the US and US claims of leadership in the western world. He wondered if there was a kind of cultural arrogance in the EU towards the US today and argued that the EU and the US need to remain allied at all costs. Prof. Pedaliu noted that we are now in a post bipolar era, and the transatlantic agreement needs to be balanced between the EU and the US. US leaders are questioning the alliance, despite its deep historical roots, while many people in Europe still look back with resentment to Blair’s move towards a closer transatlantic union with the US. However, she noted, we should not forget that the transatlantic relationship is a factor of stability in Europe.

The chair, Ms. Afentouli, pointed out that NATO is the only political unit where the EU and the US can get together to discuss vital security issues and interests and decide whether or not to undertake common actions such as wars. Returning to President Koskos’ initial question,

Prof Hatzivassiliou said in the public's view in the EU, NATO is exclusively a military entity; however, in reality, it is more of a political and strategic entity.

Another participant asked about why NATO has not responded to Turkey's violation of Greek airspace, given the importance of good relations between members of the alliance but also in light of security concerns in the region. Alexandros Dimitrakopoulos noted that such differences between member states—and the ones between Greece and Turkey are not the only ones—are a cause of concern for NATO. However, the Alliance is an intergovernmental organization and not a supranational one.

The next question from the audience concerned NATO's stance on cyber threats. Alexandros Dimitrakopoulos noted that NATO has indeed recognized the seriousness of cyber warfare; indeed, cyber has been recognized as a domain in its own right that, along with land, air and sea, we need to defend. Prof Krzyzanowski added that contrary to commonly held assumptions, cyber is not borderless at all, so it is still true that certain countries attack others, citing for example the activity of Russian bots in the American elections

Prof. Schlosser commented on the political dimension of NATO. He noted that for years we have trying to forge greater political links within Europe, reminding participants that when the 1963 Élysée Treaty between Germany and France was ratified by the Bundestag- only after the political link in the treaty was removed. US administrations, he noted, have never accepted that Europe would be anything more than an economic union. Prof. Ellison, however, countered that the US has been willing to accommodate a greater European identity. There is room, he said, to develop this arrangement, as long as it doesn't detract from NATO.

The Chair closed with a reference to the controversy surrounding the NATO Summit in July of this year and the decisive intervention on the part of French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Trump's behavior vis-à-vis the transatlantic dimension, the Chair noted, has fueled fears that the US will leave NATO. However, US institutions and the US presence in the EU remains strong even today, even if the image of the US and people's trust in its leadership is lower than ever before.

Rapporteur: Juliane House

Panel 6: EU Security and Defense

Ino Afentouli, NATO Public Diplomacy Division

General Mikhail Kostarakos, Chairman of the European Union Military Committee

Harry Papassotiriou, Institute of International Affairs

Chair: George Prevelakis, Panthéon-Sorbonne University

As Chair of the panel, George Prevelakis introduced the session on EU Security and Defense by outlining common themes which had been discussed throughout the conference: dilemmas regarding the political and economic changes in Europe; the prospect that Europe can no longer rely on support from the US as was the case throughout the Cold War. He concluded by saying that the panel discussion would therefore be presented in this context.

Presentations

General Mikhail Kostarakos

General Kostarakos' presentation focused on major reforms in security and defense prompted by recent terrorist attacks, and the irregular and uncontrolled migration issues which had occurred in the EU. The reforms were based on an "integrated approach" to promote cooperation within the EU and externally reflecting the spirit of the EU Global Strategy on EU's Foreign and Security policy, which was introduced in 2016. He pointed out that the Global Strategy openly supports the relevance of hard power in Europe and that reforms for defense and security need to be addressed by the EU internally and with its international partners:

Internal cooperation: Major Kostarakos stressed the importance of Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), which lies at the core of the EU's internal cooperation. He explained how PESCO was built on existing treaties among EU member-states to further develop 17 joint projects in training and operational readiness in the field of defense with a budget of 43 billion euros.

