Young Leaders Study Group on the Future of Europe: The EU, the West, and the Rest

"Looking Inward, Looking Outward – the EU and its Relations with the East and the West"

Report

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Introduction

For the second time in three years, the American Council on Germany, the Dräger Foundation and the ZEIT foundation Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius have convened a Young Leaders Study Group on the Future of Europe. The meetings of the first group dealing with the relations of an enlarged Europe with the United States were adequately timed around the "big bang" of May 1, 2004. The new group will look further and take Wider Europe and the Wider World into its focus. Starting out in Berlin in April 2006, the 38 participants from 17 nations will meet again in Washington D.C., Istanbul, and Brussels over a period of two years.

While the basic mood during the first group's meetings was not necessarily euphoria – after all, they started their discussions shortly after the Iraq crisis and ended them just ahead of the referenda in France and the Netherlands – at least the feeling of something extraordinary like the "unification of Europe" happening was there. Two years after this event, the second Study Group faces much more uncertainty, both at the European and Global level.

For some, the question is still there whether the last Enlargement has done more good or harm to the project of European integration. Certainly, a point of debate is how far this enlargement process can go on and what, if not membership, the European Union (EU) could offer those states that it does not want to take on as members. The relation with the United States (U.S.) has clearly been stabilised after the 2003 crisis, but what exactly 'the West' understands by a (new?) global order and whether Russia is a partner or a competitor in this endeavour still remains unanswered. Economic globalisation, though happily proposed and enacted by both the EU and the U.S. for decades, now faces stiff protectionist resistance on both continents. And, last but certainly not least, there are conflicts like over the nuclear programme of Iran that put a strain on policies both within the EU and among the Western countries as a whole.

Against this background, the Study Group opened their discussions in the German capital. Taking Europe as a starting point does not mean to see Europe as the world's navel. Much more, it is because the EU has been navel-gazing for so long that it prevented itself from playing an active global role alongside the United States. However, an 'undefined something' does not make for a good partner in world politics. Therefore, also this report sets out with the discussion on what Europe, what the EU is about (1), before it starts to look into the EU's neighbourhood and its fuzzy borders (2). The global look then takes into focus both partners like the United States as well as areas of common engagement (3), before concluding on highlighting some of the challenges 'out there' (4).

1   Looking Inward: The Essence of Europe

In a perfect world, a state or society would first (and maybe once and for all) define its identity and only then engage with its neighbours. In today's world, this is not an option, especially not for something like the European Union: a hybrid structure, neither state nor fully supranational organisation, which acts alongside its constituent members, constantly taking over new responsibilities from them (and sometimes also passing back some tasks). The Union cannot take a rest from European and world affairs to meet in conclave until white smoke signals success. Any discussion of identity and essence has to take place next to the daily business and, therefore, will also be influenced by current events.

1.1 Identity

Before there may have been any European identity, there was something like a European idea: The Unification of Europe was a project of visionary people already in medieval times and especially in the Renaissance. It was longed for even more in the inter-war period of the 1920s and 1930s. But it was only after the Second World War that Europe has turned from a lofty idea into a concrete confidence-building measure, as one speaker put it.

Identity itself was seen by speakers and participants alike as an elusive concept, marked rather by clichés than by a precise definition. The so-called 'Euro-sceptic' would even argue that there is no such thing as a European identity, and that it could and certainly should not be enhanced. The most common understanding is that there are multiple identities in Europe, where a European framework gives hold to different layers of identity: Like a Russian *babushka* doll, one has a personal identity at the core, then adding a local and regional layer before coming to the – often more clearly defined – national identity layer. It follows the European tier, which again is enclosed by what unites us all, i.e. the human (or, politically speaking, the United Nations) outer layer.

One speaker observed a cultural and philosophical continuity over three millennia, starting with the Greeks and the Romans, but this continuity certainly did not extend to the political level. This pan-European trait, which historically included the whole Mediterranean region, makes it clear that those countries that are (politically) not part of the EU should under no circumstances be denied a European identity.

Another speaker deplored that much of the evolving European identity is developed in contrast to the United States. While some may say that it is natural to balance superpower, he saw this relationship less as a competition between partners and more as a mirror: The EU wants to be like the U.S. and is frustrated that it cannot be like it. Whether one takes the U.S. as alter ego or counterpart – others made the argument that, as a matter of principle, the European identity should not be defined negatively, e. g. against "the other" – be it non-EU neighbours, the United States, or indeed the rest of the world.

1.1.1 Values

While the *babushka* image is helpful in illustrating that a national and a European identity are not in contradiction to each other, it does not provide a definition of "Europeanness". Values are a central element of any identity, and an enumeration of them can luckily be found in some of the most important EU documents. In the Preamble to the Treaty on European Union (the 1992 Maastricht Treaty), the Heads of State or Government of the EU Member States confirm their attachment to "the principles of liberty, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and of the rule of law" as well as to "fundamental social rights as defined in the European Social Charter".

In the "Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe", the so-called Constitutional Treaty which was signed by all 25 Member States' governments, the Union's values are made explicit in Article I-2:

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

These values can serve as a reference to identity, but they can also, as one speaker pointed out, become an aim. Thus, the EU has set itself, both in the Treaties in force and the proposed Constitutional Treaty, specific objectives:

- to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples;
- to offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, and an internal market where competition is free and undistorted;

- and to work for the sustainable development of Europe based on balanced economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment.

Finally, the speaker continued, these values can also serve as a source of protection: On the one hand, the defence of the basic rights of individual citizens vis-à-vis the state or the Union; on the other hand, the international security environment in which the Union, by establishing a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), pledges "to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter" (Title V, Art. 11 of the Treaty on European Union).

Nevertheless, some questions do arise from these quotations. The first is, in what way these values are particularly *European*, as opposed to 'Western' (i.e. shared with, for example, the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand) or even universal? If they are not universal, is this because of their Christian foundations, as one participant suspected, thus making them exclusive to others? A second question would be, how far the European citizens are aware that they – supposedly – share these values? One speaker argued that, in fact, the people felt these values to be an artificial creation and too distant from their daily lives. Thirdly, it could be asked, what practical implications flow from this: Even if there is agreement among Member States about the ideal of a "Social Europe" as one speaker confirmed, there is still a (political) debate about the means to achieve such an ideal. This is the point where national identities come into play.

1.1.2   National Identity
The Nation state remains the basic building bloc of the European System, not just in legal terms (the Union is established by a Treaty among the Member States) but also in the very practical understanding of most EU citizens. The largest part of a citizen's loyalties is directed to the national level. It was even made a provision of the Treaty that "The Union shall respect the national identities of its Member States" (Art. 6 III of the Treaty on European Union).

