

# EU FOREIGN POLICY OPTIONS

## EU Foreign Policy Options (EFPO)

Roundtable series organised by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, bringing together experts and policy-makers to debate the EU's emerging options in international affairs

## THE EU'S ROLE IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD

### *Theme*

Developments in the Eastern neighbourhood test the EU's self-proclaimed goals to strengthen stability and security and promote democracy in neighbouring countries. The Eastern Partnership policy, launched in 2009, pursues these goals through integration and legal approximation of the six partner countries. However, in reality democracy is stalling or declining in most of these countries, and integration is proceeding very slowly if at all. There is also little progress in the settlement of unresolved conflicts, which remain a major security concern for the EU. In order to encourage debate on the EU's policy options in the Eastern neighbourhood, the FIIA is organising a series of roundtable discussions on some of the key issues the EU faces in the region.

### *Format*

Each seminar will address a chosen topic among a small (max 30) group of relevant invited stakeholders: researchers, diplomats, politicians et al. Two speakers will be invited to provide short introductions (15 min.), presenting different views on the topic and focusing on the EU's policy options. In order to allow for a frank exchange and out-of-the-box thinking the event will be closed to the public and under Chatham House Rule. Summaries of the proceedings will be prepared by the FIIA and distributed to all participants.

### **Roundtable I, 20 April**

While unanticipated events in the Arab world might open up avenues for democratic transition in the EU's southern neighbourhood, democracy is stalling or declining in most of the EU's eastern neighbourhood. How should the EU engage with neighbours with increasing autocratic leanings? Should it support reforms and move forward with free trade and visa liberalisation even in relation to countries where democracy is on the decline? Or should it apply tougher policies such as sanctions and withholding assistance?

### Speakers:

**Giselle Bosse**, Assistant Professor, Maastricht University

**Balazs Jarabik**, Associate Fellow, FRIDE

Chair: **Kristi Raik**, Researcher, The Finnish Institute of International Affairs

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## **Roundtable II, 1 June – Unresolved conflicts and European security**

None of the unresolved conflicts in the EU's eastern neighbourhood seem close to a settlement. How can the EU work towards a peaceful solution of the conflicts over Transnistria, Nagorno Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia? Should it make more effort to engage with Russia; how? Is the European paradigm of security through integration relevant in dealing with these conflicts, or should the EU engage in a substantial renewal of its approach to European security? Should the EU primarily focus on enhancing its contribution to confidence-building and human security in the conflict areas?

Speakers:

**Neil Melvin**, Director of the Armed Conflict and Conflict Management Programme, SIPRI

**Matthew Rojansky**, Deputy Director of the Russia and Eurasia Program, Carnegie Endowment

Chair: **Teija Tiilikainen**, Director of the Finnish Institute of International Affairs

**Roundtable III: Energy Security – forthcoming**