



27 – 29 MAY 2019

PRAGUE EUROPEAN SUMMIT SUMMARY

CZERNIN PALACE



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“

“For many years I have been listening to calls that we need ‘more Europe’, or that we have to create and develop an ‘ever closer Europe’. These days, after a decade of growing uncertainties and rapid technological development, as well as the rise of populism, nationalism and extremism, I would modify these slogans. What we need is as much Union as necessary, but as little Union as possible.”

”

Mikuláš Dzurinda,
extract from ‘Vision for Europe Award 2019’ speech



3 DAYS

25+ EVENTS

100+ SPEAKERS

43 % WOMEN SPEAKERS





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WELCOME WORDS

Dear reader,

It is our pleasure to present to you a summary of the fifth annual Prague European Summit. Everybody knows that timing is crucial. Taking place just a couple days after the European Parliamentary elections, the Prague European Summit was the first major event to provide space for discussion on the elections' results and their consequences for the EU's future. The symbolism is important as well. In 2019, Central Europe celebrated the anniversaries of two important events: 30 years since the start of its democratic and economic transition and 15 years since its accession to the European Union. Hence, it is no surprise that this year's recipient of the Vison for Europe award is Mr. Mikuláš Dzurinda, the former Prime Minister of Slovakia who is one of the symbols of the democratic transition and EU accession processes in Central Europe.

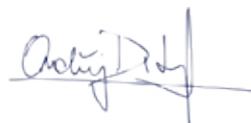
This year again, the Prague European Summit covered a variety of important topics, starting its deliberations with a comparison of Europe's different faces, namely those it had 30 years ago and those it has now. We also discussed in detail the different opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for the European Union and its member states. The following summary provides an overview of all the discussion formats held either at the conference venue at the Czernin Palace or in various other venues in the city of Prague, enabling the participation of citizens in the debates. Whether you attended the conference and only wish to recall what was discussed, or you could not make it but take an interest in the (many) current issues on the agenda, we invite you to read on.

In the preparation of the Prague European Summit, we had stressed the importance of securing representation of different opinions and absent voices in the debates. We consider it quite an achievement – but certainly not a cause to rest in our effort to advance even further! – that with more than forty per cent, we doubled the representation of women in the panel debates in comparison with the previous years. The Prague European Summit was also already for the third time accompanied by the Future European Leaders Forum, where 30 young people from various European countries and fields of expertise had a chance to interact with policy makers and inspirational leaders.

We would like to sincerely thank all the partners that participated in the preparation of the Prague European Summit as well as all the speakers and participants. We would also like to invite you to the sixth edition of the Prague European Summit, which is to be held on 18–19 November 2020. The debate continues. While we will continue to cover a number of recurrent issues of interest to policy makers, business and civil society representatives and citizens, our special focus in 2020 will be on climate change, both as an outstanding issue of utmost political importance and as inscribed in many individual internal and external policies of the EU.



Vladimír Bartovic,
Director,
EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy



Ondřej Ditrych,
Director,
Institute of International Relations Prague





PRAGUE EUROPEAN SUMMIT 2019

The fifth jubilee year of the Prague European Summit was held at the end of May 2019 as the **first high-level discussion forum in the EU following the European Parliamentary elections**. As an initiative of the EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy and the Institute of International Relations, and under the patronage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, the representation of the European Commission in the Czech Republic and the City of Prague, the Prague European Summit has been established to trigger a strategic and open debate on the future of the European Union among high-level political representatives, government officials, business representatives, academics and journalists from the Czech Republic, EU countries, V4 countries and further afield. Reflecting on the critical junctures facing the EU, whether related to the election and the forthcoming new Commission, Brexit or the culmination of the Bratislava Process at the summit in Sibiu, over the course of three days, encompassing more than 20 panels and speeches, experts discussed topics including European sovereignty and strategic autonomy, challenges to the rule of law and the EU's fundamental values, the use of big data in public policy, the effects of 'industrial revolution 4.0' on European societies, as well as the competitiveness of Europe in the field of artificial intelligence and virtual reality.

The core of the summit took place at Czernin Palace, headquarters of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Two 'Urban Talks' were held in Prague, one also in Brno, and 'Discussion Breakfasts' were hosted by the French (in cooperation with the Swedish) and Romanian embassies, as well as the Institute for Politics and Society and American Center. As per tradition, the prestigious 'Vision for Europe' Award ceremony was a highlight of the Prague European Summit. Additionally, the Future European Leaders Forum brought together more than 30 exceptional young people in the fields of politics, science, business, media and civil society for networking and capacity building.

