

# Europe: Crises of Identity

## Coping with Crisis

Working Paper Series

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**Cover Photo:** Armed police officers patrol London's transport system one month after the terrorist attack on the city on July 7, 2005.

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## Foreword

Terje Rød-Larsen

*President, International Peace Academy*

The International Peace Academy (IPA) is pleased to introduce a new series of Working Papers within the program *Coping with Crisis, Conflict, and Change: The United Nations and Evolving Capacities for Managing Global Crises*, a four-year research and policy-facilitation program designed to generate fresh thinking about global crises and capacities for effective prevention and response.

In this series of Working Papers, IPA has asked leading experts to undertake a mapping exercise, presenting an assessment of critical challenges to human and international security. A first group of papers provides a horizontal perspective, examining the intersection of multiple challenges in specific regions of the world. A second group takes a vertical approach, providing in-depth analysis of global challenges relating to organized violence, poverty, population trends, public health, and climate change, among other topics. The Working Papers have three main objectives: to advance the understanding of these critical challenges and their interlinkages; to assess capacities to cope with these challenges and to draw scenarios for plausible future developments; and to offer a baseline for longer-term research and policy development.

Out of these initial Working Papers, a grave picture already emerges. The Papers make clear that common challenges take different forms in different regions of the world. At the same time, they show that complexity and interconnectedness will be a crucial attribute of crises in the foreseeable future.

First, new challenges are emerging, such as climate change and demographic trends. At least two billion additional inhabitants, and perhaps closer to three billion, will be added to the world over the next five decades, virtually all in the less developed regions, especially among the poorest countries in Africa and Asia. As a result of climate change, the magnitude and frequency of floods may increase in many regions; floods in coastal Bangladesh and India, for example, are expected to affect several million people. The demand for natural resources – notably water – will increase as a result of population growth and economic development; but some areas may have diminished access to clean water.

Second, some challenges are evolving in more dangerous global configurations such as transnational organized crime and terrorism. Illicit and violent organizations are gaining increasing control over territory, markets, and populations around the world. Non-state armed groups complicate peacemaking efforts due to their continued access to global commodity and arms markets. Many countries, even if they are not directly affected, can suffer from the economic impact of a major terrorist attack. States with ineffective and corrupted institutions may prove to be weak links in global arrangements to deal with threats ranging from the avian flu to transnational terrorism.

Finally, as these complex challenges emerge and evolve, ‘old’ problems still persist. While the number of violent conflicts waged around the world has recently declined, inequality – particularly between groups within the same country – is on the rise. When this intergroup inequality aligns with religious, ethnic, racial and language divides, the prospect of tension rises. Meanwhile, at the state level, the number of actual and aspirant nuclear-armed countries is growing, as is their ability to acquire weapons through illicit global trade.

As the international institutions created in the aftermath of World War II enter their seventh decade, their capacity to cope with this complex, rapidly evolving and interconnected security landscape is being sharply tested. The United Nations has made important progress in some of its core functions – ‘keeping the peace,’ providing humanitarian relief, and helping advance human development and security. However, there are

reasons to question whether the broad UN crisis management system for prevention and response is up to the test.

Not only the UN, but also regional and state mechanisms are challenged by this complex landscape and the nature and scale of crises. In the Middle East, for example, interlinked conflicts are complicated by demographic and socioeconomic trends and regional institutions capable of coping with crisis are lacking. In both Latin America and Africa, 'old' problems of domestic insecurity arising from weak institutions and incomplete democratization intersect with 'new' transnational challenges such as organized crime. Overall, there is reason for concern about net global capacities to cope with these challenges, generating a growing sense of global crisis.

Reading these Working Papers, the first step in a four-year research program, one is left with a sense of urgency about the need for action and change: action where policies and mechanisms have already been identified; change where institutions are deemed inadequate and require innovation. The diversity of challenges suggests that solutions cannot rest in one actor or mechanism alone. For example, greater multilateral engagement can produce a regulatory framework to combat small arms proliferation and misuse, while private actors, including both industry and local communities, will need to play indispensable roles in forging global solutions to public health provision and food security. At the same time, the complexity and intertwined nature of the challenges require solutions at multiple levels. For example, governments will need to confront the realities that demographic change will impose on them in coming years, while international organizations such as the UN have a key role to play in technical assistance and norm-setting in areas as diverse as education, urban planning and environmental control.

That the world is changing is hardly news. What is new is a faster rate of change than ever before and an unprecedented interconnectedness between different domains of human activity – and the crises they can precipitate. This series of Working Papers aims to contribute to understanding these complexities and the responses that are needed from institutions and decision-makers to cope with these crises, challenges and change.



Terje Rød-Larsen

## Introduction

The European Union's emergence as a leading global political and economic actor is an important, exciting and inspiring development in modern history.<sup>1</sup> The signature in 1957 of the EU's founding Treaty of Rome, creating the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) and the European Economic Community (EEC) has been followed rapidly by a spate of initiatives designed to draw EU members into an ever closer economic and political union.

As the world's most sophisticated experiment in regional cooperation and collective sovereignty, the EU has long been an inspiration and model for countries seeking similar regional integration. An array of common institutions, legal treaties, and raft of regulations that bind EU states to each other make war among EU states unimaginable. Consequently, EU countries currently enjoy a period of peace and stability unprecedented in their history.

## Europe's Identity Crises

The opening years of the twenty-first century have been especially unkind to Europe. While the 1990s were marked by landmark decisions to break down internal barriers and create a single European market, the historic introduction of a single European currency and vital moves to take in new Eastern European members, the last few years have witnessed an upbeat Europe giving way to a twenty-seven nation bloc racked by doubts and uncertainties. Many EU plans for bigger and better things – a new constitution, expanded membership, a revamped economy and global power status to rival the United States – are currently on ice as EU governments squabble over the soul of their common enterprise.

Self-confidence in Europe's destiny has been replaced by a deep malaise about the future. European policymakers talk openly about the EU's crisis of identity as they struggle to respond to an array of complex challenges they have sidestepped for over fifty years. The list of European woes includes last year's rejection of a draft EU constitution by voters in France and the Netherlands. Among reasons given for the treaty's defeat were rising public fears about EU enlargement, including concern about opening the doors to Turkey, a largely Muslim nation, as well as

perceptions that Western Europe was being flooded by workers from Eastern European states willing to accept below-average wages. To make matters worse, the EU appears to be split into two seemingly irreconcilable camps. France and Germany – joined by Spain, Italy, and the three Benelux states – remain committed to building a politically integrated EU, with strong institutions and a joint foreign and defense policy. However, Britain and a number of new EU states from central and Eastern Europe have never hidden their doubts about such a development, preferring to focus on the trade-related advantages of a Europe where goods and services can move freely across borders. Many EU newcomers, given their communist past, are especially skeptical about submitting to the diktats of a central power like the European Commission.

