

Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA)  
2019 Finnish Pre-Presidency Conference

## REPORT

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The National Museum of Finland



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Integrating  
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## Report of the 2019 Finnish Pre-Presidency conference

On the occasion of the Finnish EU Council Presidency starting on 1 July 2019, the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA) held the Pre-Presidency Conference (PPC) in Helsinki on 6-7 June 2019, which was co-organized and hosted by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs. The conference is part of the long-standing tradition of TEPSA's Pre-Presidency Conferences, which take place twice a year in the capital of the country holding the EU Council Presidency prior to the beginning of its mandate. The aim of the TEPSA Pre-Presidency Conference is to provide sound assessment, analysis and advice on topical issues facing the EU in general and the Council Presidency in particular.

The conference was supported by the Representation of the European Commission in Finland, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union, and the [SEnECA](#) and [InDivEU](#) projects in the framework of the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme. The two-day conference was held in the premises of the National Museum of Finland.

The conference attracted a broad international and domestic audience. The participation of the TEPSA network was on a record high level. In addition, the key sessions were web-streamed and visibility in social media was at a very good level.



The support of the Finnish MFA and European Commission enabled the organizers to invite distinguished experts as speakers also beyond the TEPSA network, and secure the participation and visibility of young professionals. With the support of the Commission, a side event targeting citizens was organized on the EU as security and defence policy actor.

The conference began with the words of welcome presented by Director **Teija Tiilikainen** from the Finnish Institute of International Affairs and **Jaap de Zwaan**, Secretary General of the Trans European Policy Studies Association and Emeritus Professor at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Dr Tiilikainen emphasized that Finland will hold the presidency in a very special political context, as the new Finnish government took office on the same day. She mentioned that one could argue that we are in an optimal situation to advise the new government, but

on the other hand the change of government will not "rock the boat" in terms of the main goals of the presidency. Since the beginning of its EU membership, Finland has shown a committed and constructive approach to EU affairs. Finland's identity in the EU is that of a small member state which

firmly supports the Union's institutional framework and position as an international actor (including a credible common security and defence policy).

Prof. de Zwaan briefly introduced TEPSA and the tradition of Pre-Presidency Conferences. He stated that Finland is a constructive, active, pragmatic and result-oriented member state of the European Union and that the basic stance of Finland's EU policy is to further develop the EU and promote growth, stability and security in Europe. He also highlighted that the EU is now in a new stage in the process of integration.

## **Plenary session I: Priorities of the Finnish EU Council presidency**

**Kare Halonen**, State Secretary of EU Affairs from the Prime Minister's Office, presented the priorities of the Finnish EU Council presidency. He mentioned that the Finnish presidency takes place in a very difficult time – the new government has for example a very short time to familiarize with the topics. In addition, Finland does not have the national presidency programme yet. Mr Halonen mentioned two major issues Finland should take forward: the negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and migration. Concerning the latter, the situation is calmer at the moment but further political problems cannot be ruled out. Also, tensions between member states still exist. Other important issues for the Finnish presidency are climate, economy, security (both internal and external), values – especially rule of law, and Brexit.

**Sabina Lange** from the TEPSA Board and the European Institute of Public Administration presented the TEPSA Recommendations to the incoming Finnish EU presidency. First, she stated that the priorities of Finland for its presidency match the TEPSA recommendations. Finland has a chance to impact the future of the EU as leadership of the EU will be decided during its presidency.

TEPSA's recommendation concerning the Multiannual Financial Framework is that Finland needs to ensure that the remaining issues in the negotiations will be discussed and that the "new actors" are on board and support decisions made. Finland is well placed to support the MFF as an instrument for economic growth, but should also promote social responsibility (especially education, youth employment). Concerning climate, the recommendation for the Finnish presidency is to make the most of this opportunity and make sure that the member state's plans are aligned with the 2050 pledge for carbon



neutrality. TEPSA recommends Finland to steer the discussion to broadening the application of the rule of law, strengthening the early communication on threats to the rule of law, and to promote the rule of law (what it means also within states and for citizens). Regarding EU's relations with Africa, the recommendation for Finland is to promote a continent-to-continent approach.

**Jana Schubert** (Research Associate at the Institut für Europäische Politik) and **Sara Kibler** (#EngagEU Rapporteur) presented “Young ideas for Europe”, a set of recommendations to EU policy makers from the European youth on the future of the EU, developed in the framework of the [#EngagEU project](#).



Although the European parliamentary elections did not generate a Eurosceptic majority, Euroscepticism, populism and nationalism remain a threat. They mentioned that the youth are an essential part of pro-EU movements. However, only few of them voted in the elections. The project #EngagEU was launched to mobilize and empower young citizens in EU decision-making. One of the key

themes to the youth in the EU is education and empowerment. Education helps young citizens to give a voice but also to pass on knowledge. Education is also key to help promote European identity by encouraging integration and making citizens more resilient. In their speech, Ms Schubert and Ms Kibler proposed that a European project week should be introduced to schools to make the EU more visible and that also full Erasmus+ scholarships should be introduced. The second key theme is related to how the EU should defend its fundamental values. The European Union as a strong international actor should take a leading role in promoting and defending its fundamental values both internally and externally. There are two challenges: trust in the EU has been damaged; and the EU's economic and cooperation agreements do include a human rights clause but there is no monitoring system to ensure its application. The Manifesto developed by young Europeans in the framework of the #EngagEU project demands an independent monitoring system in trade relations with third countries. The third key theme should be a forward-looking climate policy. The #EngagEU manifesto suggests the introduction of environmental education in primary and secondary schools. Finally, the EU should support cross-Europe coordination on collaborative projects and develop a common European Refund System for some kind of household waste (plastic bottles, batteries, bags, food waste etc.).