The Prague European Summit has been facilitating high-level strategic and open debates on the actual challenges that Europe, and the European Union in particular, are facing since 2015 and the fifth anniversary furthered this legacy. As European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly, the recipient of the 2018 'Vision for Europe' Award has stated: "It's not Brussels, it's not Strasbourg, it's not Luxembourg. It is outside of the usual venues in which we discuss the future of Europe and I think when people come, particularly here, they get a different perspective, they hear different voices and I think that is very important."

ORGANIZERS



The EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy is a non-profit, non-partisan, and independent think-tank focusing on European integration. EUROPEUM contributes to democracy, security, stability, freedom, and solidarity across Europe as well as to the active engagement of the Czech Republic in the European Union. EUROPEUM undertakes research, publishing, and educational activities and formulates new ideas and opinions for the EU and Czech policy making.

>INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PRAGUE

The Institute of International Relations, Prague (IIR) is an independent public research institution which conducts excellent academic research in the field of international relations, focusing on European studies, security studies, area studies and other related disciplines. The IIR has been the leading academic institution for the study of international relations in the Czech Republic since 1957 and it is also an active member of several international research networks. In its IR research, it sets national benchmarks for the quality of scientific research in International Relations. As an independent institution originally founded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the IIR also provides policy analysis and recommendations. It serves as a hub for academics, policy makers and the general public. It stimulates the expert, intellectual and public debates on Czech foreign policy, European affairs and global issues. The IIR also publishes a number of academic journals and books, and offers a joint PhD programme in International Relations and European Studies.



CONTENTS

DAY 1	10
Words of Welcome	10
Opening Panel Discussion 1989-2004-2019: Different Faces of Europe	10
'Vision for Europe' Award	11
DAY 2	12
Key-Note New Trajectory for Europe	12
Plenary Panel Challenges to the Rule of Law and the EU's Fundamental Values	13
Panel A European Sovereignty and Strategic Autonomy: How Can We Make It Work?	13
Panel B Industrial Revolution 4.0 Effects' on European Societies	15
Plenary Panel Data as a New Currency, Big Data Governance and Public Policy	15
Panel A The Future of European Neighborhood	16
Panel B Competitiveness of Europe in the Field of Artificial Intelligence	17
Panel A Brexit. What Now?	17
Panel B The Future Path of the Euro (in cooperation with the Institute for Politics and Society)	18
DAY 3	
High Level Ministerial Panel Central Europe as an Active Player in the Aftermath of the European Parliament Elections	19
Chat A Is It the End of Global Agreements on Common Challenges?	20
Chat B Is Europe Ready for a Dynamic Future? Role of EU Governments and Governance	20
Chat Evolution of Humans in the Next Century, Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies	21
Workshop Czech Perception of the European Union and How it Differs from Other V4 Countries	23
Closing Remarks	23
DISCUSSION BREAKFASTS	24
What should the EU's Leadership Vision be?	24
Coalition Building After Brexit	24
Atlantic Challenges	25
Chinese Influence in (Central) Europe	25
URBAN TALKS	26
Big Data, Information and Politics. Disinformation in Focus	26
Big Data, Information and Politics. New Technologies in Focus	27
Assessment and Reflection on the EP Elections Results: A Debate on Future Scenarios and Ways Forward	27
PARTNERS	29

PRAGUE european summit

27 – 29 MAY 2019



DAY 1

WORDS OF WELCOME

TOMÁŠ PETŘÍČEK, Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs, opened the fifth Prague European Summit by honoring the historic value of the venue, the Czernin Palace. He highlighted overarching issues that the EU must keep in mind, which included the safety the coalition provides, rule-based order and the rising role of China. He also noted the need to shape the future of the EU in order to suit the needs of individual member states.

VLADIMÍR BARTOVIC, EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy Director, highlighted the turnout of the EU Parliamentary elections, a record high in 20 years, proving that Europeans do care about the EU. Similarly, **ONDŘEJ DITRYCH**, Director of the Institute of International Relations Prague, stressed that a space of authentic politics was created in which we may now engage in a genuine dialogue and this was an opportunity not to be wasted.

OPENING PANEL DISCUSSION 1989-2004-2019: Different Faces of Europe

The opening panel compared perspectives on the EU from when the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, during a period of enlargement in 2004 when 10 new countries joined the EU, and now as the European project faces uncertainty with reinvigorated populist and nationalist movements sweeping across the continent.

When looking back at 1989, many of the panelists regarded this period as one of excitement. **PETR DRULÁK**, Ambassador at the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Paris, described the atmosphere as enthusiastic, intoxicated by new liberties. Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs **TOMÁŠ PETŘÍČEK** reflected on this time as the year of change, a change that was palpable in the streets and homes. **ANA PALACIO**, former Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, said it was the year of confidence with the fall of the Berlin Wall anticipating unification, enlargement, and the creation of a distinct Europe.