This has been given new urgency after the recent Enlargement as some of the new member states had only recently regained their sovereignty and, thus, had had little time to discuss their own identity. Especially in times of the pressures from globalisation, there is a strong wish among the people to know what the Nation State is for, one speaker said. Therefore, traditional elements are back on the rise in these countries, e.g. in Poland. And what is more, an over-imposing European identity could lead to a feeling of having passed "from one (Soviet) Union to another (European) Union", one of the speakers warned.

However, such 're-nationalisation' is not limited to the new Member States as shows the 'Leitkultur' discussion in Germany. Also a country like Turkey, which has only started to negotiate its membership, is already in deep discussion about its national identity: Whether she should view herself as a secular state with a Muslim majority, or as a moderate Muslim country, one participant reported. And the same kind of soul-searching currently takes place in the U.S., ranging from questions of identity to practical issues like economic protectionism.

Closely related to the question of national identity is the complex issue of national interest. With regard to EU politics, a 'two-level game' can often be observed in national governments: When participating in EU decision-making through the Council of Ministers, they may use their supposedly reluctant electorates as a bargaining chip. Once such a decision is made, governments, in the need to be re-elected on day, often try to please their electorates by blaming all negative policies on 'Brussels' while taking credit for all good things. This, however, is bound to create an alienation on the side of the citizens that eventually fires back on the common project, the EU. "One cannot blame the EU six days a week and praise it on the seventh," one speaker frustratedly noted.

With regard to EU Communication, the Member States have a prime role to play in selling Europe. On most policy issues of today's world, there is not only no dichotomy of a national vs. the European interest. Much more the situation is such that the national interest of any Member State can best be served when the common European interest is enhanced. To be true, by entering the European Union, Member States bind themselves to the *Acquis communautaire*, pooling sovereignty at the European level. So there are both cost and benefits to EU membership, but the benefits need to be communicated as well, one speaker demanded.

1.1.3   Diversity

"Unity in Diversity" is the new motto of the European Union: To cherish the continent's cultural diversity while embracing political unity, all founded on common values. For many Europeans, this clearly is a reason to celebrate. One speaker reminded the audience that Member States like Belgium or Germany, which as federal states know a lot about national diversity, also appear to be the most integrationist at the European level. One participant added that prospective candidate countries like Ukraine or the Western Balkan states have themselves a multicultural experience, which they would bring into Europe. And another speaker provided the image of Europe being a big mosaic rather than 25 mere billiard balls.

It is this understanding of productive diversity – instead of diversity as a weakness – that can turn the inevitable conflicts of societal life into something positive: "Europe is a conflict-resolution case," one participant put it. It is the intensive practice of co-operation, a hallmark of the current EU, through which elements of European identity are born. Co-operation is possible only when there are common interests. And this is what makes the EU a model for other countries and regions, too.

1.2   Achievements

The EU would not be such a model – and despite all its current difficulties and shortcomings, many would agree that it still is – if it had not achieved anything substantial. So at the outset of their discussions, the Study Group was asked to "take the pulse" of the EU. On this, one participant cannily noted that measuring the pulse need not mean that 'the patient' is sick; it could also be a routine check. Moreover, neither a low pulse (good for athletes) nor a high pulse (a sign of adrenaline) was necessarily a bad thing. So in a very European way of positive thinking and interpretation, any result could be good as long as the process was right: "Asking the right question is half of the answer," one participant claimed.

Irony aside, there was broad agreement that the European Union had achieved to create a zone of peace, stability, and prosperity in (most of) Europe, which has steadily expanded over the years. Even though the process has not been linear, but often characterised by messy compromises, as one speaker pointed out, the EU should be regarded as a success story. This is especially true for enlargement, as this process has not only extended the EU's reach, but has more often than not been a catalyst for necessary internal reforms.

The Copenhagen criteria[1], defined in 1993 in the wake of the fall of the Iron Curtain and with a view to accepting the newly independent states from Central and Eastern Europe as Member States, have become the real criteria for Europeanness. They are a *conditio sine qua non* for any state wishing to join the Union, thus guaranteeing a homogenous area of political stability and prosperity. In addition, in preparing itself for the accession of new members, the EU has had to reform old (or invent new) internal and external policies: This was the case with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Development policy, or with the introduction of a Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) and Common Foreign and Security Policy. After the last

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[1] The so-called Copenhagen criteria are of political (Democracy, Rule of Law, Minority rights), economic (Market economy, capacity to withstand competition), and legal-institutional nature (ability to implement the *acquis communautaire*). While these are applied to the applicant state, a "fourth criterion" relates to the EU itself: The fact that the Union can absorb new members without losing the integration momentum.

enlargement to eight formerly Communist countries, the EU can now even make use of the transition experience of its members when designing external policies. This could be the case for the Western Balkan states, for which EU membership is as much a "sweet cookie" – in the words of one participant – as it was for the Central and Eastern European countries.

On the political level, the degree of political unity among EU member states, even though often contested, is a remarkable achievement, many participants put forward. This was displayed lately by the signature of 25 Heads of State or Government of the Constitutional Treaty, a political agreement based on one and a half years of work of the European Convention. While the process of ratifying this Treaty has been put on hold due to the unfavourable referenda in two Member States, the passing of this document both in the Convention and in the ensuing Intergovernmental Conference represents a major step towards the "ever closer union" as it has been proclaimed in the Treaties ever since the European Economic Community entered into force in 1957.

Another great political achievement, though not equally shared by all (old and new) Member States, was said to be the Schengen agreement. Lifting restrictions on travelling within the EU, in particular abolishing internal border controls, is a very practical way of constructing Europe from the bottom, one participant remarked.

The field of the EU's greatest achievement, however, has been the economic and not the political one. From a war-torn and divided continent in the middle of the 20th century, the EU has by now become an economic giant, globally on par with the United States. It has created an Internal Market of now 450 million customers, the most powerful economic bloc worldwide. Yet this achievement is tainted by a poor fulfilment of the promised Four Freedoms (free movement of goods, capital, labour, and persons). The recent debate about the Services directive showed just how far the EU finds itself behind these genius principles.

Another, literally very tangible achievement of the EU has been the Single Currency. Introduced in 1999 (and in 2002 with coins and bank notes), the Euro has become the glue that connects (at least many) Member States, one participant observed. At the same time, participants felt strongly that the currency should not build new walls by keeping the new Member States out of the system for a longer time than justified by purely monetary reasons.