## Plenary session II – The Future of Europe

In the plenary session II **Michel Barnier**, Chief Negotiator of the Taskforce on Article 50 negotiations with the United Kingdom (UK), held a speech on Brexit and the future of the EU. He argued that the future of Europe is much more important than Brexit, as well as the future relationship between the EU and the UK is much more important than the divorce. Speaking about possible future relationships, Mr Barnier stressed that the best possible scenario would be the UK remaining part of the EU. The



second-best scenario would be a “Norwegian regime” (with the UK being part of the internal market but not of the EU), while the third-best scenario would be a free-trade agreement on the model of what the EU has with Japan or Canada. However, Mr Barnier noted, the UK has certain red lines with regard to the future economic relationship, of which the EU is taking note, and which make the free trade agreement the only possible option. Finally, observing that Europe represents an ageing society and a shrinking part of the world, Mr Barnier outlined the main challenges that the EU27 will face in the years to come. Namely, the need to build a greener EU; the need to take our security in our own hands; the need to prepare for the next migration crises by developing solidarity mechanisms for those member states which are most impacted and by developing a true partnership with Africa; and finally the need to support European businesses in their quest for competitiveness. “A united Europe is not a uniform Europe”, concluded Mr Barnier, and our best chance to meet our objectives is to act together, with all our national specificities.



The speech was followed by a panel discussion on “*The Future of Europe in light of EU elections*” with **Michael Kaeding** (Chairperson of TEPSA and Professor at the University of Duisburg-Essen), **Tuomas Saarenheimo** (Permanent Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Finance of Finland), **Frank Schimmelfennig** (Professor and Head of European Politics Group at Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, member of the TEPSA Board) and **Elisa Pascucci** (Researcher at the University of Helsinki).

In his intervention, **Michael Kaeding** analysed the results of the May 2019 European Parliament elections. As a result of the surge in the turnout, the new European Parliament now has much more legitimacy than the previous one. However, it must not be forgotten that the turnout did not grow in all member states, and there were countries with high level of abstentionism. At the same time, Prof. Kaeding argued that increased participation should not be translated into a support for the European project, as there were countries where the turnout increased but Eurosceptic parties had a strong success. Secondly, a major feature of the new Parliament is the loss of majority for the Socialist and Democrats (S&D) and the European Popular Party (EPP) groups, and the subsequent need to earn the support of the Liberals and the Greens. When it comes to the internal composition of parliamentary groups, the balance within the EPP changed as a result of the Fidesz’s strong performance in Hungary, which made the Hungarian delegation the third biggest one in the EPP. Within the S&D group, the Spanish delegation is the biggest one, whilst the German delegation is only fourth. Finally, an important consequence of the European elections highlighted by Prof. Kaeding is that the new

European Commission will have to take into account the new composition of the Parliament, including the increased weight of the Greens.

**Tuomas Saarenheimo** elaborated on the economic side of European integration and the future of the European Monetary Union. The elections were a “defensive victory” for moderate, pro-European forces, noted Mr Saarenheimo. He argued that a more fragmented Parliament seems to be a victory for forces who challenge a traditional vision of euro-area economic integration, i.e. the traditional idea, largely a brainchild of EPP forces, that Southern states would accept greater control on their economies in exchange for solidarity from the Northern states. Support for this stronger control is weakening, stressed Mr Saarenheimo. The new Parliament, he predicted, is unlikely to want the European Commission to be any stricter in the implementation of economic rules than the previous one. This will result in an erosion of trust between the North and the South. However, Mr Saarenheimo claimed that this should not lead to worry, as he does not see a big role for trust when it comes to building permanent institutions for Europe.



**Frank Schimmelfennig** discussed the role of Differentiated Integration (DI). Whereas before DI was used to be an “ad hoc fix” to facilitate the integration of new policies where there was opposition between some member states, it is now proposed as a proactive strategy to develop the EU further. While DI has been endorsed by prominent figures, he argued, its usefulness is declining. Prof. Schimmelfennig argued that the greatest potential for Differentiated Integration today is in the field of

defence, which at the moment is weakly integrated. However, the EU is most challenged with the reform and consolidation of areas which are already very much integrated (e.g. eurozone, internal market, Schengen area). Prof. Schimmelfennig concluded that the EU faces a dilemma: on the one hand given the high heterogeneity there is a high demand for DI, but looking at the individual policies we find that this would be extremely hard to implement. What the EU needs most at this moment, he added, is strengthening solidarity among member states and strengthening the institutions’ capacity to face the challenges, two objectives for which DI is not the right tool.

**Elisa Pascucci** focused her presentation on how the migration issue was discussed during the EP election campaign and what are the implications of the migration issue for the future development of European integration. In some countries which are heavily affected by migration like Italy, the results of the European elections played in favour of right-wing populist forces, for instance with the League becoming the first party in iconic places for the migration issue (e.g. Lampedusa and Riace). According to Dr Pascucci “refugee crisis” is a misleading term, and we should rather be talking about a crisis of

the EU asylum system. After the 2015-2016 migration peak, a system was put in place with the concept of hotspot at its centre. These centres are aimed at identifying incoming migrants and streamlining of asylum procedures. Under this system, Dr Pascucci argued, Italian and Greek authorities are forced to identify migrants in a way that makes them responsible for these asylum applications. Complementary to the hotspot system, she reminded, is the EU-Turkey statement, with Turkey currently not accepting returns to its territory from mainland Greece. Dr Pascucci concluded her intervention with a recommendation to completely revise or even possibly revoke the hotspot system, and to focus the EU's attention on legal ways of migration and safe passages.

