

12:30-13:30

Registration and light lunch

13:30-14:30

Session 1 in parallel

Panel 1

EU-MENA Relations in Times of Crisis - How to Ensure Strategic Cooperation with our Southern Partners?

*Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS – Germany)
Politische Akademie (PolAk - Austria)*

Panel 2

As the Energy Crisis Bites, is a Food Crisis Next?

Anton Korošec Institute (INAK – Slovenia)

Panel 3

Technology Transfer - an Untapped Potential for the CEE Region

TOPAZ (Czechia)

14:30-15:00

Coffee break

15:00-16:00

Session 2 in parallel

Panel 4

From Ukraine to the Mediterranean: EU Migration Policy In Times of Crisis

Luigi Sturzo Institute (ILS – Italy)

Panel 5

The Future of European Liberal Democracy – What Role for the EPP?

Konstantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy (KKID-Greece)

Panel 6

Can Europe Emerge Stronger from the Energy Crisis?

Foundation Tunega, Púčik, Tesár (NTPT – Slovakia)

16:00-16:30

Coffee break

16:30-17:30

Session 3 in parallel

Panel 7

The EU's Role in Revitalising the Global Trade System

Hanns Seidel Stiftung (HSS - Germany)

Panel 8

East Mediterranean - Shallow Waters or Deep Currents?

The Glafkos Clerides Institute (GCI – Cyprus)

Panel 9

NATO and the Defence of Europe: Between a Northeastern Shift and Southern Challenges

De Gasperi Foundation (FDG – Italy)

17:30-20:00

Closing cocktail and 15th anniversary reception

This event receives financial support from the European Parliament. Sole liability rests with the organiser, the European Parliament is not responsible for the activity.

13:30-14:30

Session 1 in parallel

Panel 1

EU-MENA Relations in Times of Crisis - How to Ensure Strategic Cooperation with our Southern Partners?

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS – Germany) Politische Akademie (PolAk - Austria)

More than a decade since the revolutionary movements in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the achievements of the “Arab Spring” remain ambivalent. In most of the Arab countries today, authoritarian regimes are back in power while countries such as Syria, Libya and Yemen suffer from the consequences of ongoing civil war and terror. Even in Tunisia, a trend of democratic backsliding can be observed. On the one hand, current geopolitical developments give the region new significance in terms of economic, energy and migration issues. On the other hand, the war in Ukraine is forcing the EU, as well as the recently founded European Political Community, to shift their focus to its neighbours in Eastern Europe. Nonetheless, political turmoil and instability in MENA pose huge challenges to Europe, of which security policy is just one aspect. Being in the EU’s immediate neighbourhood, it is important to ensure that MENA is not overlooked alongside other current foreign policy matters. The purpose of this discussion is to examine the current state of EU-MENA relations and to provide an outlook for the future: Where do the political systems in MENA stand today and which role can the EU play to support democracy and stability in the region? How can the EU ensure cooperation on current geopolitical issues to support European interests? How can the European Political Community ensure MENA is not left behind in future political cooperation?

Moderator:

Christina Bache
Ph.D., Associate Researcher at the Center for Migration, Diversity, and Justice, Brussels School of Governance

Panel Speakers:

Ajla Hotic
Senior Policy Adviser, EPP

Wolfgang Pusztai
Senior Advisor, Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy

Isabelle Werenfels
PhD., Senior Fellow Africa and Middle East, German Institute for International and Security Affairs

Panel 2

As the Energy Crisis Bites, is a Food Crisis Next?

Anton Korošec Institute (INAK – Slovenia)

Even before the unprovoked Russian invasion of Ukraine, Europe was already facing rising prices of raw materials, energy prices, and energy products, which in turn massively drove up prices of materials used in agriculture, such as mineral fertilisers. After the Russian invasion, energy prices in Europe exploded, forcing fertiliser producers to cut production by as much as 70% to avoid bankruptcy. With this year’s record drought that affected European farmers, the aforementioned reduction of mineral fertiliser production and the multiplication of energy prices, Europe is under threat of a significant decrease in agricultural production and, as a result, significantly more expensive food on supermarket shelves and, for people with the lowest incomes, even famine. The panel will focus on both the effects of the current crisis situation on the future of the EU agricultural sector, as well as on the draft SUP regulation, which, if implemented in such form and influenced by the events of recent months, could lead to a substantial reduction of European food production and a food crisis of significant proportions.

