

**21<sup>st</sup> Foreign Policy Conference****21. Außenpolitische Jahrestagung****Between Hard and Soft Power****The European Union In A More Competitive World****EXPERT CONFERENCE - Preliminary Program (as of 19 January 2021)****January 29, 2021****Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin***Last Update: January 19, 2021 – please do not share!***Date**

Friday, January 29, 2021 – Expert Conference (by invitation only), 10.30am to 3 pm (CET)

**Conference Language is English.**

No simultaneous translation will be provided.

**Project Director**Giorgio Franceschini, Head of Foreign and Security  
Policy Division, Heinrich Böll Foundation,  
franceschini@boell.de, +49-(0)30 28534 393**Conference Management**Milena Grünwald, Foreign and Security  
Policy Division, Heinrich Böll Foundation,  
gruenewald@boell.de, +49-(0)30 28534 331  
Lena Strauß, External Consultant and Project  
Manager, foreign\_policy@boell.de**Key Concepts**

European Strategic Sovereignty, European Values, Interdependence, De-Coupling, Resilience, Geo-economics, Open Societies, Transatlantic Relations, Technological Standards, Digital Sovereignty, post-Corona Globalization

**Background**

The EU has been created to overcome old-fashioned geopolitics, nationalism and narrow national interests. It has long been seen as the first building bloc of a new world order in which multilateralism and win-win-approaches would prevail over power politics. Now it seems that power politics is back everywhere. In reaction, many in Europe are calling for a „Geo-Economic Commission“ and an EU that can operate in a way similar to a great power.

Is there a danger that by transforming the EU it will lose its "soul" and its identity based on openness, multilateralism, willingness to compromise? How can the EU navigate through a far more competitive world, and be a respected global player, and yet remain committed to its fundamental values?

The 21<sup>st</sup> Foreign Policy Conference of the Heinrich Böll Foundation will examine some of these questions more closely, especially in the fields of

- Common Security and Defense Policy,
- European Digital Policy, and
- Geo-economics

**Friday, January 29, 2021 – Expert Conference** (closed session - invitation only)

Digital Event, Zoom Meeting Rooms, about 80 experts

10.30 – 11.00 am      Welcome (Plenary)  
**Ellen Ueberschär and Giorgio Franceschini**, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin

**Key Questions:**

How can the EU square the circle: navigate through a far more competitive world and be a respected global player, and yet remain committed to its fundamental post-national and post-power politics values? Is Brussel's new approach of a "Geo-economic Commission" compatible with the fundamental values of the EU – especially the promotion of peace and the protection of human rights?

And what would a tougher EU mean for the crises in its Eastern and Southern neighborhood, for the European aspiration of digital sovereignty and for Brussel's geo-economic ambitions?

11.00 am – 12.30 pm      Parallel Break-Out Sessions  
Max. 20 participants per room + chair and minute taker

***Parallel Session 1: Security in the Eastern Neighborhood (Focus on Belarus)***

Discussion Opener: **Jörg Forbrig**, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Berlin

With further contributions by:

**Viola von Cramon**, Member of European Parliament, Brussels

**Wojciech Konończuk**, Center for Eastern Studies, Warsaw

**Yauheni Preiherman**, Minsk Dialogue Council on International Relations, Minsk

Facilitator: **Lena Exner**, International Justice Mission, Berlin

**Key Questions:**

In Belarus, large parts of the population are fed up with a Soviet-style autocratic order and attracted by the European way of life. Should the EU act more like a great power and push back more harshly against Lukashenko and Russian influence? Or should it put its bets on the longer-term transformation, driven by ideas and economic change?

Between hard and soft power: what would be Brussel's most promising approach? And would it still be compatible with European / green values?

-----

***Parallel Session 2: Security in the Southern Neighborhood (Focus on Libya)***

Discussion Opener: **Wolfram Lacher**, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin

With further contributions by:

**Elham Saudi**, Lawyers for Justice in Libya, London

**Florence Gaub**, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris

**Omid Nouripour**, Member of German Bundestag, Green Party, Berlin

Facilitator: **Chiara Rosselli**, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Berlin

**Key Questions:**

After a European-led military intervention with US backing, Libya has not found new stability. Now a number of powers have become decisive players on the ground, the UAE, Russia, Egypt, Turkey. Germany's efforts at peace-making have been undermined by many players. Even if a number of European countries – France, Italy and to a certain extent also Germany - have been involved in Libyan crisis management, they have not established a new stable, let alone democratic order. What went wrong in Libya? Why is Europe as a whole unable to pacify the country? What should be done better in the future? And what would be first steps towards a more stable Libya?

-----

**Parallel Session 3: European Digital Sovereignty**

Discussion Opener: **Andrea Gilli**, NATO Defence College, Rome

With further contributions by:

**Tyson Barker**, German Council on Foreign Relations, Berlin

**Zora Siebert**, Heinrich Böll Foundation, EU Office, Brussels

**Janka Oertel**, European Council on Foreign Relations, Berlin

Facilitator: **Helena Wittrich**, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Berlin

**Key Questions:**

How should Europe position itself in the new geopolitical tech rivalry? Should it align with the US and other democracies to confront and contain the new digital autocracies? Or should it pursue a European way and promote domestic digital champions? Which approach is more promising, which is closer to the European value base? And is there a viable middle-ground between both visions? And what would it mean concretely for the roll-out of 5G networks in Europe in the next years? Do EU Member States have a coherent and credible 5G strategy?

-----

**Parallel Session 4: Geo-economics**

Discussion Opener: **Jacob Kirkegaard**, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Brussels

With further contributions by:

**Jürgen Trittin**, Member of German Bundestag, Green Party, Berlin

**Clara Portela**, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris

**Nils Redeker**, Jacques Delors Institut, Berlin

Facilitator: **Caspar Kolster**, APROPOS-Advancing Process in Politics, Berlin

**Key Questions:**

Are the geo-economic ambitions of the European Commission credible and realistic? And how can the Commission engage the EU member states with this strategy?

Which policy priorities need to be tackled first to advance Brussels' geo-economic ambitions?

On the other hand: Is the approach to use geo-economic coercive instruments compatible with European values? Would it advance the "green political agenda", i.e. sustainability, human rights and democracy?

12.30 – 2.00 pm

BREAK

2.00 – 2.40 pm	<u>Short reports on the four breakout sessions (Plenary Session)</u>
2.40pm	<u>High-level final Keynote</u> <b>Franziska Brantner</b> , Member of German Bundestag, Green Party, Berlin  Topic: A Green Vision for Europe in the post-Corona globalization  <b>Key Questions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In which fields should Europe continue to promote openness, global exchange and cooperation?</li><li>• Where, on the other hand, should it focus on self-help and build resilience (defense, technological platforms, reserve currency, public health)? How comprehensive must this resilience be?</li><li>• What (military, technological, financial, logistical) capabilities does Europe need to build for this purpose? And what are the costs?</li><li>• Where is the green / progressive entry point into this debate?</li><li>• Will the EU become a "normal" great power or can its normative heritage be maintained?</li><li>• How do concepts of a Geo-Economic Commission fit in with the green vision of a federal European Republic?</li></ul>
2.50pm	<u>Wrap-Up and Farewell</u> <b>Ellen Ueberschär und Giorgio Franceschini</b> , Heinrich Böll Foundation, Berlin
3.00pm	<u>End of Expert Conference</u>