Disagreements also persist on the future economic direction of the EU. The gap is wide between Britain's liberal reform and deregulation agenda – favored by most of the new EU states – and the social welfare model traditionally espoused by France and Germany. Europe's economic future is clouded by low fertility rates and high levels of unemployment. At the same time, rising oil prices continue to cast a dark cloud over prospects of economic recovery. While China and India have raced ahead over the past decade, the EU's so-called Lisbon Agenda of Reforms launched in 2000 has failed to inspire governments to push through crucial economic and labor market reforms. As a result, EU dreams of transforming the bloc into the world's leading economic powerhouse have faltered.

On foreign affairs, EU governments are often at loggerheads over how best to deal with global flashpoints. Disagreements over the pros and cons of the US-led Iraq war – which was backed by Britain, Spain, and Italy but opposed by France and Germany – provided the worst example of such EU infighting over foreign policy. Since then, EU governments have made a determined – albeit not always successful – effort to speak with one voice on the global stage. Although ambitious talk of building the EU into a counterweight to the US has died down, EU nations have taken an active role in trying to clinch a diplomatic deal to end the crisis over Iran's nuclear program, have sent troops to Congo to help secure national elections and to Lebanon to monitor a fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hizbullah fighters. EU forces are also deployed in the Balkans.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper uses the term "Europe" to mean the twenty-seven nation European Union, the largest political and economic grouping on the continent, with a population of 450 million.

Despite the new military focus and the slow but steady emergence of a European defense and security policy, which is independent of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Europe remains a “soft power” which uses trade, aid, and diplomacy to try and project security, stability, and prosperity worldwide. Europe’s soft power outreach is also evident in the process of eastward expansion which is allowing a peaceful reunification of the continent. EU enlargement in 2004 (which included eight former communist countries in addition to Malta and Cyprus), the 2007 entry of Bulgaria and Romania, as well as plans to take in states in the western Balkans and Turkey, have helped it to respond to major political changes such as the fall of dictatorships and the collapse of Communism. It has also consolidated democracy, human rights, and stability across the continent.

However, the EU’s foreign and security policy successes have been marred by bureaucratic wrangles and turf battles between EU governments and the European Commission – the EU’s Brussels-based executive body – which have prevented the bloc from punching with its full weight on the global stage. Also, given European public skepticism about further enlargement, the EU has promised to slow down the entry of more new members into the Union. As of now, in addition to judging whether candidate states are in compliance with EU rules, EU governments will also take stock of their club’s “integration capacity” – a reference to EU institutional structures and finances – before opening the door to newcomers.

While few expect an unraveling of the EU, there is serious concern that the bloc has entered a long period of stagnation and introspection which will make it increasingly difficult for European governments and EU institutions to address an array of internal and external challenges to European security, social harmony, and economic development. Crucially, while Europe is distracted by worries over the fate of the crippled draft constitution and declining public support for enlargement, “Fortress Europe” is crumbling fast under pressure from desperate immigrants and asylum-seekers, many of them Africans, seeking to illegally enter southern European ports and islands. In addition, as highlighted

by recent terror attacks, bomb alerts, race riots, and public confrontations between mainstream Europe and Muslim minorities, such as those over the publication of caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed, ensuring security in Europe requires urgent action to curb the radicalization of young Muslims in Europe and the threat of “home-grown” terrorism. As Eric Rosand discussed, the EU must win the “battle of ideas” if it is to successfully fight the appeal of radical preachers and terrorists preying on Europe’s alienated Muslim youth.<sup>2</sup>

Policymakers in national European capitals as well as the EU are trying to respond to the challenges posed by immigration and terrorism by upgrading diplomatic, trade and cultural ties with African and Islamic countries. A series of agreements have been negotiated with sub-Saharan, Arab and Muslim nations focusing on aid to spur economic development, create domestic jobs and provide better education to young people in these regions. But implementation of these accords, especially provisions for improving the rule of law and human rights, remains a challenge.

In addition, EU governments and institutions need to improve relations with members of Europe’s 15–20 million Muslims and implement more effective policies to end discrimination and ensure their social integration.<sup>3</sup> This will not be easy, however. Although Islam is the fastest growing religion in Europe and Muslims are the largest minority on the continent – the total of 20 million people is expected to double in 20 years, driven by high birth rates and continued immigration – the gap between many European Muslims and mainstream Europeans appears to be growing. Many Muslims in Europe are becoming more religious as they seek spiritual refuge in an expanding Europe and a globalized world, and most Europeans believe that Muslims want to be distinct from the broader society rather than adopt European customs.<sup>4</sup>

The stakes are high. Failure to build bridges between mainstream Europe and Islam will not only heighten the sense of alienation and isolation felt by many Muslims in Europe, but also create fertile ground for extremism and radicalism. This, in turn, will impact on Europe’s relations with other countries, including the US, which has already warned

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<sup>2</sup> Eric Rosand, presentation at the *Coping with Crisis* Working Paper Series Authors’ Workshop, “Evolving Challenges to Human and International Security,” (Greentree Foundation Conference Center: New York, October 13, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> In this paper the term “integration” is used to refer to a two-way process under which governments and minority communities recognize their mutual rights and corresponding obligations and work together for the full participation of immigrants in society.

<sup>4</sup> Roula Khalaf, “Muslims’ Integration in Europe is Urgent Challenge,” *Financial Times*, July 14, 2005.

that Europe's difficulties in successfully absorbing its Muslim communities, and failure to quell the spread of extremist beliefs, pose a threat to American security. With many Muslims arguing that Western policies on Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine are fuelling such militancy, it is also imperative that European governments pursue a balanced and even-handed foreign policy agenda based on a respect for human rights.<sup>5</sup> Accusations of European "double standards" in relation to Middle East politics – made recently by British Muslim leaders, referring to Europe's strong denunciation of Palestinian violence but more muted response to Israeli actions – must be addressed.

This paper will present the different factors – internal and external – contributing to Europe's current crisis of identity and the implications of this EU-wide malaise for human and international security. It will argue that the EU is weighed down by institutional and economic problems which it is still struggling to address and caution that Europe's future stability and social harmony are also conditional on efforts to tackle uncontrolled immigration and come to grips with increasingly assertive but deeply alienated Muslim communities. It will highlight the EU's efforts to stabilize its neighborhood and improve relations with Islamic nations, but also make the point that some aspects of EU foreign policy are contributing to Muslims' frustrations. Based on this discussion, the paper will proceed to discuss the various actors engaged in Europe and working with the EU to defuse current security challenges and finally, outline three scenarios – catastrophic, middle, and ideal – for Europe's future.

## Internal Challenges

### EU Consolidation and Enlargement

Europe's current loss of confidence is the result of a mix of factors including the absence of strong leadership, a crisis of credibility facing most EU institutions and an acrimonious debate over the future of the constitution. Anxiety over further expansion is also increasing. In contrast to the joint drive for further integration launched in the 1990s by the iconic European Commission President Jacques Delors, French President Francois Mitterrand, and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, today's EU leaders are often at cross purposes over the long-term destiny of the EU. The European Commission, the EU's executive

agency, headed by former Portuguese Prime Minister José Manuel Barroso is struggling to come up with new initiatives to keep the EU engine running. However some of these blueprints, including Barroso's recent economic liberalization drive – especially in the energy sector – have failed to win either the public's hearts and minds or the support of key EU leaders like German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Other important EU institutions are also facing a crisis of credibility. More than 25 years since the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979, public support for the EU assembly remains low, with the average turnout for parliamentary polls in June 2004 – the first since the EU took in 10 new members in May of that year – hitting a record low of 45.5 per cent. The complex decision-making system in the EU's Council of Ministers, often requiring unanimity on key issues, means that governments are frequently unable to resolve logjams over important issues like immigration and foreign policy. Also, while some proceedings of the Council of Ministers are open to the public, many aspects of EU decision-making continue to lack transparency, heightening European citizens' sense that EU institutions are far-removed from their daily concerns.