Enlargement in 2004 marked a turning point. Petříček said this was the year the Czech Republic returned to the EU, and with this commitment to EU integration came new responsibilities as the Czech Republic transitioned from a recipient of aid to a donor, from a state-controlled economy to a market economy, and from an authoritarian state to a democracy. Drulák saw this as an optimistic time with new states joining the EU, and Palacio said it helped push Europe forward.

In comparison, 2019 shows a stark difference. Petříček posed two questions regarding this new level of uncertainty: How can we recapture the significance of 1989? Should we leave it to others who are financially and technologically better off?

The challenges of 2019 are multifaceted, many panelists noted the EU's complicated relationships with its allies like the United States and changing geopolitical developments. **PAWEŁ ŚWIEBODA**, Deputy Head of the European Political Strategy Centre for the European Commission, mentioned China being projected to overtake the EU's collective defense spending by 2025 and predictions that Africa will more than double its population by 2050. He also underscored the turnout in the *recent EU elections, which transformed the political scene in many member states, and highlighted the need for protection, growth, fairness, sustainability, and influence to be the top issues for the European Council.*

Many of the speakers also called attention to the significance the next 10 years of policy will have for the EU. **RÉKA SZEMERKÉNYI**, Executive Vice President of the Centre for European Policy Analysis, underscored the importance of decisions the EU makes (or doesn't make) in determining the next few decades. She referred to *groups, whether they be multinational companies or terrorist groups, as fundamental challenges that require cooperation and structures that strengthen the EU.* Palacio echoed this sentiment calling for institutional reforms and reconstruction. Drulák also suggested that the geographical differences between the East, West, North, and South within the EU need to be overcome for better cohesion.

During the question and answer session, the audience asked about enforcing the rule of law in certain member states. Palacio put particular emphasis on the independence of the judiciary. **ŚWIEBODA** concurred, saying red lines laid down by the European Court of Justice need to be respected.

Another question posed by the audience concerned the EU's ability to project hard power. In response, Petříček praised NATO's role in collective security and the need to find the line between soft power and hard power. Szemerkenyi alluded to the importance of cooperation between the EU and the US in addressing challenges. **ŚWIEBODA** ended the discussion by stating that as much as it sounds cliché, EU-NATO cooperation has never been better.

'Vision for Europe' Award

'Vision for Europe' is an annually bestowed award for distinguished personalities who have, in the course of their lives, devoted substantial energies to the establishment and development of European ideals such as strengthening peaceful cooperation among European nations, developing fairer institutional arrangements for European integration, making European integration more accessible to the European public, and overcoming prejudices and misconceptions related to the integration process. The award ceremony is part of the Prague European Summit and includes the European Vision speech, delivered by the awardee. This year's award went to the President of the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies and former Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic, **MIKULÁŠ DZURINDA**.



Throughout his life, Dzurinda has sought to advance the causes of peaceful cooperation between European nations, particularly with regard to his native Slovakia. During his term as Prime Minister, he advocated passionately for greater cooperation and integration within the European Union and the Northern Atlantic Treaty Organisation, leading an efficient reformist government that rapidly improved the lives of Slovaks and brought the nation into the EU and NATO during his term of office. Furthermore, throughout his political career he ceaselessly worked to develop and improve the framework and structure of the European institutions on the basis of fair and democratic principles, championing the cause of European integration, and working to set the record straight on misconceptions and myths related to the process of European integration. Dzurinda has long been one of the most positive and influential advocates of European ideas and values in Central Europe. During his term of office as Prime Minister and later as Foreign Minister of Slovakia, the Visegrad Group saw much improved cooperation and collaboration both internally and within the wider European Union.

PRAGUE european summit

27 - 29 MAY 2019



DAY 2

KEY-NOTE

New Trajectory for Europe

The Czech Republic's Secretary of State for European Affairs **MILENA HRDINKOVÁ** delivered the keynote address, starting with how joining the EU has benefitted the Czech Republic. She cited a 37 percent increase in the Czech Republic's GDP since 2004, and that the country currently has the fourth lowest public debt in the EU with salaries growing.

Even with these benefits, Hrdinková said there is still a need for effective policies that will overcome the challenges posed by institutional complexities, such as redundant bureaucracy. The European Parliamentary elections demonstrated to her how essential it is to reinsert institutional balance in hopes of concentrating on the EU in a more positive way. She also criticized the politicization of the current

European Commission, saying she hopes that it can move forward to contribute more constructively to the EU.

