

Draft Programme

11th German Nordic Baltic Forum 2019

2019 – A Year Full of Fate Elections and a Lasting Impact for the Future

21-22 November 2019

Venue:

Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Tallinn, Estonia

Chatham House Rule applies.

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Thursday, 21 November 2019

13:00-14:00 *Registration and Coffee*

14:00-14:15 **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Dr. Kristi Raik, Director, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute (EFPI), Estonia

Dr. Funda Tekin, Director, Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP), Germany

14:15-14:45 **Keynote**

Urmas Reinsalu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia

14:45-15:45 **Opening Discussion**

Panel **Fabio Della Piazza**, Strategic Planning Division, European External Action Service (EEAS), Belgium

Sini Paukkunen, Director, Policy Planning and Research, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland

Dr. Christoph Schwegmann, Senior Defence Advisor, Policy Planning Staff, Federal Foreign Office, Germany

Moderator **Eerik Marme**, Director of Policy Planning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Estonia

15:45-16:15 *Coffee Break – End of the Public Part*

16:15-17:30 **Panel I: Transformation of the European Party System(s)**

Panel **Tuomas Iso-Markku**, Finnish Institute of International Affairs (FIIA), Finland

Piret Kuusik, Junior Research Fellow, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute (EFPI), Estonia

Manuel Müller, Research Advisor to the Managing Directors, Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP), Germany

Moderator **Dr. Funda Tekin**, Director, Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP), Germany

18:30 **Dinner-Reception at the Residency of the German Ambassador to Estonia**

Friday, 22 November 2019

09:00-10:30 **Panel II: Hybrid Threats and Deterrence in Cybersecurity**

Panel **Eitvydas Bajarūnas**, Ambassador-at-Large for Hybrid Threats, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lithuania

Piret Pernik, Researcher, NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE), Estonia

Kaan Sahin, Research Fellow, Technology and Foreign Policy, German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), Germany

Moderator **Dr. Kristi Raik**, Director, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute (EFPI), Estonia

10:30-11:00 *Coffee Break*

11:00-12:30 **Panel III: EU-China Relations in Light of “One Belt, One Road”**

Panel **Monika Reinem**, Policy Planning Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Estonia

Ville Varjola, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland

Moderator **Dr. Tim Rühlig**, Research Fellow, Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI), Sweden

12:30-13:30 *Lunch*

13:30-15:00 **Panel IV: Common Security and Defence Policy**

Panel **Dr. Gunilla Herolf**, Senior Associate Research Fellow, Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI), Sweden

Kristjan Mäe, Deputy Director, NATO and EU Department, Ministry of Defence, Estonia

Jana Schubert, Research Associate, Institut für Europäische Politik, Germany

Moderator **Sidonie Wetzig**, Policy Officer, EU Office, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Germany

15:00-15:30 **Wrap Up**

Dr. Kristi Raik, Director, Estonian Foreign Policy Institute (EFPI), Estonia

Dr. Funda Tekin, Director, Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP), Germany

15:30 *Farewell Coffee*

Topics of the Forum

Panel I: Transformation of the European Party System(s)

The European elections in May 2019 brought significant changes in the composition of the European Parliament: While the traditionally dominant “informal grand coalition” composed of EPP and S&D fell below the absolute majority for the first time in history, the liberal group (RE, formerly ALDE), the Greens/EFA and the hard-right (ID, formerly ENF) all became stronger than ever before. These changes, whereby both (left) liberal/green and right-wing forces are gaining votes at the expense of traditional center-left and center-right catch-all parties, are part of a longer trend which can be observed on both the level of the European Union and many of its member states. They can be understood as a growing polarization along a new cleavage between inclusive (cosmopolitan) positions on the one side and exclusive (nativist) positions on the other, which gains importance with respect to the traditional economic left-right cleavage. However, due to different national party systems as well as different political experiences on the national level, the trend is not uniform in all member states. Among the Nordic and Baltic states, many have held parliamentary elections in 2018 (Sweden, Latvia) and 2019 (Estonia, Finland, Denmark). Whereas in some of them (left) liberal and/or right-wing forces have made significant inroads, in others the party system has remained more stable. The GNBF will discuss the commonalities and differences between these electoral experiences and their significance in the broader European context.

Key questions:

Which are the reasons of these transformations in the party system? To what extent are they due to common European developments or to specific national factors?

How have traditional parties dealt with the success of hard-right parties in different countries (involvement in or exclusion from governmental responsibility; publicly addressing their main issues or dethematizing them)?

Which consequences has the weakening of traditional centre-left and centre-right parties for the EU governance?