At the same time, differences over the fate of the failed EU constitution – rejected by Dutch and French voters in summer 2005 – continue to poison the political debate within Europe. Although reasons for the "no" votes are still the subject of heated debate, there is general agreement that voters in both France and the Netherlands were casting their ballots against EU institutions, the impact of future enlargement on jobs, and fears over the membership of largely Muslim Turkey. Believing that a new institutional framework is crucial for the smooth functioning of an enlarged EU, German Chancellor Merkel has vowed to try and revive the constitutional debate during Berlin's EU presidency in early 2007. But success is not guaranteed, with countries like the Netherlands demanding that the entire project must be radically cut back and slimmed down. The increasingly heated discussions on the constitution are expected to last at least another two years. Barroso, among others, has warned that with the treaty on ice, there can be no further EU enlargement.

Barroso's comments reflect a growing "enlargement fatigue" in many Western European nations. Two years after the EU's "big bang" expansion in

<sup>5</sup> Adrian Croft, "Muslim Groups Say British Policies Fuel Militancy," *The Mirror*, August 12, 2006.



2004, when the bloc took in ten new mainly East European members, the noble enterprise of bringing peace and prosperity to the mainly former Communist countries is not going too well. Bulgaria and Romania will be allowed to join on January 1, 2007, but will face tough scrutiny of their reform efforts. Tensions between new and old EU states are rising. While EU newcomers complain about being treated as second-class citizens, EU leaders, fearing the high cost of further expansion on their budgets and responding to public fears over an increase in east-west immigration flows, have warned that the future pace of enlargement will now also be dictated by the ability of present members to “absorb and integrate” the mainly poorer states knocking at the EU gates.

Linked to the current “enlargement fatigue” are deep-seated questions linked to the geographical limits of the EU. The countries of the Balkans were given an understanding in 2003, at an EU summit in Thessaloniki, that they were all eligible for membership once they met EU political and economic entry standards. But no deadlines have been set, with EU officials insisting that it depends on the pace of reform in each state. There is consensus that Russia will not join the EU, but although the EU has made no promises of accession to Ukraine and Georgia, both countries have made clear that they are waiting at the doors.

The debate over expansion is especially fierce when it comes to Turkey. Having spent four decades in the EU's waiting room, Turkey finally opened EU membership negotiations on October 3, 2005. However, according to the mutually agreed negotiating framework, these negotiations – expected to last at least a decade – are “an open-ended process, the outcome of which cannot be guaranteed.”<sup>6</sup> Significantly, the EU's decision to open accession talks with Turkey has also had an impact on the debate on Islam in Europe, bringing long-held prejudices, based on Europe's historical clashes with Islam, back to the fore. Several key EU policymakers, including Barroso, have warned that getting Turkey into the EU will be very difficult since many in Europe see the 70 million-strong, mainly Muslim nation as culturally different. But others have argued that a Turkey

integrated into the EU could play an essential role in working as a bridge to the Muslim world.

In a sign of the difficulties facing Turkey's EU membership bid, EU foreign ministers agreed on December 11, 2006 to partially freeze accession talks with Ankara. The suspension, covering eight out of thirty-five areas under discussion followed Turkey's refusal to establish transport links with the Republic of Cyprus which became an EU member in May 2004. Highlighting Turkey's strategic importance to the EU, however, ministers said discussions with Ankara would continue in other areas. However, Nicosia still wields a veto over the entire negotiating process.

### Aging

There is another dark cloud hanging over Europe. Low fertility rates and an aging population mean that Europe needs young foreign workers to fill labor shortages in both the skilled and unskilled sectors of the economy.<sup>7</sup> Immigrants' incomes and tax revenues are also needed to prop up Europe's creaking pension and health care systems. According to recent figures, the working age population in the EU is expected to decrease by 52 million by 2050.<sup>8</sup> The share of the population aged between 0 and 14 will also be reduced, from 16.4 percent in 2004 to 13.4 percent by 2050, while the proportion of elderly people (aged 65 and more) is expected to almost double over this period, from 16.4 percent in 2004 to 29.9 percent in 2050. The proportion of very old people (aged 80 and more) is expected to almost triple in the EU, from 4.0 percent in 2004 to 11.4 percent in 2050.

The decreasing numbers of young people and increasing numbers of senior citizens enjoying longer life expectancies is having an immediate economic impact by increasing health care and pension costs. As a result, Germany, France, Italy, and Britain are spending 25 percent of their GDP on social welfare programs, as compared to 16 percent in the United States.<sup>9</sup> Expenditures to support Europe's aging population will undoubtedly require that governments raise taxes, cut spending in other areas or make people pay more out of their own pockets in order to

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<sup>6</sup> “EU-Turkey Negotiating Framework,” Luxembourg, October 3, 2005, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/st20002\\_05\\_TR\\_framedoc\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/st20002_05_TR_framedoc_en.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> According to a January 2006 “Green Book” published by the European Commission, Europe's working-age population will drop by 20 million by 2020 even with the present rate of immigration. The corresponding fall in competition and productivity will diminish EU wealth and standard of living.

<sup>8</sup> Michele Flournoy, Julianne Smith, Guy Ben-Ari, Kathleen McInnis, David Scruggs, “European Defense Integration: Bridging the Gap between Strategy and Capabilities,” paper prepared for the Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 12, 2005.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

maintain their existing healthcare systems.

Significantly, the aging population will mean a decline in the “recruitment pool” of European armies.<sup>10</sup> Equally important, although Europe sees itself as a “soft power,” EU policymakers are concerned that the pressures on public finances will also make it increasingly difficult for European governments to hike up their defense budgets. That, in turn, will have a negative fallout on the future development of the fledgling European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). European countries spent on average 3.5 percent of GDP on defense at the height of the Cold War, but military expenditure is now down to an average 1.9 percent of GDP. In contrast, the United States now spends about 3.4 percent of its GDP on defense.<sup>11</sup>

### Immigration and Minorities

With opportunities for legal immigration into most European countries having been significantly curtailed in the 1970s – governments currently only allow limited family reunification – there is a thriving trade in smuggling people into Europe from a variety of countries, including China and Central Asia, as well as African states. The influx from Africa is especially dramatic, with many young men, women, and children drowning while attempting the crossing into Spain, Italy, and Greece by sea.