## Parallel sessions I:

### Growth and Multi-Annual Financial Framework

In the afternoon, there were three parallel sessions. The moderator of the session "*Growth and Multi-Annual Financial Framework*" was **Michele Chang** (Professor at the College of Europe and member of the TEPSA Board) and the speakers were **Antti Peltomäki** (Head of the European Commission representation in Finland), **Janica Ylikarjula** (Chief Policy Adviser, EU Affairs, Confederation of Finnish Industries EK) and **Ramūnas Vilpišauskas** (Director of the Institute of International Relations and Political Science at Vilnius University).

According to Mr Peltomäki, the EU cannot really accomplish major achievements through the long-term budget as such. Instead, public funding/spending on both the EU and domestic level would be more beneficial. After the long economic downturn, investments are now going up; however, we are still below average. Mr Peltomäki stated that the key element of the new MFF proposal is to have more focus on investments. Growth cannot be driven solely through money. Instead there needs to be the right overall policies and incentives for growth.

Ms Ylikarjula said that the EU added value does not come from the budget but from the framework that is the single market. The EU budget is an important tool to develop the Union. Ideally, the discussion on the budget would start by deciding which topics are better dealt with on an EU level. We know certain member states are not interested in increasing the EU budget. Ms Ylikarjula argued that the areas which should be financed on the EU level are e.g. research and innovation and internal and external security. We have seen previously that if flexibility is needed, funding can be re-allocated. She continued by saying that at the moment there is lack of unity and trust between EU member states and institutions, which causes the biggest threat. She proposed that we should enforce the single market and its rules and regulations. Also, we need to find growth outside the EU. According to her, for the MFF it is important to improve efficiency and delivery. There should be efficient climate policy and the EU budget could support research and innovation in this field. Ms Ylikarjula argued that the MFF negotiations will be divisive. She advised that Finland needs to be pragmatic. Finally, she argued, funding for research and innovation should not be cut as these are investments for the future of the EU.

In his presentation, Prof. Ramūnas Vilpišauskas presented three points. First, the EU budget's importance for growth is exaggerated. He emphasized that the budget is small, and it is not the EU budget but mostly the single market that provides for the economic growth. Secondly, he argued that the post 2020 budget is still a reflection of yesterday's politics rather than tomorrow's economic needs. Some areas continue to be funded due to compromises made in the past. Changes have been proposed, such as increased funding for research, migration/border control, education and youth etc., which are all facing challenges and have too little funding at the moment. He stressed that trends in terms of EU budget reforms are encouraging but the amounts are still lagging behind. Thirdly, Prof. Vilpišauskas argued that countries are focusing on defending their alleged national interests (despite Brexit and other so-called crises such as Eurozone, refugee crises) rather than taking into consideration how EU funding could help with economic growth.

## Rule of Law challenges in the EU

This session was moderated by **Wolfgang Wessels** (Professor, Jean Monnet Chair of European Politics, University of Cologne, former Chairperson of TEPSA) and gathered the following speakers: **Allan Rosas** (Judge at the EU Court of Justice), **Lucia Mokrá** (Dean of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University of Bratislava and Chairperson of TEPSA), and **Päivi Leino-Sandberg** (Professor of Transnational European Law at the University of Helsinki). The discussion focused on new member states and the challenges they face in rule of law. The EU has helped countries financially to establish institutions required for membership. This includes lots of training to make sure that the state, judges and prosecutors understand the rule of law. Especially, small countries need support from the EU to uphold all the criteria for rule of law. It was also pointed out that the problem with Article 7 is that it is specifically developed for the purpose of disciplining and punishing member states that violate the rule of law. However, it is somewhat ineffective when there are various member states that have infringed the rule of law. Member states also have different understandings of what the broadly defined Article 7 means. There is also a challenge of budgetary conditionality: why should the EU fund states that don't follow EU principles? Current EU treaties do not allow the funding to be cut just because the state doesn't comply with the rule of law. The budget can be made conditional only in a way that it is tied to the use of the funds and the EU budget. To apply this mechanism, each case must be processed individually and the EU has to deal with the results of some national crisis. In the session it was stressed that the E-evidence directive is incredibly important for the rule of law. Judicial authorities in a member state gain access to electronic evidence such as usernames and e-mails. A prosecutor in one state asks for the information from another state and service providers in another state can be put under pressure to comply with the request.

## EU in the Arctic

This session was moderated by **Mika Aaltola** (Programme Director at FIIA), and speakers included: **Jari Vilén**, Senior Adviser for Arctic Policy at the European Political Strategy Centre, European Commission; **Adam Stepien**, Researcher at the Arctic Centre, University of Lapland; and **Andreas Raspotnik**, Senior Research Fellow at the High North Center for Business and Governance. The discussion was held under the Chatham House rule. The discussion focused on the EU's goals in the Arctic including combatting climate change, safeguarding the environment and the local population, supporting the sustainable use of resources and increasing international cooperation on issues related to the Arctic. These



policies are lined out in the 2016 Joint Communication on an integrated EU policy for the Arctic, published by the European Commission and the High Representative. While the paper provides the framework for the EU's activities in the region, it was argued that it is missing the geopolitical dimension, namely the growing interest in the Arctic as a reaction to China's increasing role and activities in the region. Although Russia's focus in the region has shifted towards hard security issues, cooperation on environmental matters in the Arctic have provided a way to keep up dialogue between the EU and Russia during the sanctions regime. Russia is not mentioned in the EU's documents on the Arctic, but lately there seems to be an acknowledgement from the EU's side on the return of the hard security and the increasing role of Russia and China in the region. In order to raise "Arctic awareness", it was argued, the Arctic should be included in bilateral talks with China, for example.

