

Connecting V4 and other regional expert networks & researching potential for future EU coalitions: V4 & Benelux

Working session organized by the Association for International Affairs (AMO) in cooperation with Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy, Res Publica Foundation and Slovak Foreign Policy Association with support of the International Visegrad Fund.

Tuesday, 16 June 2020, 10:00-11:30 – Wednesday 17 June 2020, 10:00-11:30

Online workshops

The United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union has been reshaping the dynamics of decision-making within the EU. Partnerships among the remaining 27 Member States are to be rethought and new alliances established. The coalition potential of individual EU members will change, and it will directly affect qualified majority voting as well as blocking minority in the Council of the EU.

Benelux, as well as the Visegrad Group, has proved to be a viable coalition in promoting the interests of its member states on international forums. However, even the coalition of three or four states needs to actively engage in partnerships with other regional networks. This working session will mark the beginning of a 19-month project focused on building inter-regional connections across the EU through connecting V4 and other regional expert networks and thus researching concrete potential for the future EU coalitions.

The on-line discussion will be divided into two 90-minute sessions focused on following questions:

Tuesday, 16 June – Different Regions, Different Perspectives?

- What are the potential benefits of inter-regional cooperation in the European Union?
- What is the current mutual political perception of the Benelux countries and the V4 and the factors affecting it? In what areas is there a working cooperation and where are the biggest divisions?
- What priorities will the countries promote in the upcoming Conference on the Future of Europe, both in terms of institutional setting and democratic functioning of the Union, and policy priorities?

Speakers:

- Mario Hirsch, Political scientist, Luxembourg Institute for European and International Studies
- Michiel Luining, Docent and researcher, Clingendael, Leiden University

Wednesday, 17 June – Potential for Cooperation:

- What are the preferences and expectations of the Visegrad countries and the Benelux countries regarding the post-pandemic European integration?

- What are the attitudes of the Visegrad and Benelux countries towards the European economy recovery after coronavirus? Under what circumstances is there a common ground to be found regarding the Multiannual Financial Framework and the Recovery Fund proposal?
- In which policy areas are there shared priorities? Where is the biggest potential for cooperation (Single Market, cooperation in the area of security and defence)?

Speakers:

- Francesca Colli, Research Fellow, EGMONT – The Royal Institute for International Relations
- Adriaan Schout, Senior Research Fellow, Clingendael – Netherlands Institute of International Relations

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