The irony is that while old Europe needs young foreign workers, public hostility towards migrants and asylum seekers remains high. Racist and xenophobic political parties are increasingly popular throughout the continent, most notably in France, Austria, Italy, and Denmark. Rightist, nationalist demonstrators recently clashed with the police in Budapest, hijacking what was to have been a solemn commemoration of Hungary's failed 1956 uprising against Soviet domination a half-century ago. The conservative Law and Justice party won elections last year in Poland and the twin brothers Lech and Jaroslaw Kaczynski, now the country's President and Prime Minister respectively, have alienated much of the EU with their conservative Catholic, anti-homosexual attitudes and talk of Poland's assuming its “rightful” place on the

Continent's political map.

Mainstream politicians are also using inflammatory language against foreigners to win votes. French politicians used strong words to condemn renewed violence in France's largely immigrant suburbs in October last year, twelve months after riots in poor neighborhoods spread across the country. French conservative Presidential frontrunner Nicolas Sarkozy called the disaffected youth “scum” in autumn 2005 and the Socialist politician Laurent Fabius has described violent young men as “bastards.”<sup>12</sup> Immigrants, meanwhile, complain of discrimination by public authorities in employment, housing, and education, while Europe's minorities increasingly complain of racism and discrimination generally. With far-right and xenophobic political parties attracting more and more support, Muslims in Europe warn of a rise in Islamophobia across the continent. The Vienna-based Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia has highlighted such concerns by warning that Islamophobic sentiments are on the rise throughout Europe,<sup>13</sup> a claim also upheld by the European Network against Racism.<sup>14</sup>

EU countries, struggling to better manage migration flows, are working to develop a common immigration policy. However, progress is slow, mainly because under current EU rules, all decisions related to justice and home affairs policy – including border controls, visa rules, and the exchange of police information – must be approved unanimously by member countries. Appeals to governments to drop their national vetoes over judicial policies have encountered stiff resistance from countries including Germany, Britain, Ireland, Denmark, and the Netherlands, which are reluctant to cede power over what they view as the domain of sovereign states.

### “Home Grown” Terrorism

The announcement in mid-August 2006 that British intelligence had foiled an alleged major “terror” plot to blow up at least 10 US-bound planes – an attack that UK officials say could have surpassed 9/11 – has spotlighted rising government and public concern about “home-grown” terrorism. Fears about the

<sup>10</sup> “A Long-term Vision for European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP),” paper prepared for the European Defense Agency, Brussels, September 13, 2006.

<sup>11</sup> Flournoy et al, “European Defense Integration.”

<sup>12</sup> “What Marks ‘Scum’ from ‘Bastards’? France Wonders,” *Reuters*, October 30, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Christopher Allen and Jørgen S. Nielsen, *Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001* (Vienna: EUMC, May 2002). This trend was highlighted in the EUMC's report, released after this Working Paper was written: EUMC, *Muslims in the European Union: Discrimination and Islamophobia* (Vienna: EUMC, December 2006).

<sup>14</sup> Sunduss Al-Hassani, *ENAR Shadow Report 2005: Islamophobia in Europe*, available at [www.enar-eu.org/en/national/eu/Islamophobia\\_in\\_Europe\\_2005.pdf](http://www.enar-eu.org/en/national/eu/Islamophobia_in_Europe_2005.pdf).

radicalization of young British Asians first came to the fore following the bombings on the London transport system in July 2005 by four British-born Muslim men. In Spain, meanwhile, similar concerns about men of North African descent were raised after the Madrid train explosions in March 2004. Dame Eliza Manningham-Buller, the head of Britain's domestic security service, MI5, has said she knows of 30 terror plots threatening the United Kingdom and is keeping 1,600 individuals under surveillance.<sup>15</sup>

The vast majority of European Muslims are undoubtedly peace-loving citizens. As pointed out by Massoud Shadjareh of Britain's Islamic Human Rights Commission, out of a Muslim population of about 2 million in Britain, over 1,000 arrests have been made under anti-terrorism legislation since September 11, 2001 and out of those, twenty-seven had been found guilty of which nine were Muslims.<sup>16</sup> However, as illustrated by events and government raids across Europe on extremist groups, the number of "radicals" and militant Islamist organizations is on the rise.<sup>17</sup> A variety of transnational groups are believed to be seeking to spread extremism across Europe, including Hizb-ut-Tahrir (Party of Liberation), the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), as well as Al Qaeda.<sup>18</sup> Meanwhile, sympathizers of the Muslim Brotherhood appear to be making strenuous efforts to take the lead in European Islam and the Saudi effort to spread Wahhabi extremist ideology throughout Europe's Muslim communities is also raising concerns. Much of their recruitment occurs in mosques as well as in prisons. This is not surprising since, for example, at least one-half of France's prison population is believed to be Muslim.<sup>19</sup> Although only 3 percent of the general population, Muslims make up 8 percent of UK inmates.<sup>20</sup>

European governments and the public have reacted to the recent bombings and alerts by visibly hardening their attitudes towards immigrants and specifically towards Europe's Muslim minority. The focus is on stronger external border controls, tougher policing, racial profiling, strict immigration tests and

stringent language requirements. Combating terrorism has also understandably become a top priority. Several European countries including Britain, the Netherlands, and Spain have enacted new anti-terror laws. Counter-terrorism policy is dealt with jointly by the Commission and EU governments. A special EU "counter-terrorism" coordinator, Gijs de Vries, was appointed in March 2004 and EU governments are working together to combat terrorism by increasing intelligence-sharing, cooperating in law enforcement and the control of financial assets. Also, a European Arrest Warrant has been introduced and efforts have been made to strengthen the role of Europol, the European police cooperation agency. A European Borders Agency was recently created in Warsaw to help border authorities in Europe cooperate more closely and share experience and best practices. European governments have also adopted a strategy involving a general commitment to combat terrorism globally, to prevent people turning to terrorism by tackling the factors and root causes which can lead to radicalization and recruitment both in Europe and internationally, and to pursue and investigate terrorists globally, to impede planning, disrupt support networks, cut off funding and bring terrorists to justice.<sup>21</sup>

However, finding the right balance between combating terrorism and ensuring the integration of minorities is Europe's most pressing security challenge for the early years of the twenty-first century. The dilemma facing Europe is that, while strong action is clearly needed to clamp down on Islamic extremist groups, terrorist organizations, and networks linked to Al Qaeda, the crackdowns are also further inflaming intercommunity and inter-religious tensions, making the integration of Muslims even more difficult. By triggering a sense of alienation and militancy among Muslims, European governmental policies may be strengthening the very threats they seek to counter. In addition, as pointed out repeatedly by human rights organizations, European counterterrorism legislation has not always struck a fair balance between security and fundamental rights.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> "MI5 Tracking 30 UK Terror Plots," BBC report, November 10, 2006, available at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/6134516.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6134516.stm).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Mirjam Dittrich, "Muslims in Europe: Addressing the Challenges of Radicalization," Working Paper No. 23, European Policy Centre EPC/King Baudouin Foundation, Brussels, March 2006.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel Fried, "Islamist Extremism in Europe," Testimony of Daniel Fried, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on European Affairs, April 5, 2006, United States Senate.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Congressional Research Service, "Muslims in Europe: Integration Policies in Selected Countries," The Library of Congress, November 18, 2005.

<sup>21</sup> EU Council, "The EU Strategy for Combating Radicalization and Recruitment to Terrorism," 14781/1/05 REV 1, November 24, 2005.