Economic integration was another key point of Hrdinková's speech. The Czech Republic's small economy relies on exports, and strengthening the single market is essential, she said. *Czechs would like to fully restore the functioning of Schengen with a focus on the idea that goods move freely while the external border is strictly guarded.* She also wishes to pay special attention to industrial and trade policies.

Hrdinková closed with addressing energy security. *The Czech government considers nuclear energy a low-energy, low-emission and environmentally friendly energy source.* Still, Hrdinková stressed that there is a tendency for many EU member states to be too ambitious regarding its climate change actions and should instead focus on meeting the

goals it sets. She insisted that *the Czech Republic must remain realistic and pragmatic* in this regard.

PLENARY PANEL

Challenges to the Rule of Law and the EU's Fundamental Values

Acting as moderator, **ERIC MAURICE**, head of the Brussels office of the Robert Schuman Foundation, outlined several issues EU member states—such as Hungary, Poland, Malta, Romania—have been having in regard to European rule of law. These states have come under harsh criticism in the EU due to democratic backsliding in recent years, and it has left many wondering if Article 7, the procedure for the EU to suspend rights to member states, should be applied. Maurice framed the discussion by posing the question: Can these challenges be addressed by changing the EU or by changing the member states?

IVAN KRASDEV, Chairman for the Center for Liberal Strategies in Sofia and Permanent Fellow for the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna, responded by asking if these challenges are a threat to the EU or just a symptom of other factors. There were divisions in the EU from the start due to domestic politics versus EU politics and parties. *The real issue is that every EU citizen should feel equally protected, but at the same time how much interference from Brussels are states going to tolerate, he asked. Krastev thinks the solution is to find a balance within the European Parliament, considering the topic of European rule of law can lead to a much more polarized political system within the EU.*

For **PÉTER BALÁZS**, former EU Commissioner and Minister of Foreign Affairs in Hungary, the answer to this question depends on what kinds of solutions (common or individual) the EU is looking for, and if EU officials are approaching state governments in a cooperative or conflictual way. He also emphasized *the importance of checks and balances, noting that while Hungary has the smallest government in the EU, its prime minister, president and speaker of the parliament all work as a very cohesive unit and their relationship dates back to their college dormitory. With tight state control of the nation's media, this leaves little room for public participation and influence in national politics.*

Balázs also referred to the lack of power Article 7 currently elicits. While it has never been used, it is considered a shaming measure in itself. *"Article 7 was the atomic bomb that would never blow up"* he said. However, its power is diminished since many states are refusing to be shamed. Additionally, the United States' 'America First' platform leaves the EU ill equipped for controlling or sanctioning its members.

Up-to-date data analysis could help with countering such violations of the rule of law, according to **CONSTANZA SANHUEZA PETRARCA**, Research Fellow at WZB Berlin Social Science Center and Research Associate for the V-Dem Institute. Being able to assess a member



state with recent data on issues like access to justice or freedom of expression can help fight corruption and pull back what she calls the "democratic façade" that some states exhibit. She also called for more transparent laws in member states such as Hungary and Greece.

Hungary's Deputy Secretary of State for EU Relations **ATTILA STEINER** offered an opposing opinion, saying that *the 'rule of law' is not clearly defined, and, considering the variety of political systems in the EU, it should be up to individual member states to determine how to apply it.* Taking into account that introducing new political structures requires the consensus of all member states, Steiner insisted that they stick to the treaty's existing mechanisms and try to use them more efficiently. When asked how Hungary is implementing the rule of law, Steiner said that his country has always implemented the European Court of Justice's rulings.

Steiner also strongly discouraged the EU from using mechanisms like Article 7 as a political tool since it breeds more distrust. Instead, the EU should engage in direct dialogue with the Hungarian government.

ŽIGA TURK, professor from University of Ljubljana and former Minister for Growth as well as Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports for the Government of Slovenia, echoed Steiner saying that *invoking Article 7 could be done for political reasons, which he found worrying.* According to Turk, national leaders who are trying to shield their countries from Brussels are getting more attention from their rhetoric for this reason.

Turk was very critical regarding the discouragement of civil society organizations in battling these kinds of violations, strongly stating that there should be no doubt that there is political motivation behind this discouragement.

PANEL A

European Sovereignty and Strategic Autonomy: How Can We Make It Work?

Considering that the EU's Global Strategy requires a certain level of strategic autonomy to promote peace and security, panelists spoke on what strategic autonomy actually looks like. Topics included having a European army and the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP).

