



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe



Natolin



The Future of Differentiated Integration in Europe:
Varying Speed and Partnerships?

International Conference
Thursday, 25 January 2018

The EU's 'Privileged Partnerships' with its Neighbours: An Institutional Perspective

Venue: College of Europe, Verversdijk 16, building A, AUD.1, Bruges, Belgium

Since the 1990s, the neighbouring countries of the European Union that could, in principle, join the EU have to varying degrees become more deeply integrated with the internal market. They have also developed or are developing a certain degree of institutionalisation of their relationship with the EU. These 'privileged partnerships' have taken different forms, ranging from bilateral and rather static models to multilateral and dynamic models. Despite their many differences, they face similar institutional challenges which have so far not been examined in depth and in a comparative manner. This is surprising in light of the topicality of the issue at stake: not only is the United Kingdom negotiating its withdrawal from the EU and under considerable time pressure to find a new partnership arrangement, but Switzerland is negotiating an institutional umbrella agreement for its many bilateral agreements with the EU, the three small-sized countries located within the EU's customs territory – Andorra, Monaco and San Marino – are negotiating a framework association, and Turkey is seeking a modernisation of its (partial) customs union in light of the 'frozen' accession process. Moreover, the European Economic Area has in recent years undergone an extensive review process.

In this context, the conference, organised in collaboration and with the support of the Swiss Mission to the EU, will in particular address the following questions:

- which institutionalised arrangements for integration into and cooperation with the European Union were proposed by the EU and/or the third country/-ies, and why has a specific institutional arrangement in the end been chosen?
- what are the major advantages and shortcomings both for the EU and the third country/-ies with regard to the role of the relevant EU *acquis* and EU institutions in the processes of decision-making, monitoring/surveillance, enforcement and dispute settlement?
- what lessons can be drawn from an institutional perspective regarding 'privileged partnerships' between the European Union and its neighbours?

PROGRAMME

9:00 Registration (*Foyer*)

WELCOME

9:30 Welcome and introduction

Sieglinde GSTÖHL, Professor and Director of the Department of EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, College of Europe

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

9:45 The EU's relations with its neighbours: an outsider's perspective

H.E. Ambassador Josef Philipp RENGGLI, Deputy Head of the Directorate for European Affairs, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Bern

10:30 Coffee break



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SESSION I Lessons from the EFTA countries

11:00 Chair: *Joëlle DE SÉPIBUS*, Visiting Professor at the College of Europe

11:10 The European Economic Area: a two-pillar system
Christian FROMMELT, Researcher, Liechtenstein Institut, Bendern

11:30 Swiss-EU institutional umbrella agreement
Christine KADDOUS, Professor of European Law, University of Geneva

11:50 Discussion opened by
Georges BAUR, Assistant Secretary General, EFTA Secretariat

12:35 Buffet lunch (Foyer)

SESSION II Lessons from the ENP and small-sized countries

14:10 Chair: *Laure DELCOUR*, Research Fellow, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris; Visiting Professor at the College of Europe

14:20 Association agreements with deep and comprehensive free trade areas
Guillaume VAN DER LOO, FWO postdoctoral researcher, Ghent European Law Institute; Centre for European Policy Studies, Brussels

14:40 A framework association for Andorra, Monaco and San Marino
Francesco MAIANI, Associate Professor of European Law, University of Lausanne

15:00 Discussion opened by
Jenő CZUCZAI, Legal Adviser, Legal Service of the Council of the EU; Visiting Professor at the College of Europe

15:45 Coffee break

SESSION III Lessons from joining or leaving the EU customs union

16:15 Chair: *Simon SCHUNZ*, Professor, Department of EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, College of Europe

16:25 The shortcomings of the EU-Turkey customs union and its modernisation
Özlem TERZI, Professor of International Relations, Istanbul University

16:45 UK withdrawal from EU membership: the quest for cake
David PHINNEMORE, Professor of European Politics, Queen's University Belfast; Visiting Professor at the College of Europe

17:05 Discussion opened by
Petros SOURMELIS, Head of Unit "Trade aspects of European neighbourhood policy", DG Trade, European Commission

CLOSING REMARKS

17:50 The future of 'privileged partnerships' with the EU
Sieglinde GSTÖHL, Professor and Director of the Department of EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, College of Europe