Moderator:

Franc Bogovič
MEP, EPP Group, Slovenia

Panel Speakers:

Emma Brown
Director of Public Affairs, CropLife Europe

Herbert Dorfmann
MEP, EPP Group, Italy

Panel 3

Technology Transfer - an Untapped Potential for the CEE Region

TOPAZ (Czechia)

The history of technology and knowledge transfer in Central Europe became relevant in the 1990s. While Czechia has an enormous potential to become one of the most innovative countries in Europe, contributing to European knowledge and technology, and inspire other Central and Eastern European countries, some limitations to fulfil these expectations prevail. The panel will discuss how to exploit this untapped potential and how technology transfer can help economic recovery after COVID-19 and the energy crisis, making a comparison and leaning on lessons learned from other EU Member States.

Moderator:

Lucie Tungul
Head of Research, TOPAZ

Panel Speakers:

Alena Mastantuono
Member of the European Economic and Social Committee, Delegate of the Czech Chamber of Commerce to EUROCHAMBRES

Otomar Sláma
Board Chairman, Charles University Innovations Prague

14:30-15:00

Coffee break

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15:00-16:00

Session 2 in parallel

Panel 4

From Ukraine to the Mediterranean: EU Migration Policy in Times of Crisis

Luigi Sturzo Institute (ILS – Italy)

The war in Ukraine and the related refugee crisis caused a completely unique response in terms of solidarity at the EU level. However, there is no guarantee that the EU's outpouring of support for Ukrainians will translate into effective reforms of asylum and migration policy. Member states are still struggling to agree on a common approach to migration and asylum, and less attention has been given recently to the Mediterranean region, where additional challenges caused by the war, such as a food crisis and inflation, could lead to greater instability and a surge in migration to Europe. Can a new crisis be avoided? What lessons can we learn from past crises? Is the Ukrainian war also creating new momentum to advance migration and asylum policy at EU level? Or should the EU response be rather seen as exceptional?

Moderator:

Steven Van Hecke
Associate Professor, KU Leuven

Panel Speakers:

Gianluca Brusco
Justice and Home Affairs
Coordinator, Italian Permanent
Representation to the EU

Laurence Hart
Director, Coordination Office
for the Mediterranean,
International Organization for
Migration

Loredana Teodorescu
Head of EU and International
Affairs, ILS, President,
Women in International
Security, Italy

Panel 5

The Future of European Liberal Democracy – What Role for the EPP?

Konstantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy (KKID-Greece)

Recent electoral results and political developments in Europe raise concerns about the course for liberal democracy. The rise of the far-right, authoritarianism and nationalist populism created a "trend" that was nurtured by economic turmoil and has drastically affected the political-electoral behaviour of citizens across Europe. The current energy and inflation crisis provides again oxygen to a new –potentially catastrophic – "antisystemic" wave. The discussion will focus on how the EPP can provide clear and effective answers for the contemporary challenges, while keeping the core of its values and principles. Likewise, the panel will address how the European centre-right can develop and put into practise new social and economic policies, find new ways to communicate with European citizens, establish a new relationship between the centre-right and voters, and finally give a new incentive to the European project.

Moderator:

Panagiotis Kakolyris
Head of International Affairs,
KKID

Panel Speakers:

Thanasis Bakolas
Secretary General, EPP

Kostis Hatzidakis
Minister for Labour and
Social Affairs of Greece

Miriam Lexmann
MEP, EPP Group, Slovakia

Panel 6

Can Europe Emerge Stronger from the Energy Crisis?

Foundation Tunega, Púčik, Tesár (NTPT – Slovakia)

Winter is coming. Citizens and companies are expecting from politicians solutions that will secure sufficient resources to overcome the winter at affordable prices. In the first part of the exercise, the EU succeeded. Gas storage capacities are reaching 90 percent; alternative suppliers from various countries are contracted, demand has decreased. Despite all of this, the price of electricity still tripled. Politicians are beginning to learn how complicated the energy market is and which measures can bring real positive results. The panel will try to analyse the actual development of the situation in energy markets. The panellists will share their views on Council and Commission positions, developments in the market and expectations for the upcoming weeks and months. Is temporary capping of gas prices the key solution? What will be the role of nuclear and renewables? Is the Energy Union a long-term solution? Can we already define the lessons learned from this crisis? How will we handle EU 2024 elections in light of the energy crisis?

