

Session 5

Europe's Multidimensional Challenges: Revitalising Multilateralism



Moderator

Melinda Nucifora

Speakers

Dr. Pavel K. Baev, Research Professor at the Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO)

Ryszard Czarnecki, Member, European Parliament

Dr Joris Van Bladel, Senior Associate Fellow, Egmont-Royal and Institute for International Relations

Dr Antonia Colibășanu, Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy Research Institute

Dr. Tessa Hauswedell, Lecturer, University College London

Discussants

H.E. Ms. Olga Hajflerová, Consul General, Czech Republic

Prof. Kıvanç Ulusoy, Professor of Political Sciences, Istanbul University

Prof Meltem Müftüler-Baç, Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Professor of International Relations, Sabancı University

Emre Gönen, CCR Executive Board, Bilgi University; Advisor to the Rector at Istanbul Bilgi University

Ana María Rodríguez Pérez, Communication Advisor, Embassy of the Kingdom of Spain in the Republic of Türkiye

Naim Rashiti, Executive Director, Balkans Policy Research Group

Prof. Talha Köse, Professor of International Relations

Key Takeaways

- The European Union (EU)'s multilateralism faces a critical juncture as Russia transforms from a strategic partner to a perceived threat, necessitating a comprehensive reassessment of strategies.
- Challenges arise within the EU due to the absence of a cohesive foreign policy, accentuated by diverse member-state responses to the Ukraine conflict. National identities often supersede a harmonised European identity, impacting internal cohesion.
- While the EU adapts strategically to manage conflicts and avoid hegemony, persistent challenges linger, including the tiered system among EU citizens and the imperative for vigilance against Russian threats.
- The EU's existence requires a commitment to inclusive dialogue, diversity celebration, and addressing multifaceted challenges. Concerns arise about EU dependencies on the US for security, ammunition, and public sentiment, emphasising the need for strategic autonomy.

Summary

In this expert roundtable, it was claimed that the EU's multilateralism, shaped by the aftermath of the Ukraine war, faces multifaceted challenges. Geopolitical shifts, particularly Russia's transformation, demand a comprehensive reassessment of strategies. Internal challenges, such as the absence of a cohesive foreign policy and struggles with identity consolidation, underscore the delicate balance required for effective multilateralism. The EU exhibits adaptability but contends with persistent issues like the tiered system among citizens and the imperative for vigilance against Russian threats.

The complexity extends to marketing challenges, where the EU's commendable performance in the Ukraine war contrasts with external perceptions favouring NATO. Inclusivity, diversity, and addressing challenges like ageing populations and external dependencies on the US become critical. The EU's dedication to a holistic and multilateral approach is questioned, emphasising the need for a resilient framework amid evolving geopolitical dynamics. Overall, experts of this roundtable noted that navigating such challenges is pivotal for the EU's sustained effectiveness on the global stage.