This decade-long success story of institutional, political, and economic achievements is diluted by weak economic growth throughout the EU in the past years. Although it is the economic integration, which has enabled 25 different and relatively small nation states to deal with globalisation, they have, on average, not been competitive with rising powers like China or India, one speaker lamented. Despite differences in growth and competitiveness between EU countries, there are structural deficiencies and demographic implications that can no longer be ignored. Economic and political successes have always been strongly inter-connected, one speaker reminded the audience. Therefore, both institutional and economic reforms are not only necessary, but should be pursued simultaneously in order to have a mutually reinforcing effect.

1.2.1 *Institutional Reform*

At the very basic institutional level, reform is necessary because the Treaty on European Union in force (the Nice Treaty) stipulates institutional arrangements for only 27 Member States. Thus, institutional reform is required before any further enlargement after the accession of Romania and Bulgaria in 2007 or 2008. The proposed Constitutional Treaty indeed would have answered some of the urgent institutional questions and made enlargement to Turkey and Croatia, the next two countries on the list, possible. More than that, it was originally meant to make the EU more democratic, efficient, and transparent. Part of the debate was then about whether or not this document could or should be revived.

One speaker argued in favour of the new Treaty, paraphrasing rock singer Frank Zappa saying "It's not dead yet, but it smells funny." Despite all the document's shortcomings, like that it

was overcharged with political (i.e. constitutionally irrelevant) content, the EU should try to find a way to ratify it, with the same content but under a different name. One or two countries ought not to hold up the whole process. Participants were informed that such 'revival' is on the agenda of the German EU presidency in the first half of 2007, most probably after the elections in France and the Netherlands in the spring of 2007.

While some argued in favour of a 'Treaty light', cut down to institutional rules, others were against this 'cherry-picking' because they saw the document as a global compromise that would fall apart once some sections were taken out. One participant spoke out strongly against the idea of a European hard core (or *avant-garde*), as this could only be defensive and negative. A point well taken was the call for target dates for internal reform: The Member States failed to agree to these reforms throughout the 1990s, manufacturing a weak half-compromise only in Nice in 2001. Now that the institutional design has come to its limits, clear and binding deadlines were necessary in order to enable the EU to move forward.

1.2.2   Economic Reform

The relative strength (or weakness) of such target dates is illustrated in the field of economic reform. The Lisbon Strategy, passed by the Heads of State and Government in 2000 at the height of the boom, did not shy away from bold statements like making the EU "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion". Yet, the national leaders did not foresee the economic downturn of the following years, nor did they care to set binding targets to achieve these goals. The Strategy was, as one speaker named it, a "Christmas tree of wishes without responsibilities".

This was rectified – to some extent – in the mid-term review in 2005, setting target dates and responsibilities for both the Member States and the European Commission. The Lisbon Strategy, one speaker explained, has a true core: its analysis about the effects of demographic change, globalisation, and declining productivity. Not reaching the goals is therefore not the main problem, he continued, as long as the Member States were learning from each other. Especially the Scandinavian members were model states with regard to economic productivity and reform. Based on the Open Method of Co-ordination, where the goals are defined jointly at the European level but the way to reach these is left to Member States, the best the Lisbon Strategy could provide are learning experiences and good practices.

1.3   Public Opinion and Communication

What many people regard as the EU's great successes, to create an Internal Market with common rules and to expand this to more and more countries, has recently become a point of criticism in many a public debate in the Member States. While in the regular *Eurobarometer* polls, people praise the EU for the peace, stability, and prosperity it provided in the past, scepticism is voiced whether it can also protect its citizens in the future – or whether it has not rather become a danger to them.

This is the view that was taken after the two referenda in France and the Netherlands, when academics tried to analyse what exactly the *Non* and the *Ne* to the Constitution had meant. Regardless of the national implications (potential discontent with the government or general disinterest), some have come to the conclusion that the EU was seen by many as not really protecting the citizens from globalisation, but rather being a transmission belt. This was exemplified by the proposed Services directive aimed at liberalising the service sector throughout the EU, which was a major part of the No-campaign in France. The same is true for enlargement where some large parts of citizens throughout the EU think that the EU should stop expanding now in order to preserve what it has achieved – if it should not have stopped before 2004's "big bang", that is.

In general, however, participants agreed that one major success of the referenda was that, in those countries, at least the people had had a discussion about the pros and cons of European integration (even if this was not precisely the question asked). People today are much more informed about the EU and they want to say what they think about Europe, one speaker observed. Moreover, it would be wrong to assume that people would want less Europe, one participant declared. People wanted a "Europe that delivers". It was one of the biggest failures of the EU, another added, that the process of political and economic integration has been pursued without explaining it to the general public, let alone convincing the electorate of it.

1.3.1 An EU Communication Strategy

The current Communication Strategy of the European Commission is called "Plan D", with D standing for democracy, dialogue, and discussion. It was developed after the Constitutional Treaty had been rejected and accompanies the 'period of reflection' that the European Council has called for in June 2005. The key message of Plan D is "putting ears on Europe": One major lesson learned from the constitutional process is to try to consult and listen to the people instead of announcing from top, one speaker explained. He went on to stress that there is nothing new in this current crisis, though. The EU has always progressed erratically: like a flock of birds it appears to be mainly circling around itself; yet, an hour later they are miles away. This whole process of how the EU integrates and with what benefit needs to be better explained, not just a proposed Treaty that hardly anyone has read.

Explaining the EU better starts with the role of the European Commission: With 27.000 overall staff, it is not a bureaucratic Moloch but has less employees than the City of Amsterdam or many a national Ministry, one speaker maintained. Moreover, in most policy areas, the Commission can only make proposals, on which national ministers (together with the nationally elected Members of the European Parliament) then decide. Therefore, he concluded, that what comes "from Brussels" is more often than not a decision taken by the Member States' government. This holds also for Enlargement, where a Treaty with every new member has to be formally ratified by all current members, thus giving a veto over expansion to every single government in place.

With regard to the Council representing the Member States, one speaker criticised that it is the only parliamentary assembly in the Western world that holds its meetings in secret. Having public debates would also give journalists a story, making the EU more public and political in general. Another participant added that it was the European Parliament that had become the centre of public debate recently with the discussions about the Services directive, about software patents, and about the REACH (chemicals) directive. For the Commission, one member of the Study Group remarked, there is a real credibility problem at stake: Is "Plan D" just a fig leaf or is it meant to be substantial? The latter would pose questions of direct democracy at the European level, something both the Commission and the Member States have shied away from so far.

The Study Group also discussed some general implications of using a Communication Strategy for the EU: If you want to sell a product, you need both a good product and a trusted seller, someone posited. This not only demands better leadership on the national level, engaging into discussion with the electorate about why a Constitutional Treaty is needed or how Enlargement benefits the citizens. It also means that, in today's media-oriented societies, you need recognisable faces on the European level. But the Commission does not have these, one participant lamented. The EU has become a "victim of the TV nature", another added: For the media, you have to sell a story; but in the EU, you have to sell 25 different stories.