For **ANNIKA BEN DAVID**, Ambassador-at-large for Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, strategic autonomy requires Europe taking greater responsibility for its own security especially considering how populism is eroding the EU's common values of human rights, rule of law and fair governance. Not only should the EU incorporate its civilian and military assets into an integrated approach to become a security provider, its notion of *strategic autonomy should also encompass human rights as well as defense.*





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Panel Discussion

Topic: [Illegible]

Speakers: [Illegible]

Time: 18:30 - 19:30

"We think development, gender and race equality is at the top of all concerns because it brings prosperity, inclusivity, diversity for others," she said.

For **ALEŠ CHMELAŘ**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for European Issues, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, strategic autonomy should be about countering the negative impacts of globalization, since he said many of the crises we are facing today are a byproduct of these processes. Many regard the EU as a catalyst for globalization. It was not a strong actor in the critical situations in its neighborhood and it ultimately paid the price during the migration crisis. Instead, *the EU should be there as a moderator and filter of globalization and use its tools to pass the sovereign state and not be a passive object.*

Chmelař also mentioned that states seem to be losing their voice in multilateral strategic negotiations. There used to be a wave of emotional enthusiasm which has now slowed down.

Both David and Chmelař touched on the importance of credibility when it comes to strategic autonomy. David emphasized the need for the EU to promote the rule of law and democracy in foreign countries, as well as within the EU in order to maintain its credibility. She noted how authoritarians love to see the EU's cohesion erode slowly since it enables them to promote their own bilateral agreements and interests. Chmelař added that credibility is important too because two percent of each member state's budget is quite substantive and so the EU's strategic interests need to be compatible with NATO.

THOMAS GOMART, Director of the French Institute for International Relations, echoed David's call for an integrated approach to defense, but he added that it is impossible to do this without the United Kingdom. He also addressed several problems the EU is currently facing, including the decline of multilateralism at the hands of China, Russia, and the United States, international actors who wish to use nuclear weapons for aggressive policies, and jihadism on European soil.

Unlike David, Gomart does not believe that the EU is a hard power at all, referring to its lack of troops and production of military material. However, there is a sense of urgency in France when it comes to defense, there are issues regarding autonomy, decision making and operation control. He also addressed worries about France being anti-US, especially when it comes to NATO, but he said the core of French security is the Atlantic Alliance with the US. Strategic autonomy is just a continentalization of the same deal and alliance, and it can encompass all of Europe together.

Gomart and Chmelař also called for more attention to be paid to cybersecurity capabilities. Considering different members states' concerns when it comes to the capabilities of Russia and China, Gomart said *there needs to be a tough reaction to manipulation of information, which includes offensive actions, not just defensive, when it comes to foreign intelligence agencies.* Chmelař also sees a large potential for cyber-offensive capabilities, but he said the symbolism of national armies will never disappear, making it complicated to create an integrated army.

When it comes to achieving strategic autonomy **SYLVIA HARTLEIF**, Principal Advisor to the European Political Strategy Centre in the European Commission, said it is important to also consider Europe's strategic culture. She sees strategic autonomy as a prerequisite to a solid defense policy, but posits that Europe does not have the infrastructure or the right policies for its own defense when it comes to Russia. Current transatlantic relations give European leaders the incentive to change policy when it comes to the tectonic shifts occurring in the world, but there is disagreement over what interests and normative policies European strategic culture entails. In order to be successful, she urged policy to be consistent and coherent.



A major question Hartleif addressed when it comes to a European army is how it will fit with NATO. There are ideas of having a cyber brigade and a European defense by 2020, and the CSDP is laying the foundations for an army. She said that *the EU must convince people that the two can be complementary. To be effective, the CSDP must first and foremost focus on what NATO does not do in regions where it is important to defend European interests.*

Hartleif also said that while an EU army is important, it will never replace national armies. It will only add layers of capabilities for smaller countries that do not have the means to do certain things, such as space travel.

PANEL B Industrial Revolution 4.0 Effects' on European Societies

Panelists spoke on the intersection of the newest phase of the industrial revolution and contemporary European society. The impact of new technologies in the workplace was a major topic. Chairperson of the European Union Affairs Committee **KALLE PALLING** began with underlining the importance of continuous education in order to prepare the future workforce in a setting where "technology in the next five years will change as much as in the last hundred years." **JAROSLAVA REZLEROVÁ**, Managing Director of Manpower Group, reiterated the need for increased training in new work techniques due to the ways jobs are evolving as a result of automation.