External cooperation: Major Kostarakos also emphasized the importance of cooperation of the EU with the United Nations and NATO, for example, the Military Mobility project which aims to lift all regulatory, procedural and physical obstacles that hamper the smooth movement of military personnel and assets across and beyond the EU with a budget of 6.5 billion euros for 2021 – 2027. He explained the need for the EU to become a global actor which resulted in projects such as the Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC). He gave the example of the joint military training missions in Mali, Somalia and the Central African Republic considered as an important step towards the establishment of an EU Operation Headquarters. Major Kostarakos also mentioned the European Peace Facility (EPF), which provides funding of 10.5 billion euros for the financing of operational actions that have military or defense implications.

Ino Afentouli

Ino Afentouli's presentation explored the possibilities of a closer relationship between NATO and the EU. First, she explained what NATO entails in terms of defense: capabilities, troops, strategies, budgets and common interests. She emphasized the difference between the two institutions: the EU is a political organization while NATO is primarily military. She pointed

out the difficulties for both organizations to develop a closer relationship: what may be of interest to an individual country may not be of common interest to NATO, and that within Europe itself there may not be issues of common interest. She also mentioned that the defense budget is a sensitive issue taking into consideration that Germany contributes less than 2% of GDP compared to some other EU countries who pay the required 2%.

Despite these difficulties, Ino Afentouli advocated closer cooperation between the EU and NATO by sharing their resources for: maritime security, security in Cyprus, defense research, military cooperation and common threats e.g. terrorism. However, she also raised the issue of whether integration of defense is viable in terms of common strategic operations.

Harry Papasotiriou

Harry Papasotiriou's presentation focused on the importance of conventional warfare to combat security challenges in the world and its role in NATO and Europe. In his view, the United States is superior in conventional warfare operations. He explained how American armed forces have made great advances in technology with the use of laser systems and collection of intelligence accessible simultaneously to all military units. He commented on the accuracy of their targeting and gave the example of how 46 American soldiers were able to contain 300 Syrian fighters without any casualties on the American side. He pointed out that NATO has always relied on conventional capabilities to address international disputes. However, apart from Greece other EU countries have not developed this capacity.

He also expressed his concern about the isolationist trend of the United States involvement in international affairs. He commented on how President Trump is inconsistent regarding international policies; it is evident the commitment by the US in international affairs is not as strong as it was during the Cold War. He therefore made it clear in his presentation that the EU cannot take it for granted that the USA will support EU countries in disputes related to their national borders.

Discussion

Before questions were asked by the participants, Major Kostarakos asked permission to present some further points to clarify the different functions of NATO and the EU. He explained that the EU is a political and economic union regarded as having soft power while NATO is a military tool and questioned whether President Putin cares about military power or economic sanctions. He also pointed out that there is no EU army and the EU does not have a command and control system. He emphasized, however, that EU defense systems complement those of NATO.

The first question from a participant concerned the definition to what constitutes a common threat and how would the EU support it. Major Kostarakos responded that apart from the support of the procurement industry in the EU, each country needs to defend its own border e.g. any dispute between Greece and Turkey would be their responsibility for military action to take place. Another participant raised the issue of unconventional threats in the EU e.g. terrorism. The response from the panel indicated that although larger countries had made significant progress, smaller countries need to make more progress regarding this type of threat.

The last issue to be discussed was BREXIT and how this would affect defense and security in Europe. Major Kostarakos pointed out that the UK has limited military forces though it has high quality senior ranking military officers, and although it has a strong intelligence unit, it is reluctant to share information with other EU countries. Harry Papasotiriou agreed that BREXIT is insignificant in terms of European defense and security, but that NATO remains prominent. He also points out that non-conventional threats were unexpected such as Russia's interference in American politics. However, he expressed an optimistic view of the progress in dismantling terrorist attacks and non-conventional threats.

Rapporteur: Christine Niakaris

Panel 7: EU and Islam

Konstantinos Filis, Institute of International Relations, Panteion University

Evanthis Hatzivassiliou (Chair), University of Athens

Sotiris Roussos, University of the Peloponnese

Magda Shahin, The American University of Cairo

Angelos Syrigos, Panteion University

The chair noted initially that the EU's relationship to Islam and Muslim countries is a pressing one today. He then asked Prof. Sotiris Roussos to start with his presentation.