This requirement then collides with another principle from communication theory: the KISS ("keep it short and simple") principle. Hardly any communication from the Commission is based on this principle, one speaker deplored. Especially the EU website, trying to address all

the needs of all people, is impossible to read, he said. Others argued that, given the complexity of the subject, the site is rather navigable.

Two more facets of this debate were language and education: "Language matters", one participant reminded the group, in the relations between the citizens and their leaders. Since the President of the Commission – the person coming closest to something like the all-European leader – cannot possibly speak all 20 official EU languages, in the end it comes down to national politicians speaking more (and better!) about EU, he claimed. Similarly, 'Europe' should be integrated into the national education systems as any EU communication can only build on values from family and school. As long as there is no common EU education policy because the Member States want their national curricula to be untouched, ERASMUS and other programmes are the best way of European integration, one participant recalled.

There are, however, two structural elements making the improvement of communication a real endeavour: First, there is not (yet) a European public sphere worthy of that name one speaker reminded the group. The media markets are still very nationalised, and only among the elite a European sphere has emerged. Some even call the Financial Times the "fifth institution" with a monopoly on EU issues. The second element is that, according to one participant, the EU citizens are not only critical about output side, i.e. what the EU delivers. Increasingly, they have also become critical about the input side: When some 70 to 80 per cent of national laws are pre-decided in Brussels, the people are asking tough questions about transparency, legitimacy, and democracy, she said.

1.3.2 *Enlargement, Prosperity, and Public Opinion*

In this sense, to "take the people on board", especially with a view to further Enlargement of the Union, is of critical importance, one speaker claimed. Notwithstanding many people from the older generation who, having experienced the war and reconstruction period, are still very convinced of the EU, it is particularly middle-aged professionals who are unsympathetic of an EU expansion. They see their personal well-being and even job security affected when mostly poorer countries, both receiving EU funds and offering low-cost labour, join the Union. However, one participant stressed that there are remarkable differences between the East and the West, with support for Enlargement being generally much higher in the new than in most of the old Member States.

In the case of Enlargement, the argument is directly linked to the economic situation in the EU as a whole and in the Member States in particular. Enlarging to ten new states and talking about further enlargement in the face of meagre economic growth throughout the Euro zone is indeed a particularly difficult undertaking. Some of the 'Turkoscepticism' in the EU was clearly based on an economic fear, the analysis from one participant went, in addition to a (real) democratic deficit in the country and a (perceived) cultural incompatibility. Therefore, "the best enlargement policy is aggressive economic reform," one speaker claimed, urging especially the old Member States to overhaul their economies. A better timing, i.e. a coincidence of growth and expansion, is needed, as well as more convincing politicians, i.e. a better communication strategy.

1.4   Immigration and Integration

Very much related to the topic of Enlargement (not only to Turkey) and public opinion is the question of immigration and integration in the EU. Immigration could be, more than metaphorically speaking, the link between the EU and its immediate neighbourhood as well as the Islamic world as a whole. Through integration, the external becomes internal. Or as one participant remarked, it is not really a question of accepting new member states when their citizens are already here.

Historically, Europe was a continent of emigration rather than immigration. With this perspective, it is understandable that Old Europe's idea of citizenship for a long time was built around the notion that a heterogeneous society is more prone to conflict than a homogeneous one, a speaker explained. Today, after decades of immigration, the question of how to integrate new citizens and build stable heterogeneous societies is of major importance for all European states. But the question remains: "integration into what?" relating back to the issue of what is the respective national (or European) identity.

Special focus was put on the situation in Germany, a country that for a long time refused to see itself as an immigrant country. On the one side, people and politicians alike hoped that the so called *gastarbeiter* (guest workers) would indeed only work for some time, helping boost the German post-war economy, and then leave again for their home countries. On the other side, as one speaker explained, there was an old German myth in the wake of the Second World War that one should not enforce one's culture or language on immigrants. This was the case in particular with those immigrants that Germany, again based on historical grounds, used to accept on humanitarian grounds. Therefore, ignorance has been the biggest problem in Germany so far, and little integration has taken place.

By today, things have changed in many ways: It has become common sense that with declining birth rates, industrialised countries like Germany need immigration for both demographic and economic reasons. And a dividing line has been put up: "No more toleration of human rights violations in the name of cultural respect", one speaker informed the group about the new German approach to immigrants.

However, the debate is still on about the right recipes and their effects. One participant called for upward mobility as the most important ingredient of successful integration. For this, education matters most, with school offerings at the local level for both for parents and children. The international education survey PISA had shown that in particular migrant pupils are disadvantaged by the German schooling system, which puts them on a bad start when entering the labour market, potentially starting a vicious circle leading to dependence on public welfare. Yet education reform is difficult and highly contested between parties even without the migration issue. "Be stingy with welfare money and generous with work permits," one participant advised. In spite of that, the "integration summit" envisaged by the new government will fail to reform the labour market, a speaker replied. Instead, affirmative action could help in identifying with the host country, for example when immigrants work in the public media. Social rise, however, one speaker cautioned, should not be expected to happen very easily and quickly.

At the European level, some things can also be done even though the EU does not have the competence to deal with immigration. However, the demographic situation is similar in most EU countries, as well as are the potential security implications of immigration. One participant asked to be careful to mix security and immigration issues: Both are important policies in their own right, but they are not necessarily always linked. Another member of the group asked the debate about brain drain, especially from Central and Eastern Europe to the old Member States, to be linked to an EU-wide immigration policy. Only then would also the positive sides of this phenomenon (called brain circulation or even brain grain) come into effect. Another observed widespread xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment in Europe, which needed to be countered. Issues of mentality and the question of how one views foreigners are a large part of the debate. So far, very often there is minimal contract on both sides, but: "Heterogeneity must (and can) be learned".

One speaker provided the group with a view from over the Atlantic: There, too, immigration has been at the centre of a recent controversy. Historically in the U.S., immigration has been perceived more as an opportunity than a threat, to the extent that immigrants have become synonymous with America: Protesters at the recent rallies about the legalisation of unlawful immigration were carrying placards saying "We are America". However, the present

economic situation there combined with a widespread fear of a Hispanic take-over have changed the climate. Add to this the situation of Arab-Americans after the 9/11 attacks and it becomes clear why immigration has become a vulnerable concept even in the U.S., one speaker explained.