<sup>22</sup> Amnesty International, "Letter to the President-in-Office of the European Union on Amnesty International Report on the UK: the Erosion of Human Rights in the Fight against Terrorism," AI Index IOR 61/007/2006, February 23, 2006.

## Europe's Long Struggle to Integrate Muslim Minorities

With Muslim communities in Europe growing rapidly, and Islam emerging as the second religion in many European countries, there is certainly a growing consciousness of Islam among Europeans.<sup>23</sup> But the spotlight – especially after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States – has also reinforced the view that Muslims in Europe are a major “problem” for their host governments and societies. A recent Pew Global Attitudes report underlined that Western publics believe that Muslims in their countries want to remain distinct from society, rather than adopt their nation's customs and way of life.<sup>24</sup> Cultural practices such as forced marriages, so-called “honor killings” and restrictions on women's access to health facilities, which are common in some Muslim communities in Europe, have also underlined concerns about the compatibility of Islam and Western values. Not surprisingly, many have argued that a rift between a secular Europe, which espouses progressive values on issues like abortion and gay marriages, and a religious minority that holds a more conservative view of the world, is inevitable.

However, integration is a two-way street. Many European Muslims, originally from poor, rural backgrounds who came to the continent to labor in coal mines and steel mills, have remained at the bottom of the economic pile, ignored by politicians and business leaders while facing discrimination in housing, schools, and labor markets. A disproportionate number of second and third generation Muslims living in Europe are unemployed and drop out of secondary school without any qualifications. A leaked British government report in 2004 acknowledged Muslims are the most disadvantaged faith group in the UK labor market, suffering disproportionate levels of unemployment (about 15 percent in comparison to the overall UK unemployment rate of roughly 5 percent). Also, until recently, mainstream Europeans viewed Muslim immigrants as “foreign” guest workers who would someday go “home.” As a result, “Muslims belong to the underclass of Europe,” notes Jocelyne Cesari, an expert on Islam in Europe.<sup>25</sup>

Adding to the disarray is the fact that Europe's

two common models of integration – assimilation and multiculturalism – have proved difficult to implement. The French approach of assimilating immigrants by seeking to minimize cultural or religious differences to forge a national identity based on common citizenship, received a strong blow when Muslims in France protested strongly at the controversial French “headscarf law,” which bans the wearing of conspicuous religious symbols in public schools. Many Muslims in France believe their needs are often ignored.<sup>26</sup>

Multiculturalism, the approach taken by the Netherlands and the UK, acknowledges the cultural, religious, and racial diversity of a nation's citizens. In practice, however, multiculturalism has not eliminated, as it intended, elements of xenophobia, racism, and anti-Islamism in mainstream society. The alienation of Muslim populations has persisted. Shaken by the 2004 murder of filmmaker Theo Van Gogh by an Islamist extremist, the Netherlands is now reassessing multiculturalism and pressing its immigrants to adopt “Dutch values” if they wish to attain residency. In the UK there is also increased questioning of British society's approach to integration. Former British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw recently provoked a storm within the British Muslim community when he called the Muslim face veil “a visible symbol of separation and difference.”<sup>27</sup>

## External Challenges

### A “Ring of Friends”

Recognizing that Europe's security hinges on stability and prosperity on its borders, EU policymakers are using the bloc's “soft power” instruments – diplomacy, trade and aid – to forge closer relations with key neighbors to the east and south, including Muslim countries. The focus is on promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law and encouraging economic reform. This is a question of enlightened self-interest. If such measures are not taken, warns a report by the European Defense Agency, a relatively poorer and older Europe will find itself living in a difficult and dangerously volatile neighborhood. It will also continue to face a tide of immigration from its

<sup>23</sup> Today, of the 15 to 20 million Muslims in Europe, 5 million live in France, 3.2 million in Germany, and about 2 million in the UK. Significant Muslim communities also exist in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands and, increasingly, in Italy and Spain.

<sup>24</sup> Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Islamic Extremism: Common Concern for Muslim and Western Publics – Support for Terror Wanes Among Muslim Publics,” Study released on July 15, 2005, available at: <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=248>.

<sup>25</sup> Jocelyne Cesari has been a Research Associate in the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University since spring 2001. She made these comments at the June 12, 2006 conference organized in Brussels by the European Policy Center.

<sup>26</sup> Fried, “Islamist Extremism in Europe.”

<sup>27</sup> Associated Press, “Jack Straw Says He Doesn't Regret Remarks on Women's Veils,” *International Herald Tribune*, November 2, 2006.

poorer neighbors.<sup>28</sup>

EU governments are key donors of development aid, including through the Cotonou Agreement which provides for €16.4 billion worth of aid for African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries for the period 2002–2007.<sup>29</sup> Overall EU states account annually for about \$43 billion or 55 percent of total international development assistance.<sup>30</sup> EU governments recently recognized that “development is crucial for collective and individual long-term security,” adding that while there cannot be sustainable development without peace and security, development was also “the best structural response to the deep-rooted causes of violent conflicts and the rise of terrorism, often linked to poverty, bad governance and the deterioration and lack of access to natural resources.”<sup>31</sup> In addition to funds from the development budget, EU money is being spent specifically to promote human rights, democracy, and fundamental freedoms under the EU’s external relations policy.<sup>32</sup>

EU efforts since 2004 have focused on building a “ring of friends” around Europe through the implementation of a so-called European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) designed to promote prosperity, stability, and security on Europe’s borders.<sup>33</sup> The policy uses some of the experience gained through enlargement negotiations with central and eastern European countries but the ENP does not open up the prospect of membership to the countries concerned. Instead, it offers countries a significant degree of integration, including a stake in the EU’s internal market. The EU also uses the ENP to encourage human rights, the rule of law and good governance and promotes cooperation in fighting terrorism and cross-border crime such as trafficking in drugs and human beings. Although not designed specifically with conflict prevention in mind, the ENP

has been widely viewed as containing elements that are useful in resolving conflict situations.<sup>34</sup> Since it is only two years old, most analysts are reluctant to give a final judgment on the ENP, with most admitting that bringing about deep-seated political and economic change is a long-haul effort.

Upgrading relations with Islamic countries is an important part of the EU’s foreign policy. European foreign ministers meeting in Salzburg, Austria, in March 2006, at the height of the controversy over the Prophet Mohammed caricatures, emphasized the importance of forging “good relations” with Muslim countries.<sup>35</sup> Admitting that “we are accused of double standards with respect to Israel, in Iraq, in the Middle East conflict or in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay,” EU ministers called for a “better use” of EU foreign policy instruments, bilateral and multilateral, to bridge the gap between cultures. The meeting vowed more efforts to promote intercultural discussions within the Euro-Mediterranean partnership launched in November 1995 and with members of the ASEM (Asia Europe Meeting) process.<sup>36</sup> The EU’s focus on the Mediterranean and the entire Middle East region is not hard to understand. Many of Europe’s Muslims are from the region, the source of vitally-needed oil and natural gas, and an important market for European exports. Europe is the largest foreign investor in the region (supplying 55 percent of total FDI) and the largest provider of financial assistance and funding for most Mediterranean countries, with nearly €3 billion per year in loans and grants flowing to the region.