Moderator:

Marek Degro
Political Advisor, European
Parliament

Panel Speakers:

Ján Figel'
President, Foundation
Tunega, Púčik, Tesár

Pauline Lucas
Policy Director, Euroheat &
Power

Ivan Štefanec
MEP, EPP Group, Slovakia

16:00-16:30

Coffee break

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16:30-17:30

Session 3 in parallel

Panel 7

The EU's Role in Revitalising the Global Trade System

Hanns Seidel Stiftung (HSS - Germany)

For more than a quarter of a century, the World Trade Organization (WTO) was seen as a guarantor of open markets, setting the framework for world trade and enabling the settlement of disputes. The EU's trade with key partners used to be based exclusively on these WTO rules. Since 2019, the US blockade of the WTO Dispute Settlement Body has effectively rendered the WTO unable to act. As a result, we can observe an increasing bilateralisation of trade relations in recent years and, at the same time, growing civil society resistance against comprehensive, regional trade agreements. Yet, despite these developments, chances of reviving the multilateral, rules-based trade regime have risen, with the EU pushing for reform at this year's WTO Ministerial Conference. Is this the beginning of a revitalisation of the WTO? Where will the EU set its future trade policy priorities? And finally, how can the WTO remain relevant in a fragmented world in which international dependencies are perceived as a burden?

Moderator:

Tomi Huhtanen
Executive Director, Martens Centre

Keynote:

Markus Ferber
MEP, EPP Group, Germany, Coordinator of the EPP Group in the ECON Committee, EP, Chair, HSS

Panel Speakers:

Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou
MEP, EPP Group, Greece, Vice-Chair of Committee on International Trade, EP

Sofia Bournou
Senior Adviser, BusinessEurope

Panel 8

East Mediterranean – Shallow Waters or Deep Currents?

The Glafkos Clerides Institute (GCI – Cyprus)

Over the last decade, significant changes have occurred in the Eastern Mediterranean Region that have been defined by new geopolitical coalitions and antagonisms, new security challenges, and significant energy discoveries. The energy crisis highlights the already renewed interest in the area from the EU and external players. Increased geopolitical games and bargaining by regional and global powers have made fragility a daily norm in the region. This panel will discuss the pressing question on whether these new prospects and developments will work towards securing peace, or at least medium to long-term stability, or even a reconfiguration of the conflict.

Moderator:

Marina Savvidou
TV journalist, Mega TV, Senior Adviser, European Parliament

Panel Speakers:

Ino Afentouli
Executive Director, Institute of International Relations

Agis Digkas
Vice President, Renewable Energy Sources Operator & Guarantees of Origin, Greece, Adjunct Lecturer of Geopolitics, NKUA

Michalis Sophocleus
Director, GCI

Panel 9

NATO and the Defence of Europe: Between a Northeastern Shift and Southern Challenges

De Gasperi Foundation (FDG – Italy)

Europe is reinforcing its ability to defend itself with the inclusion of Sweden and Finland in NATO. However, by shifting NATO's geographic centre of gravity decisively to the north and east, the risk is that the alliance may lose track of the threats gathering to the south. The war in Ukraine has made blindingly clear that the Alliance's greatest antagonist remains Russia, which threatens Europe's east, but tipping NATO's focus almost exclusively toward the eastern and northern flanks risks leaving the continent's soft underbelly dangerously exposed. As Moscow expands its influence through the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Sahel, NATO will need to consider that countering Russia in the north and east cannot be done without considering issues in the south and planning accordingly. Failure to do so would risk the kind of political instability, insecurity, widening famine, or spiralling inflation that have triggered great waves of refugees and migrants across the narrow sea in the past, creating conflict both within European societies, and among them and their neighbours across the Mediterranean.

Moderator:

Mattia Caniglia
Associate Director of the Digital Forensic Research Laboratory, Atlantic Council

Panel Speakers:

Paolo Alli
Former President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and Member of the Executive Board, FDG

Nicola De Santis
Head Engagements Section, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO

17:30-20:00

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