The effects of climate change in the Arctic have been faster and more dramatic than expected, and therefore the EU should be more ambitious on climate change. It was stressed that the Arctic narrative can also be used a starting point for different policies, for example in climate change mitigation, by showcasing how climate change is changing the region. However, the failure of the Arctic Council ministerial meeting in Rovaniemi to agree on a common statement on fighting climate change in the Arctic highlights some difficulties. Climate change can be a decisive factor, as some states will not discuss climate change and others will not discuss the Arctic if climate change is not discussed.

Economic activities have and will keep on increasing in the Arctic region. It was underlined that the EU should not shy away from taking part in these activities, while at the same time promoting high European standards for sustainable development. It is also important that the economic activities will be tailored to the Arctic populations.

It was suggested that a new communication on the EU's policy in the Arctic be made by spring 2021. The process of compiling the communication should involve the European Parliament and the national parliaments more than previously, as they have much to contribute and a lot of interest in the topic. On the other hand, more concrete actions would be welcomed. More focus should be given to the Arctic in the EU, and the focus should be on a more concrete dialogue, moving towards the implementation of the strategies; and streamlining activities and processes to avoid the decline of interest of core groups. Finland can play a significant role in this regard, with a focus on climate change mitigation and supporting the message of the Northern areas stressing the possibilities of economic development and the need for support.

## Plenary Session III: EU defence and the changing security policy landscape

The second day of the conference started with the Plenary Session III "*EU defence and the changing security policy landscape*", where the keynote address was held by **Jyrki Katainen**, Vice-president of the European Commission. Other speakers were **Jori Arvonen**, State Under-Secretary for EU Affairs from the Prime Minister's Office; **Sylvia Hartleif**, Principal Advisor and Leader of the Foreign Policy Team at the European Political Strategy Centre; and **Barbara Kunz**, Research Fellow at the Institut

Français des Relations Internationales. **Gianni Bonvicini**, Scientific Advisor at the Istituto Affari Internazionali moderated the session.

In his presentation Mr Katainen discussed the new paradigm of diversification of threats in security environment (migration, geopolitics, technological changes, etc.) Hybrid warfare, he argued, is increasingly present, and an international response is needed. He also talked about the vulnerability of communication systems, which can be seen as “weapons of mass manipulation”. He stressed that the trading system, that is facing increasing challenges, is a top priority for the EU. US-China tension is on the rise and thus



Europe’s China narrative has changed. For the first time we have a situation where both the US and Russian presidents challenge the Union. Mr Katainen pointed out that uncoordinated, isolated approach does not work. Still 80 % of defence project run on a national basis, and there is not enough investments in defence (R&D). Competition and different systems cost tens of billions annually. The EU has reconsidered its approach. The European Commission’s aim is strengthening the defence industry and its efficiency and competitiveness. It will focus more on SMEs. The level of interest and the quality of proposals is very high. Mr Katainen stressed that change of the mindset is important and mentioned that collaborative thinking is emerging.

Mr Arvonen pointed out that EU member states have the same value base, which Finland will highlight during its presidency. The Finnish presidency will emphasize also defence cooperation. The next years should be an era of consolidation of the ongoing processes (EDF, PESCO, CARD). Mr Arvonen argued that there has been a lack of strategic debate in Europe at the leaders’ level. He continued arguing that Finland will highlight digitalization and Artificial Intelligence of the defence side. Also, EU-NATO cooperation is seen as essential by Mr Arvonen. Concerning hybrid threats, Finland will actively debate in different meetings and there will be more than 20 events around hybrid threats in the fall. Mr Arvonen concluded by saying that we need awareness raising to build comprehensive approach, ability to make decisions, detect threats and to support partners outside the EU.

Ms Hartleif started by arguing that regarding defence, progress has been made. A reason for dynamism is the fact that we are in a strategic moment. She mentioned great power rivalry, systemic competition, hyper-globalization and technological advances. Ms Hartleif said that in the next half year we will have a civilian CSDP compact and review conference, PESCO projects and CARD cycle. She also mentioned that the next MFF and EDF will depend on negotiations.

Dr Kunz analyzed in her presentation the Franco-German cooperation. She said that the surface of the cooperation looks good but there are also cracks. For example, industrial cooperation and export control are completely locked and there is no solution in sight at the moment. The countries have also different approaches on third country participation. Her conclusion was that we are in a situation where there is no joint Franco-German vision on the direction on the EU defence. Necessity to act is the main driver of bilateral cooperation.

Dr Kunz continued that France and Germany have different and independent strategic cultures. However, there is not a clash of visions, only asymmetric situation, where France knows what it wants



and wants to lead but lacks followers. Germany tries to define the essence of German and European defence policy. The countries have also different takes on the security environment. In France urgency is high, but not in Germany. They have also divergent views on the transatlantic relations. Dr Kunz concluded by saying that France and Germany will struggle to find a common vision.