The EU’s priority in its Euro-Mediterranean partnership, launched in Barcelona in November 1995, has been to help the region cope with the challenges of political reform and economic change including unemployment, social unrest, rapid urbanization, globalization, population growth,

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<sup>28</sup> “A Long-term Vision for European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP),” paper prepared for the European Defense Agency, Brussels, September 13, 2006.

<sup>29</sup> European Commission, *The European Development Fund in a Few Words*, (Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2002).

<sup>30</sup> Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, “Official Development Assistance Increases Further – but 2006 Targets Still a Challenge,” OECD Report, November 11, 2005, available at: [www.oecd.org/document/3/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_201185\\_34700611\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/3/0,2340,en_2649_201185_34700611_1_1_1_1,00.html).

<sup>31</sup> European Commission, “Proposal for a Joint Declaration by the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on the European Union Development Policy,” December 20, 2005, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/development/body/development\\_policy\\_statement/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/development/body/development_policy_statement/index_en.htm). (Cf. ‘The European Consensus’, p. 8).

<sup>32</sup> Council of the European Union, “Council Approves EUR 2 Billion Financing Instrument for the Promotion of Stability under the EU’s External Relations Policy,” EU Council press release 14882/06 (Presse 306), available at [www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/misc/91518.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/misc/91518.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> Countries covered by the policy include: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, Ukraine and Syria.

<sup>34</sup> Fraser Cameron, “The European Neighborhood Policy as a Conflict Prevention Tool,” Issue Paper No.47, European Policy Centre, Brussels, June 2006.

<sup>35</sup> EU Council of Ministers, oral statement to the press, Salzburg, March 8, 2006.

<sup>36</sup> Euro-Mediterranean dialogue members include Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. Libya has held observer status since 1999. ASEM participants are Brunei, Burma/Myanmar, China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Laos, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

fundamentalism, and water scarcity. The focus has been on trying to curb immigration from the region. However, the ten-year old Barcelona partnership has fallen short of many of its goals. Most crucially, political difficulties caused by the continuing Middle East conflict have cast a shadow over the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. In addition, the EU's power to encourage political reforms and speed up the region's economic transformation has been limited, with many EU governments reluctant to impose strict aid and trade conditions on their southern partners. As the EU has sought to engage with non-governmental organizations and civil society representatives, many governments in the region have complained of EU meddling in their internal affairs.

The Middle East peace process has also long been a political priority for Europe's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), with the EU playing an active role as a member of the international "Quartet" working for peace in the Middle East peace.<sup>37</sup> EU governments have also spent millions of euros on support for the Palestinian Authority. Although EU direct aid to the Palestinian Authority was frozen following the election victory of the militant group Hamas in elections held in January 2006, European governments are still providing large amounts of humanitarian assistance and other forms of emergency aid to Palestinians. In addition, on August 25, 2006, several European countries agreed to provide about half of the authorized 15,000 strong international peacekeeping force to be deployed in southern Lebanon to oversee a fragile ceasefire between the Israeli army and Hizbullah fighters.

However, while European governments, individually and through the EU, play a central role in providing financial support for state-building enterprises underway in the Palestinian territories and in Lebanon, Europe cannot match the political weight of the US. Europe has not been able to translate economic power in the Middle East into direct political influence in the region. This is largely due to persistent differences among EU states on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with Germany and the Netherlands refusing initiatives by France and Spain which could be critical towards Israel.<sup>38</sup>

EU policy in the Middle East – seen by some as too supportive of US actions in the region – has been criticized for helping to fuel the radicalization of young Muslims in Europe. The strongest connection yet between European foreign policy and extremism was made in the aftermath of the alleged London airplane plot by British Muslim leaders. In a letter to British Prime Minister Tony Blair on August 12, the leaders, including several members of the British Parliament, urged Blair not to ignore the effects of his "unjust" foreign policies, which they claimed were playing into the hands of extremists and endangering the lives of civilians in the UK and abroad. "The debacle of Iraq and now the failure to do more to secure an immediate end to attacks on civilians in the Middle East not only increases the risk to ordinary people in that region," they said, adding that UK policy has given "ammunition to extremists." Such comments also spotlight continuing negative European public perceptions of the United States.<sup>39</sup> In fact, perceptions of American unilateralism remain widespread in Europe, as US policy in Iraq continues to undermine America's credibility abroad.<sup>40</sup>

Closer to home, the EU is focused on stabilizing the Western Balkans (South East Europe), with the focus on bringing stability and development to the region so that renewed military conflict becomes unthinkable. Large EU military and police missions are deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EU has promised to step up its presence in Kosovo once there is a decision on the territory's future status. EU officials are aware that given weak states in the region, low economic growth and public distrust towards nascent democratic institutions, any failure to stabilize the Balkans will lead perhaps not to a new Balkan conflict but to a nasty combination of state failures and small criminal wars which in turn will pose a security and destabilization threat to the rest of Europe.<sup>41</sup>

The EU focus is therefore on helping countries in the region to stamp out corruption and fight crime. For countries that have made sufficient progress in terms of political and economic reform and administrative capacity, the next step is a formal contractual relationship with the EU in the form of a tailor-made Stabilization and Association Agreement. To date,

<sup>37</sup> Middle East Quartet members include the US, the EU, Russia and the UN.

<sup>38</sup> Markus Bouillon, "The Middle East: Fragility and Crisis," *Coping with Crisis* Working Paper Series, International Peace Academy, New York, 2007.

<sup>39</sup> Will Woodward and Stephen Bates, "Muslim Leaders Say Foreign Policy Makes UK Target," *The Guardian*, August 12, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Pew Global Attitudes Project, "A Year After Iraq War Mistrust of America in Europe Ever Higher, Muslim Anger Persists," Study released on March 16, 2004, available at: <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=206>.

<sup>41</sup> Ivan Krastev, "European Union and the Balkans: enlargement or empire?" paper for the German Marshall Fund of the United States, available at <http://www.gmfus.org/doc/Krastev%20Paper.pdf>.

Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania have signed such agreements, while Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina have launched SAA talks designed to encourage and support domestic reform processes. In the long run, the EU has offered the western Balkan states the prospect of full integration into the EU's structures, provided that certain political and economic conditions are met. Croatia has started EU membership talks while Macedonia is recognized as a candidate although negotiations have not yet begun. Despite such moves, however, many in the region complain about the slow pace of rapprochement with the EU and fear that given Europe's current "enlargement blues," they may never make it through the gates.

The EU has yet to forge a unified approach towards Russia, with Britain, France, Germany, and Italy engaging separate policies towards Moscow and each, at various times, seeking a special relationship with President Vladimir Putin.<sup>42</sup> These bilateral relationships have been competitive – and Putin has played the member states against each other skillfully. EU countries are divided into three distinct groups over dealings with Russia: the "pro-Russian" camp led by France, Germany, Italy and others; the "anti-Russian camp" led by Poland and the Baltic states; and others in the middle, such as Britain. Whenever the EU tries to develop a line on Russia, or react to a specific event – such as the Russian blockade of Georgia in October 2006 – the EU proves unable to agree on anything other than the most anodyne of statements. Some of the EU's most influential member-states simply do not want the EU to do anything that might upset Russia, including overly strong criticism of the country's poor human rights record, hard-line policies in Chechnya and fears that the rule of law and market economy principles are not always correctly applied.