Sotiris Roussos

Prof Roussos first took up the twin issues of Islamophobia and Islamic radicalization. While the fear of Islamization is very real in many EU countries today, there is little basic information available. Only 5% of the total EU population are Muslims. With further high rates of migration and the subsequent increase in the EU population, this percentage will at the most amount to 11%. Thus, fears of the Islamization of Europe appear to be rather unfounded. It is interesting to note that the fear of Islamization is highest in Eastern European countries with the fewest Muslims—Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic—and in the north of England, which also has very few Muslims.

One of the major causes of Islamophobia, the speaker noted, can no doubt be found in terrorist attacks. Islamic radicalization occurs mainly among impoverished people in large cities in the EU who have little knowledge of Islam. The high rate of unemployment in ghettoized suburbs of big European cities further fuels radicalization and the formation of criminal gangs. Budget cuts have reduced police presence in cities in the UK and elsewhere in Europe. In European prisons certain imams create networks of poor uneducated Muslim detainees who themselves have never visited Muslim countries. Finally,

Magda Shahin

The second speaker, Prof. Magda Shahin, emphasized initially that Islamic extremism is not the doing of Islam, but rather a function of much more important external factors. The situation has been exacerbated today with growing populism in many European countries, so the West has its share in causing Islamophobia.

She noted that Islam has changed substantially today. In the past there were no religious extremists. Islamic extremism, she stated, began with the establishment of the Muslim Brothers in 1928 in the UK, which was later followed by the rise of the Taliban in the US. In his ominous, strategically planned 1993 book "The Clash of Civilizations" – described by Edward Said as "the Clash of Ignorance" - Samuel Huntingdon helped create an enemy and predicted the victory of the west.

Turning to EU discourse and Islamophobia, the speaker noted that major shifts in policy occurred right after 9/11 and in 2003 with the rise of ISIS. Following World War II, there was peaceful immigration from Muslim countries into the EU, for instance by Turks into Germany. Even after 9/11 the EU was barely affected by Islamic extremism. A backlash took place around the turn of the century, when Europe first saw a trend away from peaceful co-

existence and multiculturalism towards radicalization. Young Muslims in the 2nd and 3rd generation of immigrants, the speaker continued, rebelled against their treatment as underdogs and looked for another identity. They believed in a new Islamic culture without borders fueled by the rise of New Islamic Warriors fighting for “a higher cause”.

Another important cause of Muslim extremism, in her view, can be seen in right-wing populist movements, which have led to a generalization of terrorism and have caused Islam to become more radical.

The new discourse of assimilation in the EU demanded that immigrants not only integrate but also assimilate to their host countries thus forcing inclusiveness and causing resistance.

The speaker then reminded the audience that when judging Islam and Muslims, one should not forget that Muslims themselves are persecuted in their own countries. In the EU, a pluralism of religions is needed. Extremism should never be met with extremism.

Konstantinos Filis

The next speaker, Prof. Konstantinos Filis, identified security as the core problem in the relationship between the EU and Islam, with demagogues deliberately heating up the discussion. Islam is now widely perceived as a threat, and this leads to a declining sense of security. There is a link between terrorism and migration, and Islam is considered both a direct and indirect threat. Arguments often heard are that the refugees are taking away employment from the indigenous population and that because of their rising numbers social services no longer function. Refugees and migrants who are highly educated and speak the local language are preferred.

Like other speakers before him, Prof Filis also pointed to the remarkable fact that the closed and homogeneous societies of Eastern Europe are the most Islamophobic ones in Europe. What we need in Europe today, he argued, is a normalization of European consciousness.

Angelos Syrigos

The next speaker, Prof. Angelos Syrigos, started out by saying that it is one of the paradoxes of EU migration policy that very few of the traditional parties officially talk about protecting the cultural identity and the values of the ageing, post-Christian and secular indigenous European population. And this, despite the fact that the vast majority of newcomers are young Muslims. This is a very serious omission, in his view. It offers the opportunity for the extreme right and the anti-establishment parties to fill the gap. At the same time—and this is the real paradox, he argued—European intelligence agencies closely monitor the mosques in every EU country and know with precision the names of some 4,500 European citizens who have travelled to Iraq and Syria to join ISIS/Da’esh (Islamic State) or other Islamic terrorist groups, and are now called “foreign fighters”. Most of these foreign fighters come from France, Germany, Belgium and the UK. But there are another 1,000 foreign fighters from the Balkans, mostly from Kosovo, Bosnia and Albania. It is estimated that around 30% of those fighters have already returned to their home countries.