The technological implications for human rights was also addressed. Laflurence CEO **PETER VARGA** mentioned that in addition to a vast diversity in newly emerging technologies, *people are able to create content not only to make a living but also to influence society on a large scale.* Taking into account the rule of law and other human rights issues, **HILARY SUTCLIFFE**, Director of SocietyInside, stressed *the importance of making sure human problems direct technology as opposed to allowing technology to direct human problems.*

Fostering innovation is one of the most important elements for **ADELA ZÁBRAŽNÁ**, Executive Manager of the Slovak Alliance for the Innovative Economy. She highlighted the need for governments to lead the way through education and to nurture innovative practices among their constituents. She closed by stating that the cultivation of innovation is the difference between countries that will prosper going forward and those that will lag behind.

PLENARY PANEL Data as a New Currency Big Data Governance and Public Policy

How can government use Big Data to improve policy without impeding on personal privacy? Journalist **DECLAN CURRY**, who acted as mod-

erator, said that is possible to safeguard data, but asked the panelists if there is some payoff between the convenience of sharing personal information on apps and indirectly allowing data collection.

GABRIELLA CSEH, who acts as the head of public policy for Central and Eastern Europe for Facebook, began by addressing the changes the social network has undergone in reaction to its users' demands for greater data privacy. She mentioned that the privacy settings are extremely finite now, allowing users to precisely decide the extent of what they want to share. She also stressed the difference between open data for the public sector and for private companies.

According to Cseh, *one of the most confusing aspects of privacy concerns data portability, when people upload their data to other services. Users must strike a deal with companies and the government when it comes to this data's use, which is difficult since each individual will have a different opinion on this matter.* Ultimately, she said that Big Data can be used for a social good, but it must be done with public consent. Project Director for the Finnish Innovation Fund **JAANA SINIPURO** said that *data portability could be seen as something that supports European values, and this could be achieved through public-private partnerships.*

JAKUB JAŇURA, who serves as the Big Data expert for the Czech Republic's Ministry of the Interior, is currently working with the Czech government to reach out to citizens about the general computation of private data. For them, the main question is who within the government should have access to this information. For example, the government has control of data from public cameras, but who should have access to this in cases of emergencies or extreme situations is up to debate.

The government knows everything about you now and can access your data for decision making purposes at almost any time, according to **JAANIKA MERILO**, an advisor to the Minister of Infrastructure and to the Mayors of Dnipro and Lviv. For Merilo, everyone is responsible for the handling of data, from the individual themselves to the government, as well as other entities that access the data.

Sinipuro also noted that citizens are giving away a lot of their rights with personal data and posed the question: What's the political purpose? Is it for transparency, accountability, political participation? The economy grows stronger and businesses improve upon the retention of user data, but she emphasizes, personal data needs to be much more transparent.

PANEL A The Future of European Neighborhood

The goal of the European Neighborhood Policy was to create a ring of peaceful, stable and prosperous states along the EU's borders. **DANIELA VINCENTI**, Spokesperson and Strategic Communication Adviser to the



President for the European Economic and Social Committee, opened the discussion by addressing the struggle many of these states are having, from economic stagnation to conflicts in nearby states like Syria and Ukraine. Panelists discussed the direction that policy should take in light of these developments.

STEVEN BLOCKMANS, Head of EU Foreign Policy and Head of Institutional Affairs for CEPS, said that the future really depends on the outcome of the debate between those who see the EU as a Europe of nations versus those who see the EU as a Europe of unity. This is also very dependent on which particular neighborhood is being discussed, highlighting that these are not singular issues and there is no one size fits all foreign policy.

All speakers emphasized the need to have clearly defined, specific, strategic goals towards different neighborhoods. Considering Europe already establishes much of its relations with the neighborhood in a bilateral manner, Blockmans said the credibility of the EU as a foreign policy actor depends on its performance in these neighborhoods. **ILGVARS KLAVA**, Ambassador and Director General of the Bilateral Relations Directorate for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, emphasized the need for a clear objective when it comes to Russia and the Eastern neighbors in general. **ADNAN TABATABAI**, CEO of the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient, also mentioned that these goals must be established in a way that overcomes the binary thinking of Europe as either economically self-reliant or committed to trans-Atlantic relations.

Tabatabai also advocated for upgrading real power while at the same time not underestimating the value of the EU's soft power, especially within the Middle East which holds Europe in high regard in relation to this soft power aspect. He believes it is important to keep in mind the various actors in the Middle East who undermine European interests in the region. He mentioned that while there has already been discussion in this regard about actors such as Russia, China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, not as much has been focused on the implications of US influence in the region possibly not aligning with European interests.