The European Commission, meanwhile, is struggling to ensure stable EU access to Russia's gas and oil resources. Russia currently supplies 25 percent of the EU's gas and oil requirements while the sales of raw materials to the EU provide most of Russia's foreign currency, and contribute over 40 percent of the Russian federal revenues. In October 2000, the EU and Russia agreed to start an Energy Dialogue dealing with issues such as security of supply, energy efficiency, infrastructure (e.g. pipelines), investments

and trade. The dialogue is based on the assumption that interdependence between the two regions will grow, with the EU increasingly interested in Russia for its security of oil and gas supply and Russia anxious to secure foreign investment and facilitate its own access to EU and world markets. Plans are also under way for a new EU-Russia cooperation agreement and the opening of negotiations on a free trade pact. The energy relationship also continues to be strained, however, with Russia proving to be an increasingly difficult partner for the EU and President Putin refusing to sign an international energy charter which would open up the country's oil and gas sector to increased foreign competition.

### Other International Organizations Working in Europe

The EU is working in cooperation with many partners to stabilize and secure its neighborhood. However, relations with many of these organizations are soured by rivalries, duplication of efforts and the overarching fact that the EU is the dominant body and key power-broker in Europe.

### EU-NATO Cooperation

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the EU are working to improve their relationship in order to prevent and resolve crises and armed conflicts in Europe and beyond. But a number of steps still need to be taken at both the strategic and tactical levels to eliminate the mistrust, unhealthy competition and information sharing blockages that continue to plague the relationship. This is at least partly because of a continuing lack of EU consensus – which is divided between 'Atlanticists' (Britain) and 'Europeanists' (France) on the degree of autonomy of the EU as an international actor. However, under the so-called "Berlin Plus" security agreement signed by the EU and NATO in 2003, the EU has been assured access to NATO assets and planning capabilities for all EU-led crisis management operations. More recently, some policymakers in NATO and the US, faced with the reality that high-intensity military operations must incorporate a civil dimension from the start, are seeking similar access to EU civil-military capabilities (police, the rule of law, and human rights) in a kind of "inverse Berlin Plus" arrangement.<sup>43</sup> NATO Secretary

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<sup>42</sup> Charles Grant, "What to do about Russia?" *The Guardian* blog, October 22, 2006, available at: [www.cer.org.uk/articles/grant\\_guardian22oct06.html](http://www.cer.org.uk/articles/grant_guardian22oct06.html).

<sup>43</sup> Sven Biscop, "The Ambiguous Ambition: The Development of the EU Security Architecture," Paper presented at the colloquium *The EC/EU: A World Security Actor? An Assessment after 50 Years of the External Actions of the EC/EU*, Paris, EU Institute for Security Studies, September 15, 2006, available at: [www.irri-kiib.be/papers/06/sec-gov/Chapter.Deighton-Bossuat.htm](http://www.irri-kiib.be/papers/06/sec-gov/Chapter.Deighton-Bossuat.htm).

General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer is particularly insistent that the EU should step up its security presence in Afghanistan, especially as regards the training of Afghan police forces.<sup>44</sup>

NATO-EU cooperation also continues to be hampered by a dispute between Turkey (in NATO but not the EU) and Cyprus (in the EU but not NATO). Turkey objects to neutral Cyprus sitting in on EU-NATO meetings because, unlike most other EU neutrals, it is not a member of NATO's partnership-for-peace program. Obviously the Turkey-Cyprus dispute is about much more than EU-NATO relations, but it has created a difficult situation where meetings between the EU and NATO currently take place with only twenty-three EU ambassadors, who are in turn permitted to discuss only joint operations and military capabilities. As a result, a whole raft of other important subjects – such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Darfur – are off their agenda. This is also partly because some EU countries, like Belgium, France, and Greece – fearing that the US could gain excessive influence over EU foreign and security policy – believe that the EU should not discuss such issues with NATO. France is especially insistent that NATO should not be a forum for global security issues.<sup>45</sup>

However, while there is a disconnect between EU and NATO headquarters, closer cooperation between the two organizations is already happening on the ground. In Addis Ababa at the African Union headquarters, EU and NATO personnel jointly coordinate their airlift support. In Afghanistan, the European Commission now funds some of the non-military activities (such as judges, aid workers, and administrators) of the NATO Provincial Reconstruction Teams. And in Vienna, officials from both the EU and NATO take part in Martti Ahtisaari's UN-mandated team that is negotiating the final status of Kosovo.

### ***The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)***

The EU and the OSCE are working closely together to resolve conflicts and ensure stability in Eastern Europe and the southern Caucasus. With the historic enlargement in 2004 and admission of 10 new states, EU members count for almost half of the 55 OSCE participants. The EU members provide some three quarters of the OSCE annual budget, giving the bloc

a significant stake in contributing to shaping the OSCE's priorities and designing the Organization's activities. The two bodies are working in close association on implementing the EU's Neighborhood Policy, with the focus on combating terrorism and trafficking in human beings, strengthening border management and security, fighting money laundering and financial crime, improving the effectiveness of public institutions, promoting economic and social development and environmental protection.

The EU's interest in using the Neighborhood Policy to try and resolve regional conflicts also means it is working closely with the OSCE, which has been the main actor in conflict resolution in Europe, including efforts to forge a political framework for the settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict in Moldova, a resolution of the conflict in South Ossetia and support for the United Nations peace-making effort in Abkhazia, Georgia. There is concern in the OSCE, however, that the organization must not become a mere "sub-contractor" of the EU. However, since the decade-long efforts by the OSCE to resolve "frozen conflicts" have so far failed to produce breakthrough results, better synergy with the EU, which can offer political and economic incentives, could offer a strong additional instrument in the settlement of existing conflicts.

### ***The Council of Europe***

Founded in 1949, the Council of Europe was set up as an intergovernmental consultative organization to maintain and develop the ideals of individual freedom, rule of law, and democratic principles through greater unity. It currently includes forty-six countries. In its early years, the Council of Europe was the main forum for debate on the future of Europe, but that role has now been taken over by the EU. However, the Council is still active as a key institutional watchdog of human rights, pluralistic democracy, and the rule of law. The EU and the Council of Europe work together in areas such as democratic institution-building, legal affairs, social and health matters, education and culture, heritage and the environment, local government and the protection of national minorities. The two institutions have liaised closely in recent months over their parallel inquiries into allegations that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) ran secret prisons in several European nations.

<sup>44</sup> Judy Dempsey, "NATO Chief Urges Overhaul of Afghanistan Effort," *The International Herald Tribune*, November 6, 2006.

<sup>45</sup> Daniel Keohane, "Unlocking EU-NATO Cooperation," *Centre for European Reform: Bulletin Issue 48*, June/July 2006.