This leads to another important aspect of the debate about integration, both in Europe and the United States: the role of religion. For the first time, many citizens ask themselves the question what is Islam? Is Djihadist Islam, as it was invoked in the three terrorist attacks on European soil (Madrid, Amsterdam, London) a perversion of an otherwise peaceful religion? How compatible are Islamic values with 'the West'? Can there be a European Islam, or has there maybe already developed an American Islam? The answers to these questions will have to be developed rather sooner than later. The cartoon debate, it was argued, had displayed, among other things, a lack of understanding in Europe about why Muslim communities reacted that way – an understanding that could be enhanced by closer communication with Muslim minorities in Europe.

2   Looking Outward: Fuzzy Europe

Taking a look outside the strict boundaries of the European Union offers a changing picture: 100 Million people and their 10 countries that were still outside of the EU in April 2004 are now well within the Union. In some ways (and in many speeches of EU officials), Europe and the EU have become synonymous. Has the EU taken over Europe? If so, is this a friendly take-over? And how far should it go?

2.1   Enlarging the EU to all of Europe?

Some 45 states undisputedly belong to Europe, geographically speaking. A majority of them are already members of the EU, while others are destined to accede. The overlap becoming bigger, there are nevertheless a few who show no willingness to enter the Union, for example Switzerland, Norway, or Iceland. If these were to change their mind, they should be considered "easy cases," one speaker claimed. However, there are more difficult cases, too: Turkey, one of the states with a small portion of European soil and a much larger chunk of Asia in her territory, has become a candidate for membership; the opposite way round Russia, in the same situation as Turkey but more than twenty times bigger in size, has not applied for membership and is unlikely to do so – nor to be accepted any time soon. Maybe for the first time, leaders in the European Union have started to realise that they cannot wait passively for other states asking to join their once exclusive club, but have to come up with a strategy of their own whom they want to join and whom not, and for what reasons.

Romania and Bulgaria are set to join in either 2007 or 2008, depending on their progress in implementing the *Acquis*. The countries of the Western Balkans were given clear perspectives on EU membership at the Thessaloniki summit in June 2003: They shall be integrated into European structures and, ultimately, become full members. Croatia, as the first of the mostly former Yugoslav countries grouped under the heading "Western Balkan", is already an official candidate. But what about Ukraine, especially after the Orange Revolution of November 2004 has brought the country democracy; what about Belarus, the "last dictatorship in Europe" in Condoleezza Rice's terms, or the "big black hole of Europe", as one conference speaker called the country; or what about Moldova, a small and fractured country clamped between the EU member Romania and the EU-hopeful Ukraine?

After all, geography *is* a factor, one speaker declared, as otherwise Australia and New Zealand could join the EU. In the reverse, this means that in fact all states geographically European can become a member of the EU – which is exactly what stipulates Article 1.2 of the proposed Constitutional Treaty: "The Union shall be open to all European States which respect its values and are committed to promoting them together."

This, however, does not seem to be a widespread feeling within the EU given that an 'Enlargement fatigue' has spread. At present, the Union is still "digesting" the last enlargement round, one speaker cautioned. This relates to the "fourth Copenhagen criterion", which is meant to keep up the political integration of the EU and which has become very popular in EU discourse recently. Yet enlargement as such has not brought any new problems, one participant replied; it has only highlighted the old ones that the Union has avoided to tackle earlier.

Therefore, the EU Commissioner for Enlargement, Olli Rehn, announced his "Plan C", focusing on the consolidation of the last round, on strict conditionality in the current process, and on better communication of the benefits of past and future enlargements. On this, one participant offered the "three D's" of an applicant country: determination in the process of fulfilling the set criteria; close dialogue with both the EU and the neighbours; and the dynamics to keep up the process both tin the country and on the EU side.

2.2   Turkey

Turkey and its negotiations for EU membership will be one of the Study Group's main foci of discussion, the location of the third meeting being adequately and consequently Istanbul. The country is the key to the debate on "what is Europe?", one participant stated. Turkey has been trying to catch up with West since end of the 18th century, one participant reminded the audience; therefore, the choice for EU membership has been made a long while ago. In the recent decades, the country has progressed in its transition from an authoritarian regime to a liberal government, installing an independent judiciary, limiting the role of the military in politics, addressing questions of cultural (i.e. minority) rights, and implementing political and economic reforms. There latter, it has been accepted rather widely, are in the interest of citizens themselves, regardless of EU conditionality.

There is, however, an unfinished debate about secularism and nationalism, sparked by a deep-seated feeling of insecurity, one participant observed. Public opinion is volatile, but generally positive towards membership,

The country has been given candidate status by the EU in 1999, and negotiations have started after the political criteria were "sufficiently fulfilled" in 2004. Currently, the so-called screening process is going on, with the first of 35 chapters probably to be opened in June. The negotiation process is expected to go rough but steady, one speaker reported. The successful completion of negotiations would mean, in the words of one speaker, the implementation of the *Acquis* and a mentality change to accept a shift of sovereignty (on the Turkish side) as well as the institutional readiness according to Article 49 of the Treaty (on the EU side). As a target for accession, the year 2015 is envisaged, implying to finish negotiations by 2013. This should be feasible for both sides, and waiting longer would risk losing support in the EU or in Turkey.

Concerning the conclusion of negotiations, some saw the main risk for a failure of negotiations on the Turkish side: Will (political and economic) stability hold? Will there be insurmountable cultural barriers to reforms, for example concerning the role of women? One participant thought the Kurdish question to be the main problem, another reminded the group of the Cyprus conflict looming. However, it was also asked whether the internal Turkish situation could be seen as entirely independent from what the EU does? The fact that the *Acquis* is constantly changing, thus making membership a "moving target" for Turkey, is in itself difficult enough. However, if the Turkish population or government were to believe that the EU is coming up with ever new conditions in order to prevent the country from fulfilling the criteria, then this would have serious internal implications for which Turkey is cannot be made fully responsible, another participant declared.

From a European point of view, it has become a question of *Weltanschauung* to consider Turkey as either part of "the West" or "the rest" in the words of the seminar's title. Many

people see Turkish membership as an answer to the question of the EU's global role: a Yes to Turkey would also mean a global ambition, while a No would imply a regional power only. Turkey being a NATO member, the latter answer would also have implications for transatlantic co-operation, one speaker argued. In addition, given the country's strategic location and soft power as a bridge to the Muslim world, Turkish membership would impact on the immigration debate: a multicultural Europe will have to accept a European Islam, one speaker demanded, commencing a new period of *convivencia* as in medieval Andalusia.

A lack of public support is thought to be the greatest danger on the EU side, although in addition the Union itself has shown to be slow in implementing the necessary institutional reforms ever since the mid-90s. The fact that a country like France has pledged to hold a referendum on any new accession after Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia has given rise to a dispute about "Plan B": What shall happen if not all Member States ratify a successfully negotiated accession treaty? Are there any possible fallback positions? One speaker thought this discussion to be misplaced, as it would only become relevant if Turkey should eventually not want to become a member; another contended that especially an expert Study Group like this should debate such a question.

