

Briefing

21st February 2018

EIN Lunch debate on: “What is future for the EU-US relationship in a new era?”

The EU-US relationship is a core value in our world and history has proven that we are stronger together by bringing prosperity and growth on a global level. This relationship flourishes opportunities on an economic, political and cultural level and it influences the overall economic development world affairs. Although the EU-US relationship is not always on the same page, we share common challenges and threats, be it in the form of terrorism or when it comes to Russia. Our European future, which soon will be our present, seems to be challenging and somewhat unpredictable. Domestic frustrations, such as politics, economy and demography are all fast changing factors that require decision-makers, as well as our society to, in shorter periods of time, reflect and react upon such changes.

In Europe, we are facing and trying to come to terms with the aftermath of Brexit and its impact in terms of European security and defence, economy and future relations. Brexit will mean a decrease in European population, defence budget and defence personnel. How can we undertake this and keep a reciprocal relationship with the UK at the same time?

The rise of populism across Europe is another concern which needs to be tackled efficiently. Although this is not a new phenomenon, anticipated by the Ancient Rome, populism nowadays has a new perception that raises questions about our concept of democracy. Having said this, politicians should act rather than react to it, by providing transparency with their programmes and shift the way they address people.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Trump’s presidency in office, has somewhat shaken the strong relationship between the EU and the US. Nevertheless, what should be highlighted here is the fact that we share common democratic values, human rights and rule of law based societies, as well as strategic interest in mutual prosperity and security which is what we should endeavor to preserve. The undergoing transformation of the international system and the challenges we face further, highlight the importance of the transatlantic relationship in ensuring peace, security and stability. We want to reinforce our partnership to shape the 21st century together.

Nowadays, all democratic institutions must use regional and global strengths to build a new common future, promote interactive and strategic dialogues by taking into account not only past patterns but also different scenarios and new alternatives for the so envisioned future.

Brexit happened, Trump is the President of the United States of America, and populism is on the rise. Nevertheless, with the rapid changes occurring, the EU and the US need to keep united and project that same unification to the rest of the world. Establishing strong contacts with the US industry, stakeholders and think-tanks are a great beginning to understand where the US policies are moving towards to, as well as to have a clear and well-established support in strategies developed by both the Congress and the Senate.

Europe and the US are facing challenges on a global scale, how can we tackle these challenges without following the conventional and fragmented approaches?