## Parallel sessions II:

### Future of EU-Africa relations

The session on the future of EU-Africa relations was chaired by **Theresa Zitting**, Director of the Unit for Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The panel included: **Jonas Jonsson**, Head of Pan-African Division at the European External Action Service; **Victor Adetula**, Head of Research at The Nordic Africa Institute and **Pol Morillas**, Director of the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB). It was discussed that the dialogue between the EU and African countries has lately been monopolized by the migration issue and that a much broader approach is required to tackle climate change. The interdependence between the EU and African countries is well recognized, and the partnership exists but needs to be strengthened and to shift from traditional development cooperation to a genuine political partnership. This goal was already outlined by the 2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), which sets the agenda for the work of the EEAS with Africa. The main objectives of the JAES are improving the Africa-EU political partnership; promoting peace, security, democratic governance, human rights, sustainable economic development, effective multilateralism, and a people-centered partnership. A lot of cooperation is taking place in the fields of trade, education and peace. Together with strengthening the business environment, supporting education and economic integration; investments are considered an important initiative in creating jobs in Africa. Last year, a Memorandum of Understanding between the African Union (AU) and the EU on Peace, Security and

Governance was adopted, outlining concrete actions to address pressing issues in areas such as peace and security, migration, job creation and agriculture.

In terms of migration, it was pointed out that the focus has been too much on security and irregular migration, while the complexity of migration, together with its root causes and impacts needs to be addressed. Migration cannot be stopped but it can be managed. It is important to recognize all the work done by the AU towards this goal, notably through the Protocol on the free movement of people, adopted in 2018. EU member states need to acknowledge the territorial continuity between Sub-Saharan Africa, the Mediterranean and Northern Europe, also in policy-making. The links between these regions need to be recognized, as there is no clear answer to what happens in the MENA region without looking at what happens in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The EU strategies towards the south need to be revised in order to find a broader agenda and to approach the southern neighborhood in a less technocratic manner. Essentially, new thinking and more respectfulness is required as attitude change also leads to policy change. The role of small EU member countries like Finland was also mentioned as important, due to their lack of a colonial past.

## EU and Russia in Central Asia, Eastern neighbourhood and Western Balkans

The session “*EU and Russia in Central Asia, Eastern neighbourhood and Western Balkans*” was chaired by **Atila Eralp**, Professor, Middle East Technical University. The speakers were **Arkady Moshes**, Programme Director at FIIA; **Dušan Reljić**, Head of Office at the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik; **Julian Plottka**, Senior Researcher at the Institut für Europäische Politik and **Pernille Rieker**, Research Professor at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs.

Dr Moshes argued that Russia is not afraid of conflict with the EU or Western powers in the EU’s Eastern neighbourhood. The EU, by contrast, is (understandably) afraid of conflict, and worried because of the several ongoing transformations in the region. The EU still wants the region to develop politically (stability and security) and to become more



prosperous. However, the Eastern neighbourhood has not become more secure or prosperous during the past decade. The problematic areas are Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. Dr Moshes stated that the EU is scaling down its visions and ambitions. It engages with the regimes as they are. He argued that Russia is not doing that well either. Ukraine, which played a key role in Russia’s foreign policy, is lost politically. Dr Moshes argued that as an economic area Russia is an empty shell. China is seen more in Central Asia than Russia. Soft power has not much influence there. He stressed that no one is willing



to challenge Russia on the Crimean issue. EU enlargement and NATO enlargement have been taken off from the agenda. The West and the EU are not committed. Dr Moshes concluded by saying that the EU should do more and it should step up its conditionality.

Dr Reljić began his presentation by saying that when Yugoslavia disappeared, a vacuum had to be filled. NATO and EU expanded fast in this area and the EU has “swallowed” the region. Dr Reljić mentioned that 75 % of the region’s trade is with the EU (mostly with Germany). Also, 90 % of the banking sector is connected with the EU. In the last 25 years, many people from this area have migrated to the West. Interconnections are strong and in economic terms there has been strong integration to the EU. Mr Reljić stressed that external powers such as Russia, China, Turkey and the US, are spoiling the EU’s chance in building on these interconnections. Russia’s trade in the region is about 5 %, so Russia is not a big investor in the region. However, Russia has a tradition of brotherhood in the region. Dr Reljić further stressed that energy is an interesting point: oil and gas come from Russia, but this does not have an impact on the region. The region is depopulated, so energy consumption is decreasing. Dr Reljić concluded that the EU should think of enlargement of economy as a security issue. Goeconomic investments are needed and the EU should think of enlargement policies and give funds for the countries in the region.

In his address, Dr Plottka focused on Central Asia and stressed that the EU should work closer with international financial institutions. When planning the new strategic document for Central Asia policy, he argued, Russia should not be mentioned, because it would cause problems in implementing the strategy. Russia is still an important partner for the region: it is a great investor and trade partner; Central Asian countries have Russian infrastructure; and concerning military, there is one base in Kyrgyzstan and another base is planned. Dr Plottka continued that the US is not that interested in the region. Therefore, the EU is the only external power to balance Russia and China in the region. Lastly, he pointed out that the Eurasian economic connectivity should be made sustainable.

Dr Rieker started by saying that the EU’s policy in the Eastern neighbourhood has shifted radically and these changes require new approaches. The changes have been mental changes in the Union’s self-image. She stressed that transformative power has been a challenge: after 2008 Europeanization was inevitable, but now it is challenged by Russia’s and China’s influence. The EU has become also less eager in its activities in the region. The situation in Ukraine is obvious, but also other regions have deteriorated. The EU has revised its neighbourhood policy priorities. European citizens have become a priority and enlargement has slowed down. There is more concern on European stability in relation to border control. Dr Rieker argued that priority seems to be regional governance and it has to accept policies and different interests.