When looking at the Eastern partnership, Klava said it must be acknowledged that it is the Eastern partners who will determine what direction these countries ultimately take. He also addressed the internal and external competitors in these countries, where *internally oligarchs and powerful business groups vie for power and externally powers like Russia and especially China compete via economic means.*

STEFAN TINCA, Political Director for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Romania, mentioned that Europe needs to focus more on European interests and less on institutional arrangements. He said that *the "ring of friends" has turned into a "ring of problems,"* which have arisen from migration issues, Brexit, and the rise of populism. He also believes that

there has been too much focus on institutional arrangements and advocated focusing more on EU interests moving forward.

VĚRA ŘIHÁČKOVÁ-PACHTA, Advocacy Manager for the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and Associate Research Fellow at the EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, maintained that the Eastern partnership is a two-way relationship. Europe should do its part to elevate certain values in these societies, such as the rule of law which the Eastern partnership has been unsuccessful in upholding. The sort of socialization that arises from this will only serve to further increase connections between the EU and neighboring countries and should be promoted, in her opinion.

PANEL B

Competitiveness of Europe in the Field of Artificial Intelligence

Rapid developments in the field of artificial intelligence and virtual reality is driving economic development and international policy. Panelists spoke on what the EU can do to be competitive in an industry currently dominated by the US and Asia.

One of the major concerns facing the EU when it comes to a united front in the field of innovation is the UK's departure. The UK is a great competitor in this realm and there needs to be a restructuring of the public sector with a multidisciplinary approach to digitization, according to **LAURA DELPONTE**, Senior Partner at the Centre for Industrial Studies. *"The role of the public sector, especially in digitalisation, is critical. Europe has to find its own way"*, said. She emphasized the need for a unified research center, making it easier for European powers to cooperate.

Executive Director of the European Global Navigation Satellite Systems Agency **CARLO DES DORIDES** said *the UK left the Galileo project before Brexit but is currently finding an agreement as the UK delegation says they want to stay*. AI also brings up ethical concerns with regards to issues of facial recognition and the use of personal data, such as the controversy embroiling Facebook over its dealings with Cambridge Analytica. For Dorides, the government and private businesses must overcome the general population's lack of trust when it comes to managing personal data, while the public also needs to be educated about and given access to these technologies. *The US is leading the way in terms of responsibility and discourse, with cities like San Francisco banning the use of facial recognition while the EU is building technical processes without a plan if something goes wrong*, he said.

For **JURAJ HOŠTÁK**, Coordinator for Smart Cities CSE and InnovEYtion Hub Manager at Ernst & Young, the EU must move from an opportunistic to a strategic standpoint in order to get the data necessary to be protected and useful for state purposes. This would mean focusing on the implementation of AI on a large scale, instead of just one-off sales.

He also posed the question of if the EU should even be a competitor in an AI cold war between China and the US or just buy from Silicon Valley or Shanghai.

ILİYANA TSANOVA, Deputy Managing Director of the European Fund for Strategic Investments for the European Investment Bank, said *what is really holding the EU back from being competitive is its inability to provide the right environment for tech companies to scale up*. She likened the hype around AI to the early 2000s e-commerce hype when two great houses of innovation, Amazon and eBay, came to power. Many companies usually leave Europe for the US if they start scaling up. The EU is currently facing problems with funding, since there are no big tech giants with enough capital for growth, and fragmentation with 28 member countries that have different budgets, languages, cultures, and so on.

Director of Eticas Research and Consulting **GEMMA GALDON CLAVELL** represented the more skeptical view of AI, saying many of the technology's promises will not and are not being delivered. According to Clavell, *the organizational issue of algorithms not working with existing structures and technologies often leads to disaster*. Therefore, there will probably be a general dissatisfaction with AI because it is not doing its job properly. Clavell also noted that the EU has a unique competitive advantage due to its ability to develop its own model. However, the EU is not taking advantage of this, partially because getting a public contract and even having a dialogue with officials and the public on the topic is very difficult.

PANEL A

Brexit. What Now?

Almost three years after Brexit, the future of the United Kingdom's relationship with the EU is even less clear. Panelists weighed in on the possibility of a No Deal departure, the likelihood of the UK's exit on 31 October, and the implications for Ireland.

CEO of Vulcan Consulting and former Irish Minister for European Affairs **LUCINDA CREIGHTON** and Deputy Director and Head of Research at the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies **ROLAND FREUDENSTEIN** both began by expressing their disappointment with how things have progressed with Brexit. Creighton said not a lot has changed after the resignation of British Prime Minister Theresa May; the EU's position is even more entrenched, and it cannot do a lot about it.

Freudenstein called *Brexit "a crying shame"*, but added that trying to keep Britain in the Union is a waste of energy because the country is too polarized, and it will take its internal battles into the EU. Instead, he said *member states should focus on channels for cooperation, such as the military and social justice*.





