

Session: Populism v. LIO: EU

Date/Time: April 25, 2018 / 10:45-12:15

Rapporteur:

Karl Friedhoff, Chicago Council on Global Affairs

Moderator:

Ali Aslan, TV Presenter & Journalist

Speakers:

Karel De Gucht, Free University of Brussels

Kim Joon Suk, Catholic University of Korea

Michael Reiterer, EU Delegation to the Republic of Korea

Philip Stephens, *Financial Times*

Session Sketch:

This session, Populism v. LIO: EU, discussed the three distinct crises to strike the European Union since 2008: the Eurozone crisis, the refugee crisis, and the current crisis of populism. To some degree, these three crises all continue to interact and influence one another and have not been fully resolved. The panelists argued that this has contributed to the perception that the European Union is often unable to act, due to the Luxembourg Compromise, but when the EU faces pressure, it has always taken effective action. The question now is how the EU will address what is perceived to be the most dangerous challenge it faces—the resurgence of nationalism.

* The views expressed herein are summaries and may not necessarily reflect the views of the speakers or their affiliated institutions.

The panelists argued that the populists that are driving this resurgence identify key challenges facing the individual countries, but they only offer simple solutions to complex problems. Mainstream politicians, however, have yet to find a better approach. To do this, these politicians and experts must not simply continue to rely on statistics and fact-driven arguments. After all, voters often vote on emotional appeal. Many experts have simply ignored this, allowing space for the populists to occupy. The argument for the necessity of the European Union needs to constantly be remade at a time when the reason for its initial existence, the two World Wars, has largely been forgotten.

The session concluded by explaining how politicians need an emotional appeal that argues for the shared value and cultural norms of a wider Europe. Only if this is successful will Europe begin to beat back the populists that currently pose a challenge to the LIO in Europe.

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