2.3   Defining the "borders of the EU"?

The debate in Europe about how far enlargement can go is visibly in full swing. Some Member States are pushing for more enlargement: They praise the benefits of hubs in the periphery like Lithuania or Turkey linking the EU to its Eastern and Southeastern neighbourhood, as one speaker put it. Others are calling for a definition of the "borders of the EU," in order to preserve both its capacity to act and its (maybe narrowly defined) identity. This was seen as something difficult to conceive of, as the idea of borders has a negative, defensive connotation – the last thing the EU needed in its approach to the neighbourhood. Moreover, especially the Eastern border has always been flexible, and both the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok, and the Council of Europe with its 46 members, prove that there is a considerably large Europe beyond the EU. Therefore, both courage and creativity are needed when thinking about how to "avoid new dividing lines" as the formula in the European Security Strategy (ESS) goes, one participant articulated.

One, though admittedly contested, way of overcoming the "inside-outside" debate is to conceive of alternative Membership policies. What had surfaced as a 'Privileged partnership' in the debate about the Turkish candidacy has some truth at its core, one speaker posited. Instead of merely offering "all or nothing" (with the risk of alienating important neighbours in the case of rejection), full integration into the Internal Market or the Euro should be offered to some (economically able) partners, while proposing quasi-membership in foreign policy (CFSP) or judicial and police co-operation (JHA) to others. This would not only strengthen the ties between the EU and these countries, but would also provide the opportunity for them to get to know the 'rule of the game' of the EU – although CFSP with its intergovernmental procedures is not particularly suitable to acquaint with EU supranational decision-making, as one participant objected.

In fact, since Maastricht there has been a difference between legal and real membership, one speaker contended, referring to the policy opt-outs of some member states. The institutionalised version of this ad-hoc mechanism should be neither "second class membership" nor "core Europe" but "modular integration": Including potential future Member States into everything possible below the full membership level would help both the EU and these states to take the many steps on their decade-long way to integration. The (institutional) price for a country's non-participation in the full spectrum of co-operation could be reduced voting rights in the Council or the omission from Commission nominations; however, full representation in the European Parliament should be ensured to underline the

democratic character of the EU, one speaker maintained. Such an arrangement would also avoid a slide into atomisation of the EU, when smaller and smaller units of former states (Kosovo, Montenegro) want to become full members, thus potentially nominating a Commissioner or wielding a veto in the Council.

2.4   Neighbourhood

With a view to finding answers posed by the 2004 enlargement, the EU has developed a Neighbourhood policy (ENP), providing a common framework for all neighbouring states. This policy encompasses countries from Ukraine and Belarus over Georgia and Israel to Libya and Morocco: It builds on the Barcelona Process in the Mediterranean (the "old *Mare nostrum*") and establishes a similar approach around the Caucasus and the Baltic Sea (i.e. the "new *Mare nostrum*", as one speaker phrased it). What unites this diverse group of countries is the fact that, from the EU point of view, they do not qualify for membership in the short run, but shall nevertheless have close contractual relations with the Union.

The discussion of the current situation in just a few of these countries highlighted, however, the difficulties of trying to devise a common approach to the whole 'European neighbour-hood'. While Ukraine with the recent parliamentary elections finds herself on the path to a stable democracy (and therefore is keener on EU membership by the day), the orchestrated presidential elections in neighbouring Belarus showed the country's dictatorial character. The EU's reaction to impose sanctions on top-level politicians must of course be different from any policy towards democratic Ukraine. Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Moldova with their frozen conflicts represent an entirely different category, and only in the latter case can the EU place hopes on its soon-to-be member Romania to help resolve the conflict, one speaker expressed.

In the Middle East, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict clearly is an issue of global implications that stretches any narrowly defined neighbourhood policy. The EU cannot deal with the question of financial assistance or the return to the Road Map as if in its own backyard, one speaker asserted. Egypt is becoming more Islamist, more fundamentalist, one participant noted, and he highlighted the necessity to build up a secular opposition. In order to win the hearts and minds of people, the West would have to be present in mass media and, above all, be credible, he said. And the recent good co-operation between France and the U.S. with Lebanon vis-à-vis Syria showed that very specific policies are needed for all of the 16 countries addressed by the ENP.

Moreover, a particular differentiation is needed, one participant urged, for those countries that, at least by their European nature, have the potential to become an acceding country. Therefore, in an effort to substantiate the ENP, politicians should also address questions of membership in this framework – despite the fact that it was not meant to be an alternative membership policy.

2.5   Russia

With regard to the neighbourhood, the EU's policy towards Russia was debated intensively. The Russian Federation, although a direct neighbour of the Union, is not part of the ENP, if only due to her sheer size and global role she deserves a different treatment in the form of the EU- Russia forum. Nevertheless, the internal situation and the foreign policy of the country are of great concern to the EU. One speaker admitted that considerable differences of opinion about the Rule of Law and the state of the Market Economy in Russia exist: The base line of EU thinking is that the quality of democracy is decided by minority rights, and that of a market economy is decided by the public registry and property rights, he said. Both are not to the best standards in Russia. One participant added that Putin's clamp on the media as well as on NGOs is dangerous and that the EU should push for more reforms.

A discussion spun around the right approach to Russia: One participant described the delicate balance between Schröder-Putin *camaraderie* on the one hand and aggressive anti-Russian

policies on the other. A speaker likened Russia's situation today to Germany's situation after the First World War for which it received much humiliation and blame. Today, he said, Russia feels like a humiliated former superpower, so blaming her in public could prove counterproductive. Understandably, the largest country on earth would want to become a superpower again: Russia is flexing her muscles by playing the energy card – ironically, Soviet energy policy used to be very reliable, as opposed to the present Gazprom policy – and widening her sphere of influence by operating as a broker in the Middle East Peace process. But there are no solutions against Russia, another speaker affirmed. Given the mutual interests in these areas, the West should try to win Russia over and make her a partner, one participant added. And for this, a common transatlantic strategy is needed.

3   Beyond Europe: Co-operation and conflict in the World

At no point in the debate about the EU's role in the world the image of the "economic giant, though political dwarf" was used – like at no point in the discussion about the European identity the "founding fathers of Europe" were called upon, as one participant wittily remarked. This speaks, of course, not only for the level of discussion among participants, but also shows how far Europe has already come in its global ambition. True, it does not yield the (military) power the U.S. does – and will probably never do so – yet, the past years have shown that the Union has indeed become a serious player on the world scene.