The core of the relationship between the EU and the Council remains the protection of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. On these issues they share the same values and pursue common aims. The European Court of Human Rights, set up under the European Convention on Human Rights, broke new ground in allowing individuals to petition directly to an international court, and has a strong impact on legislative reform and human rights. The Council of Europe's focus on upholding human rights in the fight against terrorism, and its role in spreading democratic values in the Caucasus and the Balkans is thus helping to respond to some key challenges facing Europe, especially on its eastern borders.

## Scenarios and Recommendations

Europe at the start of the twenty-first century faces an array of complex political and economic challenges to its security. Whether or not these are tackled in a successful manner will determine the EU's future course. As such, several scenarios are possible:

### Catastrophic Scenario

Given the current political, economic, and social climate in Europe – not to mention ethnic and religious tensions – a worst-case scenario is unfortunately not difficult to imagine. A continuation of the existing political stalemate over the future of the failed constitution will bring discredit to all EU institutions, decrease chances of an inter-EU *entente* on tackling key economic priorities and tarnish Europe's international reputation. Taxes will be increased as governments scramble to find more money for rising health and pension costs linked to an aging population. Relations with neighbors will be strained as Europe turns inwards and puts the brakes on further enlargement.

On the immigration front, a lack of government efforts to open up legal routes for immigration into Europe – and continuing under-development and poverty in Africa – will mean an upsurge in illegal migration by perilous sea crossings as an increasing number of desperately poor people try to reach Europe aboard rickety boats – often dying in the process. Human trafficking and smuggling will increase. This, in turn, will spur EU governments to pull up the drawbridge to “Fortress Europe” by tightening border controls, deploying more naval patrols and setting up detention camps for the new arrivals while waiting to deport them to their

countries of origin. As their pleas for restraint and respect for human rights are ignored by governments and the public, UN bodies and human rights organizations will lose influence and credibility as the norms they set are repeatedly challenged.

Intercommunal relations will worsen as, following in the footsteps of their extreme right-wing counterparts, mainstream European politicians adopt an increasingly xenophobic tone and pander to public unease over Islam and immigration, thereby encouraging the acceptance of Islamophobic sentiments. The consequent marginalization and alienation of European Muslim communities will lead to an increase in the number of their younger members falling prey to the extremist discourse of largely foreign-funded imams and militant anti-Western groups. Muslims' anger will be further fuelled by what they perceive as an unjust EU foreign policy, including disproportionate support for Israel and for dictatorships in Islamic countries.

### Middle Scenario

In this scenario, European governments will “muddle through” with an array of disjointed policies. As urged by a number of policymakers, the EU will salvage bits of the crippled constitution although the move will not meet with strong public approval. Europe's thirst for energy will make it less critical of human rights and rule of law shortcomings in Russia and the Middle East. Given Europe's demographic imperatives and labor shortages, there will be a small opening up of the channels for legal immigration, with more skilled and unskilled workers being allowed in for longer, but still strictly-limited, periods of time and for specific industrial and agricultural sectors. This will not completely end but still substantially reduce the number of asylum-seekers and illegal immigrants seeking to enter Europe.

Under pressure from human rights watchdogs, tougher anti-discriminatory and anti-racist legislation will be introduced and governments will also promise special affirmative action for minorities. But many of the laws will remain unimplemented and mainstream politicians will continue to try and win votes by calling for tougher controls on foreigners while xenophobic political parties become even more popular. While feeling besieged, Europe's Muslim minorities will strive to break out of their marginalization and take a more visible and assertive stance, including in politics. They will also step up moves to organize themselves into lobbies and campaign groups to push for their rights to better housing, education,

and jobs. With discrimination still a fact of life, a small number of disaffected and frustrated young men will continue to fall under the spell of extremists and radicals. As such, the threat of terrorism will not decline substantially.

### **Best-Case Scenario**

In this optimistic scenario, European leaders will stop bickering and agree to work together to either salvage or, for once and for all, bury the EU constitution. There will also be consensus that the EU needs to expand further – including by opening its doors to Turkey – to ensure stability and peace in Europe but also to try and match the might of emerging nations like China and India. Stronger EU policies will lead to more public respect and support for EU institutions and also upgrade the bloc's international reputation. The EU will continue to deploy peacekeepers worldwide and become more active in conflict prevention and crisis management. Acknowledging that foreign policy is also impacting on the sentiments of Muslims in Europe, the EU and European governments will reinforce contacts with Islamic countries and keep Muslim concerns about double standards in mind in their dealings on issues such as Iraq and Palestine, ensuring policies reflect the concerns of all European citizens and constituencies. More determined efforts will be made to find a just and equitable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

At home, recognizing that they face a massive labor deficit – not to mention financial difficulties linked to an aging population – EU governments will finally start to implement a politically sustainable immigration policy, allowing a specified number of foreign workers and their families to settle in Europe. This will go hand in hand with efforts allowing Europe to fulfill its potential as a diverse society where people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds can live in harmony. The focus will also be on the integration of those who are already in Europe to avoid more clashes and social unrest. In this upbeat future, there will be wide-spread acknowledgement that integration is a two-way street and societies and migrant communities will start actively and consistently engaging in the process of accommodating and adapting to each others' needs. There will be agreement that integration does not mean immigrants must give up their identity, and Muslim community leaders will urge and encourage

immigrants to break their isolation and respect the fundamental norms and values of their host society. The EU will emerge as an important source of ideas and insight on immigration and integration issues and slowly but surely, the threat of “home grown” terrorism will be substantially reduced.

Meanwhile, a more responsible media will take a strong look at the images and terminology used in its coverage of Islam, with journalists recognizing that prejudice and ignorance must be replaced by truthfulness, clarity, and objectivity. Journalists will acknowledge that they have a special responsibility to act cautiously to avoid fuelling the fires of racism and Islamophobia. This will be done by improving recruitment policies so that there are more newsroom journalists from Europe's ethnic and religious minorities. Government policies will be challenged and politicians taken to task when they propagate racist views. Europe's reporters will recognize that they can no longer afford to turn a blind eye to the problems of integration facing minority groups throughout the continent.

Achieving such an upbeat future will not be easy, however. Several years of doubt, arguments and uncertainty lie ahead as key governmental and non-governmental players start a long-needed debate on how to tackle the EU's current crisis of identity, including such difficult issues as the geographical limits of the EU and the ultimate political and economic goal and nature of their joint enterprise. This in turn requires sustained, strong leadership from the European Commission, and efforts to reinforce the credibility of other EU institutions. There must be a strong commitment to their joint future by EU leaders and an end to wasteful competition and rivalry among key EU states, including Germany, France, and Britain. In addition, the EU must have the financial resources needed to follow through on its soft power ambitions, including the provision of increased aid to countries in Africa and the Middle East as well as assistance to help fight criminality in the Balkans. Equally important, while working to forge an independent foreign and security policy aimed at strengthening its global reach and reputation, the EU will have to work with other organizations, including NATO, the OSCE and the Council of Europe, to tackle the complex cocktail of internal and external security challenges facing Europe.

## Further Reading

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*This is an important critical view of one of the EU's most iconic policymakers by a respected journalist and head of the London-based Centre for European Reform.*

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