## Brexit – EU-UK future relations

**Jaap de Zwaan**, Secretary General of TEPSA moderated the session on “*Brexit – EU-UK future relations*”. The panel included **Brendan Donnelly**, Director of the Federal Trust; **Petr Kratochvíl**, Senior Researcher at the Institute of International Relations Prague; and **Ignacio Molina**, Senior Analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute.

Mr Donnelly discussed the three possible outcomes of Brexit in the short-term. The first scenario would be the revocation of Article 50 by the British government, but this is considered very unlikely. The second scenario is the conclusion of a withdrawal agreement, which is also very unlikely. The third option is a no-deal outcome – a solution which is not excluded by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Mr Donnelly pointed out that Brexit holds a lot of delusion as to what Britain might gain. He stressed that parliamentarians who oppose Boris Johnson might oppose the no-deal outcome incredibly strongly and demand a second referendum. A referendum might be considered a lesser evil to avoid a no-deal outcome and could be held either after a general election or instead of a general election.

Dr Kratochvil stated that the Central European countries (the “EU’s Eastern wing”) used to hold the United Kingdom to an incredibly high standard as a beacon of golden democracy. The true impact of Brexit is on the self-identification of the Central Europeans countries. Britain has been painted as a key ally to the EU’s Eastern wing in many important areas. Brexit creates a panic in the area, he argued, because both the Transatlantic link and peace in Eastern Europe seem to be crumbling. Dr Kratochvil argued that the second problem is deeper integration. The EU is not seen in a positive light when it comes to the control of power. The intergovernmental camp is weaker but regionally as strong as ever. His final point was that the Brexit negotiations are a mortal blow for Eurosceptics.

Prof. Molina noted that the UK has a special position in the EU seen from the other EU members. The change in UK’s attitude not the EU is due to various factors i.e. changes in the Conservative party, the enter into force of the Lisbon treaty and the rise of UKIP. There is also an issue with euro as the official currency of Europe. Prof. Molina also analyzed the potential positive effects of Brexit for the EU, which could be a more integrated union, with a stronger coherent external action, the euro as an official EU currency, budgetary benefits and financial regulations. There are a number of options for future relations with the UK, he stressed,, some more likely than others (e.g. the EFTA/Norwegian option –

customized joining; the Swiss option – bilateral agreements under constant negotiation; the Turkish option – customs union; or the Canadian option – a free-trade agreement).

**Michael Kaeding**, Chairperson of TEPSA, concluded the conference by thanking all the participants for the lively discussions and interesting sessions, and by announcing that the next TEPSA Pre-Presidency Conference will be held in Zagreb, Croatia, hosted by the Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO).



## Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA) 2019 Finnish Pre-Presidency Conference

6–7 June 2019, Helsinki  
*The National Museum of Finland*

### *Programme*

Co-organized and hosted by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs

*With support from*



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## Day 1: 6 June 2019

12:00 – 12:30 Registration

12:30 – 12:45 Words of welcome

**Teija Tiilikainen**, Director, Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA)

**Jaap de Zwaan**, Secretary General of the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA), Emeritus Professor, Erasmus University in Rotterdam

12:45 – 13:30 Plenary session I: Priorities of the Finnish EU Council presidency

**Keynote address** by **Kare Halonen**, State Secretary, EU Affairs, Prime Minister's Office

**TEPSA recommendations** for the Finnish EU Presidency by **Sabina Lange**, TEPSA Board

**Young ideas for Europe** by **Jana Schubert**, Research Associate, Institut für Europäische Politik (IeP) and **Sara Kibler**, Rapporteur of the project #EngagEU

**Comments** by **Kare Halonen**, State Secretary, EU Affairs, Prime Minister's Office

Moderator: **Teija Tiilikainen**, Director, FIIA

13:30 – 15:30 Plenary session II – The Future of Europe

*(panel organized in the framework of the [InDivEU project](#))*

**Keynote address** by **Michel Barnier**, Chief Negotiator, Taskforce on Article 50 negotiations with the United Kingdom  
**Brexit and the Future of the EU**

**Panel discussion on the Future of Europe in light of EU elections**

Speakers:

- **Michael Kaeding**, Chairperson of TEPSA, Professor, University of Duisburg-Essen
- **Tuomas Saarenheimo**, Permanent Under-Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Finland
- **Frank Schimmelfennig**, Professor and Head of European Politics Group, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zürich)
- **Elisa Pascucci**, Researcher, University of Helsinki

Moderator: **Juha Jokela**, Programme Director, FIIA



15:30 – 16:00 *Coffee Break*

16:00 – 17:30 **Parallel sessions I**

## 1. Growth and Multi-Annual Financial Framework

*Room: Karhunpesä*

Moderator: **Michele Chang**, Professor, College of Europe

Speakers:

- **Antti Peltomäki**, Head of the European Commission representation in Finland
- **Janica Ylikarjula**, Chief Policy Adviser, EU Affairs, Confederation of Finnish Industries EK
- **Ramūnas Vilpišauskas**, Director, Professor, Institute of International Relations and Political Science of Vilnius University

## 2. Rule of Law challenges in the EU

*Room: Auditorium*

Moderator: **Wolfgang Wessels**, Professor, Jean Monnet Chair of European Politics, University of Cologne

Speakers:

- **Allan Rosas**, Judge, EU Court of Justice
- **Lucia Mokrá**, Dean of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences, Comenius University of Bratislava
- **Päivi Leino-Sandberg**, Professor of Transnational European Law, University of Helsinki

## 3. EU in the Arctic

*Room: Atelje, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor*

Moderator: **Mika Aaltola**, Programme Director, FIIA

Speakers:

- **Jari Vilén**, Senior Adviser for Arctic Policy, European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC), European Commission
- **Adam Stepien**, Researcher, Arctic Centre, University of Lapland
- **Andreas Raspotnik**, Senior Research Fellow, High North Center for Business and Governance, Bodø, Norway

## Day 2: 7 June 2019

9:00 – 9:30 Registration

9:30 – 11:00 **Plenary Session III: EU defence and the changing security policy landscape**

**Keynote address** by **Jyrki Katainen**, Vice-president of the European Commission

Speakers:

- **Jori Arvonon**, State Under-Secretary for EU Affairs, Prime Minister's Office
- **Sylvia Hartleif**, Principal Advisor, Leader Foreign Policy Team, European Political Strategy Centre, European Commission
- **Barbara Kunz**, Research Fellow, Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI)

Moderator: **Gianni Bonvicini**, Scientific Advisor, Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)

11:00 – 11:30 *Coffee break*

11:30 – 13:00 **Parallel sessions II:**

**1. Future of EU–Africa relations**

*Room: Atelje, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor*

Moderator: **Theresa Zitting**, Director of the Unit for Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Speakers:

- **Jonas Jonsson**, Head of Pan-African Division, European External Action Service (EEAS)
- **Victor Adetula**, Head of Research, The Nordic Africa Institute (NAI)
- **Pol Morillas**, Director, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB)

**2. EU and Russia in Central Asia, Eastern neighbourhood and Western Balkans**

*(panel organized in the framework of the [SEnECA project](#))*

*Room: Auditorium*

Moderator: **Atila Eralp**, Professor, Middle East Technical University (METU)

Speakers:

- **Arkady Moshes**, Programme Director, FIIA
- **Julian Plottka**, Senior Researcher, Institut für Europäische Politik (IeP)
- **Pernille Rieker**, Research Professor, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI)
- **Dušan Reljić**, Head of Office, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP)

### 3. Brexit – EU–UK future relations

*Room: Karhunesä*

Moderator: **Jaap de Zwaan**, Secretary General of TEPSA

Speakers:

- **Brendan Donnelly**, Director, Federal Trust
- **Petr Kratochvíl**, Senior Researcher, Institute of International Relations Prague
- **Ignacio Molina**, Senior Analyst, Elcano Royal Institute

### 13:00 – 13:30 Conclusions

*Room: Auditorium*

**Michael Kaeding**, Chairperson of TEPSA



# Recommendations from members of the TEPSA network to the incoming Finnish Presidency

*The Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA) has a tradition of formulating recommendations to the incoming Council Presidency. Mario Kölling and Ignacio Molina (Elcano Royal Institute, Madrid), Lucia Mokrá (Comenius University, Bratislava, and TEPSA Board member), Pol Morillas (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs - CIDOB) and Martin Unfried (Maastricht University) contributed to the recommendations. Sabina Lange (European Institute of Public Administration, Maastricht, and TEPSA Board member) co-ordinated the process and composed the recommendations. They do not necessarily represent the views of TEPSA or its Member Institutes. The recommendations will be presented to the incoming Finnish Presidency by Sabina Lange on the occasion of the TEPSA Pre-Presidency Conference on 6-7 June 2019 in Helsinki. The conference is organised by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA) and TEPSA, with support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the European Commission – Europe for Citizens and Horizon 2020 programmes (in the framework of the SEnECA and InDivEu projects).*

**June 2019**

## Preamble

Finland will take over the six-month rotating Presidency of the Council following the EU parliamentary elections in May 2019. Finland's Presidency will coincide with the start of the European Parliament's 9<sup>th</sup> legislative term. This timeframe will also see the election of a new Commission President alongside the appointments of a new President of the European Council, High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, and College of Commissioners. Finland will be facilitating these processes with European citizens' eyes on Brussels in expectation of delivery on the election promises.

At the same time, this will be the period of lower legislative activity in the EP, allowing Finland to focus comparatively more on the work in the Council, which will allow for the legislative work with the EP to resume without delay. While finalising the negotiations on the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027, there will nevertheless be more space for policy debates.

The Finnish Presidency takes place in the middle of the 18-month programme of the Romanian, Finnish and Croatian Presidencies, which emphasises common values, commitment to the European project, proximity to citizens, unity and consensus, as well as support for the multilateral system. The priorities for the Finnish Presidency emanate from these principles.

Therefore, our recommendations concentrate broadly on the MFF negotiations as decisive for growth, on rule of law as essential to Europe's values and unity, and on Europe's global role, with particular focus on the EU's relations with Africa and the debate surrounding the Union's strategic autonomy. These recommendations take into account the timing of their presentation and the role of the rotating Presidency in the EU.

## Growth and conclusion of the negotiation on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027

The negotiation of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027 is one of the most decisive topics on the EU agenda for the months to come. An agreement on the MFF before the end of 2019 is



essential for the work on regulations on specific spending headings to be completed in time for the programmes to be initiated in 2021. Despite the progress made during the Austrian and Romanian Presidencies, contending views persist on a number of issues, including the overall size of the MFF, funding of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Cohesion Policy, climate mainstreaming, links with the European Semester, and the new instrument supporting the Economic and Monetary Union. Therefore, mediating activities of the Presidency in the Council will be essential. The Presidency has powers to concentrate the meetings on open issues, to structure the deliberations, and to convoke ‘confessionals’ during which other member states reveal their interests and ‘red lines’, allowing the Presidency to formulate a common ground which may lead to a unified position.