The issue of foreign fighters has been high on the political agenda of member states and the EU alike for the last 7 years. It touches upon a wide range of policies, including the prevention of radicalization; disengagement/deradicalization inside and outside prisons; and, the treatment of radical Muslims in the EU countries. The speaker pointed out that if one looks at

the background of those involved in terrorist attacks, social exclusion is not the only reason for radicalization: for example, some of those involved in the July 7, 2005 attacks in the UK were actually well-integrated. On the other hand, some extremists did have a difficult childhood, especially in the suburbs in Belgium and France, where they committed petty crimes, ended up in jail, and became radicalized.

While many young Muslims are EU citizens, Prof. Syrigos said, they do not share a cultural bond with the society in which they live. They feel that society has failed them and they are not allowed to live up to their potential. So, the speaker argued, they look for some cause for their life. Such feelings can be found elsewhere, such as among white working class people as well. This means that political Islam plays a specific role in the process of radicalization.

The speaker then focused on the return of foreign fighters. They are perceived as serious security threats, because they may perpetuate the terrorist threat to the EU through radicalizing and fundraising. In many instances, fighters have families. The issue of the so-called 'Jihadi wives' has recently become salient. And, the return of the children of foreign fighters presents particular challenges: they need to be identified and possibly repatriated to the EU states with which they have links. Some of these children may have had military training in zones of war, prompting questions about the "threat" they may pose.

The speaker noted that member states' capacity and willingness to avoid the return of foreign fighters and their families or to arrange for their deportation is now high on the agenda in security-oriented discussions about the management of returnees.

The speaker then turned to the issue of deprivation of citizenship. According to the 1961 UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the EU member states are bound to restrict citizenship deprivations to dual-nationals. In Belgium, Denmark and France, criminal conviction is a prerequisite for deprivation of citizenship. There are no such preconditions in the UK and Belgium.

Other issues mentioned by Prof. Filis concerned the debate about the appropriateness of judicial and diplomatic responses to European deportees in Iraq and Syria, the toughening of counter-terrorism measures for restricting the movement of deportees/returnees and the containment of terrorist-related suspects and offenders in specialized prison units.

Finally, Prof. Filis addressed the case of Greece and radical Islam. Greece is the home of an old Muslim population, and it is the only country with not one foreign fighter.

In conclusion, the speaker said that the situation is very worrying, indeed. After the Euro-crisis, radical Islam together with migration threatens the foundation of the European project.

Discussion

The discussion first centered on the radicalized version of Islam today and the role of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. One participant pointed out that the concept of inclusivity is different from the notion of assimilation. Another participant raised the issue of the creation of martyrs in connection with the return of foreign fighters. A participant from Canada referred to the type of multiculturalism in Canada where there is no discernible Islamophobia. The situation in Canada is very different from the alienation and prejudice and

feelings of being the underdog which Muslims experience for instance in the UK or France. He also mentioned the role of the Yugoslav war, where the Muslim population was pitted against the Christian population. Finally, this speaker noted that it was remarkable that the EU still does not have proper migration laws.

The discussion then turned to the interpretation of the Koran, Islamic extremism in the EU, the role of the Fatwa, the problems surrounding the returning fighters and their role in ISIS, the support in various EU countries for the Bosnian Moslems (and the condemnation of Christian Serbs), and the need for reform in asylum legislation.

One participant traced the general attitude of Europeans vis-à-vis Islam back to the Christian Crusades. Another argued the EU has no refugee crisis: the real crisis is in such small countries as Jordan and Lebanon where millions of refugees now live.

A final comment touched on the sense of fear and insecurity in the EU countries, a fear which is being exploited in right-wing populist movements and which, in the participant's view, Brussels has done nothing to counter.

Rapporteur: Juliane House

HellenicAmericanUniversity

