

ECFR in the New World Disorder

Strategic framework 2017-2020

ECFR began 10 years ago. The goal was to help European nations and citizens come together to stand up for the values of the open society and transform the world order to reflect them. In 2016, that vision suffered major setbacks. We are witnessing a global counter-revolution against the institutions and values of the open society; a European Union that is disintegrating where the consensus for EU action has eroded; and a fundamental change to politics and the media which raises questions about traditional ways of achieving political change. Donald Trump is not just the first US president not to see the preservation of the EU as a priority, he may even tempted see the break-up of the Union as an opportunity. These developments necessarily change how we do business, but they also make our work all the more important. We believe that a liberal world order is essential to preserving European values and human dignity and we work daily to defend that proposition.

Defending the Liberal Order

In the face of these shocks, Europe is more focused on protecting itself than promoting its values around the world. Europe's foreign policy priority must be to defend the core pillars of liberal internationalism and peace, particularly close to home. ECFR must show how protecting the EU's nations and citizens will depend on engagement and co-operation rather than isolationism. We will make the case for cooperative European solutions to the key foreign policy challenges.

- **New Security Threats** – We have embarked on an effort to understand the new types of security threats that are already plague Europe. We have established a New European Security Initiative (NESI) bringing together expertise on cyber, hybrid war, terrorism, and conventional military threats to devise new strategies to defend against them. This will include reflections on how Britain fits into securing Europe post Brexit.
- **Roots of Refugee and Migrant Crisis and Terror** – The refugee crisis and many of the terrorist attacks on European soil stem from war, instability and poor governance in the Middle East. ECFR research seeks first to understand that region and ultimately to provide European solutions – at a time when the United States is retreating and regional actors such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, alongside neighboring states like Turkey and Russia are shaping the agenda. We will convene key policymakers, officials and opinion leaders around innovative proposals for European efforts to de-escalate the war in Syria, promote political and economic stabilization in Libya, save the Iranian nuclear deal and find creative solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- **Instability on Europe's Periphery** – The European Union cannot be stable and united while instability persists on its periphery. ECFR's analysis focuses on supporting independence and effective governance in Eastern Europe, particularly Ukraine. We will work to propose new

mechanisms both for deterring Russian intervention in our shared neighborhood and for engaging with Russia. We will also continue to promote a pan-European debate on how to engage with Turkey in a context of a more difficult political environment in Europe and a worrying deterioration of EU-Turkey relations.

- **Saving the EU from the Unraveling of Global Order** – Europe's influence and wellbeing both supports and depends on a functioning global order. That order is now under threat not just from Russia, but from actors as diverse as China, India, and even the United States. ECFR seeks to understand how others see the evolving global order, what they want from it, and how Europeans can work with them to preserve its best features. As well as devising a strategy for taming Trump's revisionism and engage with an increasingly assertive China, we will focus particularly on how to strengthen European sovereignty.

Impact in the New Political Era

ECFR was always based on the knowledge that EU foreign policy does not exist waiting to be influenced – it has to be built throughout Europe on every issue. That's why we have a Council of 300 prominent Europeans and a network of offices in seven European capitals. But, whereas ten years ago, many member states were committed to building a common European foreign policy, that consensus has all but disappeared. In this new world, ECFR needs to work even harder to build a consensus for European co-operation on foreign policy by framing arguments in ways that will resonate in national capitals, working with political parties as well as governments, reaching out to new media and engaging skeptical audiences. Our approach has three main dimensions:

1. **Building up ECFR's policy and advocacy capacity in national capitals.** In a fragmenting Europe we have a vision for a more networked organization, where ECFR's leadership, policy, advocacy and communications teams are working more closely with the national debates shaping European foreign policy. In practical terms, over the next four years we will deploy our staff in each of the offices which are most influential in their area in order to counter Europe's centrifugal tendencies.
2. **Shift Centre of Gravity to Berlin.** In order to reflect the British decision to leave the EU, but also in the belief that Germany will serve even more as pivot in European foreign and security policy, we will gradually shift the centre of gravity of ECFR from London to Berlin as the new administrative centre for the organization. Our goal is to use the engagement of the German government as a kernel of wider European coalitions, which we will encourage through building up our presence across our network in continental Europe.
3. **Move toward new forms of communication.** The way that people receive and understand information is in a state of constant flux. Many of traditional modes of engagement, particularly the written word, have become less effective. We are continuously increasing our use of data visualization, infographics, podcasts, and social media channels to allow our ideas to reach broader audiences more effectively.