At the same time, the Presidency will have to work closely with other actors to ensure that an absolute majority of the newly elected European Parliament supports the MFF agreement. Transparency and inclusiveness should govern relations with the EP. Since the preferences of the Finnish Presidency are in line with the MFF proposed by the European Commission, the Presidency is well placed to support the MFF as a strong instrument for promoting economic growth. It can use this as a platform for winning the support among the member states and in the EP for the finalisation of the Digital Single Market and a strengthened focus on the EU’s social responsibility to its citizens, especially regarding education and youth unemployment.

## **Rule of Law**

The rule of law is one of the fundamental values of the European Union. It is a value that allows member states and EU institutions to work together and trust each other. The rule of law forms the basis of democratic systems in all member states, is central to the functioning of the internal market and is vital for making the European Union work as an area of freedom, security and justice. Confronted with situations which revealed systemic threats to the rule of law, the Commission reacted in 2014 by adopting the Rule of Law Framework to address such threats. In April 2019 the Commission laid down possible avenues for further strengthening the Rule of Law Framework and called for other parties, including the Council and member states, to reflect on its proposals.

Finland expressed its support for the connection between the MFF and respect for the rule of law by the member states. According to the EU JUSTICE scoreboard 2019, Finland is the country with the highest level of evaluated independence. From its Presidency seat, it is therefore best placed to steer the response to the Commission’s invitation to reflect on the strengthening of the rule of law framework with a view to preparing Council Conclusions.

Reflection on the Rule of Law framework in the Council should consider the application of this framework across EU programmes and policies, also by linking it to the European Semester. It should also aim to communicate the potential threat to the rule of law with member states institutions early on and to make the rule of law toolkit an effective instrument in strengthening this fundamental value. The Presidency also has a chance to raise awareness of the need to respect the rule of law in order to protect our democracies, safeguard fundamental rights and maintain a cooperation among the member states that is based on solidarity and trust. In formal, informal and outreach meetings the Presidency should highlight the importance of the rule of law in every area of cooperation to ensure that work within and between member states and citizens is conducted in a spirit of trust. Trust in public institutions and the justice system is imperative for an effective and democratic European Union.

## **Climate change and environment**

The 2015 Paris Agreement on climate set out the goal to contain the rise in average global temperatures to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. However, without

additional efforts by the EU and others, these targets are unlikely to be met, resulting in serious consequences for member states and third countries alike. The 9 May Sibiu meeting of EU Heads of State and Government displayed challenges ahead of the EU in combining high-level ambition and unity in climate policy.

Finland has proven itself to be well placed to address the challenges posed by climate change. Accordingly, several climate actions have been scheduled during the Finnish Presidential term. These include the EU-wide adoption of a forward-thinking emissions strategy, with the EU to submit the details of the strategy to the United Nations by early 2020. Finland's Presidency will also be the first to operate under the European Commission's long-term climate strategy, which calls for a carbon neutral economy by 2050 and reemphasises the importance of abiding by the terms of the Paris Agreement.

The Finnish Government has yet to join the member states pledging for carbon neutrality by 2050. While Finland has created a strategy that outlines the steps necessary for it to meet and surpass the EU's targets, Finland's decision not to join the above-mentioned pledge should help it secure a neutral, more persuasive position during its Presidency. As Germany's reticence towards the 2050 target appears to be softening, the Finnish approach should prove instrumental in Germany's eventual decision. In parallel to the debate on the 2050 target, the member states must also prepare their ten-year (2020-2030) national energy and climate plans by the end of 2019 to abide by the EU's Governance Regulation. The Finnish Presidency should make the most of this opportunity and talk to member states to determine how their plans align with the 2050 long-term strategy.

## **Global role and Europe's security: relations with Africa**

The Arab Spring of 2011 and the migration wave of 2015-2016 showed not only how close Africa is to Europe, but also that Africa is a continent connected by the Sahara rather than divided by it. This recognition leads to the understanding that the EU must look at Africa through a continent-to-continent perspective. Issues such as the internal-external security nexus, movements of people, socio-economic trends and demography stretch from northern Europe to Sub-Saharan Africa and pass through the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean Sea, however, has become more of a lake, and it is through this lesser size in the face of today's transport and communication technologies that the Mediterranean defines the shape and future of EU-Africa relations.

The renewal of EU-ACP partnerships/Cotonou agreement after 2020 presents an opportunity to strategically rethink the EU-Africa relationship. The gradual gravitational shift from North Africa and the Middle East towards the Gulf and sub-Saharan Africa also calls for a rethinking of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Upgrading the Cotonou agreement to a more ambitious partnership goes hand in hand with the revision of the ENP to further incorporate the challenges and strategic approaches to the neighbours of the neighbours and to gradually move to a continent-based relationship instead of a neighbourhood-based one. This would also enable the EU to have a more global approach to international politics, taking into account the increasing influence of world powers such as Russia or China in the developments within territories closer to the EU. This is why Finland is well placed to facilitate the ripening of such a vision of EU-Africa relations during its term in office. Finnish Presidency events in Finland in the area of the EU's external action, including informal ministerial meetings, should be dedicated to finding common ground for member states. This common understanding and support from members should focus on the operationalisation and application of the EU Global Strategy's principles and objectives in Africa.