Panel II: Hybrid Threats and Deterrence in Cybersecurity

In 2019, countries and institutions are frequently challenged by state and non-state actors that blur the distinction between peace and war. The range of methods and tools used for hybrid threats is wide and includes everything from military actions, to economic pressure or disinformation. Especially the cyberspace has been gaining international attention, as attacks are increasingly linked with state actors, such as the WannaCry (North Korea) or the NonPetya (Russia) attacks. At the same time, the possibility of deterrence and dissuasion in cyberspace is frequently discussed, but the debate still contains major gaps, as cyberspace deterrence differs greatly from conventional deterrence theory. Even though cyber threats do not consider national borders and private actors play an important role, states are still the most important actors in terms of enforcing international cyber norms. Currently, attacks or “hack backs” on foreign servers do not have a legal base in Germany. The constitutionality of outside operations during peace times would have to be determined individually. In May 2019 however, the EU Council has established a framework that allows the EU to impose methods to deter and respond to cyberattacks. In September 2019, Jens Stoltenberg, Secretary General of NATO, stated that a serious cyberattack could trigger Article 5, vindicating collective defence. The Nordic countries are positioned as frontrunners regarding digitalisation, whereas the Baltics, especially Estonia and Lithuania, are regarded as frontrunners in terms of cybersecurity. Given that sanctions are now part of the EU cybersecurity toolbox, as well as the advancement and expertise of Nordic-Baltic states in the field of digitalisation and cybersecurity, the GNBF will discuss how the EU and its member states could not only protect itself against, but also prevent attacks. In more detail, a practical understanding of the possibilities and capacities needed for member states to make full use of measures within the Common Foreign and Security Policy would be an important step towards securing European cyberspace.

Key questions:

Which are the main challenges for the EU and its member states when dealing with hybrid threats in cybersecurity?

Are the available cyberdefence tools an effective deterrent to hybrid threats? Which tools should or shouldn't the EU apply? Which roles should NATO and the EU play respectively?

What are the positions of Germany and the Nordic and Baltic countries regarding cyberdefence? Which scope is there for deeper cooperation on these issues?

Panel III: EU-China Relations in Light of “One Belt, One Road”

In March 2019, the European Commission has launched a debate about the EU relationship to China, which has made clear its global ambitions with the 2013 “One Belt, One Road” (OBOR) initiative. The initiative plans to connect China by land and sea with Asia, Europe and Africa. As the project also includes an arctic sea component, China has published its first official Arctic Policy in 2018, demonstrating its growing interest and ambitions in the region. This is of special importance in light of other announced involvement in European infrastructure, such as a possible multi-billion Euro investment to connect the Baltic and Nordic states with a tunnel between Helsinki and Tallinn. Since the late 2000s, China has become a significant bilateral trade partner to the Nordic states and has increasingly pushed for a more formal and structured cooperation over the past years. Moreover, while the debates on Sino-Nordic relations are still mostly running in parallel but different tracks, due to geography and domestic circumstances, the Baltics are already enveloped in different Sinocentric frameworks, such as the OBOR initiative or the China and Central and Eastern Europe Countries (CCEEC or 16+1) mechanism. On the other hand, Germany and other EU member states have modernized and tightened foreign direct investment screenings, which raised the bar for Chinese takeover and have already affected Chinese investment patterns. A common understanding in the German-Nordic-Baltic context could be an important step towards the much-needed common EU strategy on issues like the increased Chinese influence in Europe and the significance of Chinese investments in European infrastructure.

Key questions:

How should the EU position itself towards Chinese investment, in particular in the infrastructure and high-tech sector (such as 5G)? Which conditions should be posed to it, especially in the context of public procurement?

Do we need a European response to “One Belt, One Road” regarding the connection between Europe and Asia? What should it look like?

To what extent are diverging national interests an impediment to a common EU strategy towards China? What can the EU do to overcome them?

Panel IV: Common Security and Defence Policy

New global developments have heralded a revived dynamic to reform the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) over the last years. Since the publication of the European Global Strategy in 2016, a number of new initiatives and policy steps have been taken to strengthen both the military and the civil dimension of CSDP. Germany, but also Finland and Sweden have been pushing for progress regarding the latter. Especially Germany has been providing tangible support to the Civilian CSDP Compact and, as the EU's strongest economy and political centre, is in a strategic position to strengthen an integrated approach in regard to security and defence. For the countries bordering the Baltic Sea, which are conjunct in having limited defence capabilities on their own, supranational defence cooperation has long been an important political issue. At the same time, although the area is confined by the same geopolitical environment, the affiliations of the Nordic and Baltic countries with

security institutions (such as PESCO, NATO, NORDEF, etc.) form a rather heterogeneous pattern. This heterogeneity might complicate cooperation and coordination and leave the area particularly vulnerable to foreign assertiveness or aggression. Thus, there is a need for dialogue on issues like the different strategic cultures of the member states, democratic legitimacy, and options of flexibility or differentiated integration in EU defence matters.

Key questions:

How do different strategic cultures of the member states affect the effectiveness of CSDP? How are the prospects of developing a shared European strategic culture? Can strategic cultures be actively shaped?

Which options are there for differentiated integration in EU defence matters? To what extent is the multiplication of European security institutions (not least in the Nordic-Baltic region) a risk to an effective defence coordination?

How can PESCO be developed further? Is there a need for a European Security Council and what should it look like?

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