3.1   European Foreign Policy

The EU itself, one speaker stated, has an interest in taking on this role, but is also needed as a positive force in the world, building on a co-operative approach, one participant opined. Therefore, the EU would have to decide what role it *wants* to play and then devise the necessary instruments instead of merely comparing itself to the U.S. and lamenting about a capabilities gap. Unfortunately, Europe is not good in defining this role and displaying what one participant called "visionary soft power".

While the precise role of the EU may yet be unclear, the past decade or so has seen a remarkable development of a whole range of foreign policy instruments: From 'old style diplomacy' like exerting economic pressure or offering financial help over innovative crisis management instruments like civilian or police task forces to the soon-to-be ready EU Battle Groups – once given the political will of EU member states to use them, an answer to nearly every crisis could – in theory – be found. And despite the small Member States' fear of a *directoire*, the "EU-3" became accepted as a valuable instrument if and when the Troika (Presidency, Commissioner for External Relations, and High Representative for CFSP) is not credible (as for example the United Kingdom, France, and Germany negotiating on behalf of the Union with Iran).

The devil, as always, is in the details: The European military is still in the transition from Cold War armies fighting Soviet tanks to modern intervention troops. Thus, deployability generally is very low: Of the 250.000 German soldiers, only 30.000 are deployable abroad; for the 2,5 million soldiers EU-wide, the figure (3%) is even lower. So the Battle Groups (which are, by the way, shared with NATO) can only be the first step before more thorough reforms take hold, one speaker claimed.

On the structural side, political unity is often the biggest hurdle, especially when the international sovereignty of the members is at stake. Not only has the EU two external 'faces' (the Commissioner and the High Representative), but there are sometimes 25 national foreign ministers who want to raise their voice, too. One participant gave the example of the EU's extremely successful Common Trade Policy. Despite the policy's successes, pooling the members voting rights and occupying a joint chair at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), thus relocating this prestigious organisation to Europe, is out of question for Member States at

present. The same is true for a joint chair at the World Bank, despite the fact that the EU is the world's largest donor and that a common development aid policy is already in place. Also something like common European embassies in third countries are not realistic at present, one speaker told the group. As always in the EU, it is only possibly to start with small steps, like pooling the consular sections of the Schengen countries, and later potentially expanding this model of co-operation to true European embassies.

Therefore, political will is what lacks most, one participant bemoaned: The EU can only be as strong as its Member States want it to be. Yet, not all of them have already realised what one speaker described as the "German approach": The passing of sovereignty to the EU, he explained, is in Germany's interest, because the EU is the most efficient vehicle of enhancing the national interest. In the course of time, the others would realise this too. One participant raised the point that the problem is not the political will to agree on something when meeting in Brussels, but to go home to the capitals and sell the agreement to the public. Another added, that it was indeed not only political will, but also a conception of the world lacking.

On both capabilities and political will, one speaker tried to curtail expectations: More wars have been ended through negotiations recently than ever before, therefore conflict resolution and civilian crisis management capabilities are at least as important, if not more important than a huge military. And as for political will, both patience and compromises are needed because, realistically, the EU cannot do much more than an "intelligent muddling through". The whole field of foreign policy, however, speakers and participants agreed widely, is an important area of transatlantic co-operation.

3.2   The United States

What Europe would suit the U.S. best, one speaker was asked: The tight, strong Europe with its own mind or the loose, weak EU that does not rebel? Later, the same question was asked the other way round: What kind of U.S. would suit the EU? The answers show the level of interdependence between the two pillars of "the West": The United States needs a strong global partner whom it can work with; equally, the EU needs a reliable American partner that should lead, but also listen. In many instances, one participant proposed, combining the American can-do spirit with the cautious European approach would produce viable results.

One obvious field of co-operation is NATO: With regard to the Russian Federation, both the NATO-Russia and EU-Russia councils are very passive, one speaker explained. Especially the Central and Eastern European Member States should start a debate about NATO's role next to the EU. Also post-war Iraq has provided ample opportunities for U.S.-EU co-operation. One speaker lauded the EU for having lived up to its values once the invasion was over: The EU "Just-Lex" mission supporting the rule of law and judiciary reform was said to be highly successful. Another speaker asked the EU to rethink its still cautious position and contribute more, e.g. in the frame of a NATO mission. This is important given repeated calls for the U.S. not to withdraw too early, but to stay for at least 10 years, as one speaker forecasted.

Another field of close EU-U.S. co-operation, both within and outside the quartet (EU, U.S., Russia, UN), is the Arab-Israeli conflict whose resolution many regarded as a priority above all other Middle Eastern policies. The EU has had a Strategy on the Middle East since 2000, although real results have been lacking so far. In the summer of 2004, the United States and Europe joined their respective strategies under the umbrella of the "Middle East Partnership Initiative" (MEPI). It was remarked that the Initiative's objectives, to further stability, democracy, and secularism, are often conflicting: Should the victory of Hamas in Palestine not be applauded for its democratic credentials? How would the West take the likely electoral success of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt if only they were allowed to stand for office? The underlying question for both the EU and the U.S., one participant formulated, is whether we are willing to accept 'Islamist *inter-regna*'? This, of course, depends on the answer to the

question whether the Islamist victors in turn would accept a democratic change with the next elections. The Palestinian Fatah, not without support from the West, does not yet seem to be ready to do this.

3.3   Iran

Transatlantic co-operation does, of course, not stop there. Iran and the country's nuclear ambition were discussed more than once during the conference. The joint analysis so far is that the nuclear programme is not only intended for civil use, but to build a military capability, one speaker reported. Should this be successful, implying that then two Muslim countries (Pakistan and Iran) are nuclear, then an Arab country like Saudi Arabia would want nuclear weapons too. This would prove disastrous not only for the regional security balance, but also bring with it the real danger of a terrorist organisation like Al-Qaeda acquiring weapons of mass destruction (WMP). Therefore, a security strategy for the whole Gulf region would be needed. In this broader regional context, the constant Arab complaint "but what about Israel?" could also be taken into account.

Unfortunately, the current negotiations do not yet go thus far. The EU-3 negotiations with Iran, started in the fall of 2003, received full U.S. approval only after the re-election of President Bush. However, there are still no direct contacts between the United States and Iran. At present, sanctions from the UN Security Council are improbable, one speaker muted: They will either not hurt the Iranians, or they might work but are too harmful for the West to be imposed, like oil sanctions. Nevertheless, it is important to keep a united front in the international community, one speaker proclaimed: The way to reach an agreement leads through Moscow, he said; then Beijing will follow. Yet, a split of the West or the international community is possible, he warned, and disagreement among the P5 would lead to new ways of proliferation.

Another speaker presented the Iranian perspective of the case. The country is feeling insecure: Throughout the 1980s already, the United States supported its enemy neighbour Iraq; now, it is surrounded by American troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. Building on the Kosovo experience, one speaker explained, Iran had adopted what he called the 'Indian security philosophy' of acquiring (nuclear) weapons in order to prevent military invasion. Therefore, in security matters, only the U.S. can deliver what Iran wants; the EU cannot.

In any case, a military attack is highly contested even in the West. Many experts, one speaker claimed, say that the military option is not an option: Iran has learned from the 1981 Israeli strike against the Iraqi reactor and built hidden facilities, which are both hard to detect and destroy. Moreover, the result of a military strike is not desirable: It would produce a real war, with devastating effects on Iraq, Lebanon, and the whole region. Others said that the military may be a hard, even bad option, but doing nothing and waiting is no option at all.

One speaker called for an consideration of the cost of war on the one hand, and the cost of a nuclear Iran on the other: Let's think about the possibility that we cannot stop them – would nuclear deterrence work, like it did in Cold War times? While one said it would not work because Iran is not a rational actor, another thought it is tough but doable. Like with the Soviet Union, it would take year-long confidence-building measures, and it would eventually also save the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) for the multilateral system. However, in particular the United States are not (yet) ready to accept a nuclear Iran as a reality, he observed. What is more, the internal situation in Iran is quite opaque: President Achmadinejad constitutionally does not have any nuclear competence, which lies with the religious leaders. The president, who according to one speaker is indeed highly rational, finds himself in an internal conflict with Mullahs, trying to take over power from them. Part of his statements towards the West, and indeed part of the whole issue of a nuclear weapons programme should therefore be understood in the frame of this domestic struggle.

3.4   World Regions and Globalisation

The issue of Iran and nuclear proliferation of course extends to the wider world, not only because of the present close co-operation between the EU-3 and the United States, Russia, and China. North Korea probably already has nuclear weapons, the group learned, and one speaker deplored that fact that the EU had so far failed to bring itself in the Six-Party talks. Much more, the underlying issue of proliferation needs to be addressed in a multilateral context, one speaker demanded. This is even more urgent after the failure of disarmament talks last year and the "dangerous deal" between the United States and India earlier this year.

At various instances, the group touched upon other world regions and how the U.S. and the EU could co-operate. Despite the continuous rise of China and India, no one in the EU pays attention to strategic balance in Northeast Asia, one participant stated. The Union has in particular failed to act in a united way on the China arms embargo. In Central Asia, the EU is very inactive despite the fact that the main drug traffic routes run through this region. Turkmenistan is a dictatorship but an EU partner, like Uzbekistan, where travel bans and sanctions have been imposed only slowly after the May 2005 massacre. The ISAF mission in Afghanistan, in contrast, was seen as a good example of EU-U.S. co-operation. The amount of EU funding is sufficient but not focused enough, one speaker considered. An expansion of the ISAF mandate, however, could bring the need to include detention operations, which could easily produce disagreement between the transatlantic partners.

To act against insecurity and failing states in Africa is in the vital interest of the EU, one speaker professed. More precisely, he saw an obligation of the Member States to enable the Union to become more active on this neighbouring continent. While the group met, discussions in the German Bundestag were going on concerning the Mission in Congo: One speaker assured the group of the willingness of Germany to send troops despite heavy domestic discussion; however, it was said that the mandate was to narrow and that the overall troop level should rather by 5.000 soldiers than 1.500.

With regard to Latin America, one participant regretted that the EU does not see the U.S. as a partner – with the exception of the policy on Haiti. Especially in the economic field, there is fierce competition between the two economic powers. While this is understandable from a short-term point of view, it would be advisable if the transatlantic partners worked more closely together in a globalised economy.

For the past decade or so, politicians and people alike have felt a new "global uncertainty" created by the Western-dominated process of liberalisation and globalisation. From a European point of view, it is very clear that no single EU country can act alone vis-à-vis the pressures of globalisation. Protectionism, both regional or national, is the entirely wrong answer to this challenge, one speaker underlined: Only transatlantic economic co-operation could help overcome this uncertainty. If Europe and the United States could agree on the rules of business, (i.e. creating a "Transatlantic Marketplace"), the rest of the world will follow. A "barrier-free EU-US trade zone" had already been proposed in the 1990s, but failed in 1997. Now, at least the proposal for a Framework Partnership Agreement with the U.S. has been accepted in the respective committee of the European Parliament. Thus, acting as a Union, in accordance with the United States, is the only chance to continue to shape globalisation.

Challenges and Questions

As this was the first of a series of workshops, no conclusion was made nor should it be tried in this report. Instead, some of the major challenges and question should be highlighted here. They may serve as an inspiration for the upcoming debates.

- Leadership: The current lack of leadership in the European Union was a major point of criticism. Some hopes were placed on the German chancellor Merkel and on more pro-European leaders as of next year. Leadership in the European context would, of course, not mean the "father-like type with the strong hand" but would start with not abusing the EU for domestic purposes like national leaders often do.
- Stressing results over ideas: Accepting leadership in the EU would imply a creative re-balancing of effectiveness and legitimacy. The public should be convinced not by idealism, but by deeds. If the EU is able to deliver, the wording (for example, whether the EU military is called Battle Group or Army) does not matter. This would also help bridge the distance between the EU elites and the people.
- European society: Can we still dream the old dream of "Social Europe" facing global competition, it was asked. Europe cannot shut itself off the rest of the world. The "soft power" it yields mainly depends on its economic resources. This includes the integration, both on an economic and a social level, of immigrant. Therefore the EU should engage in liberalisation for the benefit of its social standards.
- Widening or (and) deepening: The EU has to resolve its internal problems first before it can accept new members. But is "two-speed Europe" the (only) solution to the debate about deepening? And are the instruments of widening still apt, e.g. would conditionality work for Belarus or others? Given the historically high level of uncertainty about EU development, it may be important to keep various options on the table, thus not limiting the EU's room for manoeuvre by trying to find definite answers.
- European Foreign Policy: Will Europe find its place in the world, living up also to outside expectations? The EU should act when it must, not only when it can. The EU's Security Strategy is an important document but not a real strategy; therefore it is nothing more than the first step on a much longer way.
- The EU-U.S. relationship: "9-11 for the United States has changed the world, but for the EU it has changed the U.S.," one speaker summarised a prevailing feeling on both sides of the Atlantic. While in the United States, talk is of "trans-Pacific relations", Europeans are still busy defining their Union. How can we find ways of effective co-operation, keeping up with one another on world issues?