All the speakers were pessimistic about future negotiations. Creighton said she could not see the Eurosceptic hostile new government negotiating a better deal. Director of the Centre for European Reform **CHARLES GRANT** predicted there will be another No Deal situation in the future, and a second referendum which will extend Brexit even further.

UK Political Consultant **ADRIAN GAHAN** reminded the audience that the UK is comprised of four nations, but *Brexit is an English nationalistic project*. For this reason, he said that a 'soft Brexit' is the best option for the country and the EU.

With pressure building in the Conservative Party, Creighton was able to shed light on the implications of Brexit for Ireland. The Irish government is facing a great deal of political problems concerning the possibility of a No Deal departure, especially around the movement of goods and services. While some surveys say that a unified Ireland is a possibility, she said that demographics must be kept in mind.

Brexit is also reigniting tension around Ireland's north and south border, a topic that Creighton says has been weaponized in Brexit debates. *Discussions on border infrastructure reforms and customs will become more important, and dissidence in the north is bubbling*, she said. *Security concerns are affecting the peace process in Northern Ireland*, and she predicted electoral fall as a result.

When asked if the EU is willing to compromise on Brexit negotiations, many speakers expressed the view that the current deal is the best. Freudenstein and Gahan both expressed the need to convince the British Parliament that the current deal is as good as it will get. Meanwhile the UK is starting to feel the implications of withdrawal. Since the referendum, Grant said that the UK economy has declined by 2.5 percent and investors are pulling out in many sectors, including pharmaceutical, biotech, and technology.

When it comes to the future, it looks as "*clear as mud*," Gahan said. For **MARIKA LINNTAM**, Director General of the Department of European Affairs for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Estonia, *the biggest lesson learnt from the negotiation process is that the UK and EU are so deeply interlinked, and it is very costly to disintegrate*. The speakers all agreed that this is not even the beginning of an end, and the EU will just have to wait and see what happens.

PANEL B

The Future Path of the Euro (in cooperation with the Institute for Politics and Society)

The euro appears unsustainable in the future, and its performance is deeply intertwined with the EU's future. Low growth and disparate economic outlooks in different member states has spawned more Euroscepticism. Panelists questioned what needs to change in order to make the euro more sustainable in the long term.

GABRIELA CRETU, Chairperson of the European Affairs Committee for the Romanian Senate, still dreams about a federal union of the EU. Calling herself a "realist utopian," Cretu explained how economic interdependence is important if the euro is to be resilient and last. *Economic divergences often lead to political divergences, which could lead to potential disintegration of the EU*. Thus, it could prevent peace and development, she said. She also distinguished that Gross Domestic Product is measured for something that is made in a country, not something that belongs to a country.

The eurozone is very resilient according to **OLDŘICH DĚDEK**, Board Member of the Czech National Bank. However, he said that something still needs to be done if it will survive another crisis like the one in 2012. The difficulty, Dědek explained, is how to balance the needs of the eurozone market with potential newcomers that might not be able to adhere to its standards. While everyone in the eurozone should be welcomed, its only countries with low inflation and stable economies that should join. He left the audience with the question *if a new country joins the eurozone and the European monetary fund, should that country take over certain responsibilities as well even though they weren't involved in the rule-making?*

The need to create a European currency policy that is beneficial to all member states was touched on by **JEAN-PIERRE LANDAU**, economics professor at SciencesPo Paris and Senior Research Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School. To Landau, the euro is still too weak to endure another crisis like 2012, where it was almost destroyed through its devaluation. *"The Euro institutions seem to be working very well but crisis-fighting mechanisms should be more powerful. The monetary sovereignty, which we have, is very important, and so is the ability to absorb shock,"* he said. He also urged everyone to think about the long-term impact of the euro. Although it is currently working well, he noted that the US dollar was getting better in 2008-2009 while the euro was doing worse.

Despite the crisis in 2012, the euro has adapted very well and is very popular among EU citizens, said **HANNI SCHÖLERMANN**, an economist for the European Central Bank. She also mentioned the need to help member states when implementing EU laws and backing the bank in member states to make sure deposits across the EU are equally safe. The EU capital market is also an issue on the agenda that needs to be solved in order to help with economic growth.

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DAY 3

HIGH LEVEL MINISTERIAL PANEL Central Europe as an Active Player in the Aftermath of the European Parliament Elections

While an alliance of big parties has been calling the shots in the EU for the past decades, the recent European Parliamentary elections showed signs that this could be changing as support for mainstream parties is dwindling. This panel of high level ministers weighed in with their thoughts on how Central Europeans can fit into this new distribution of power.

Acting as moderator, freelance journalist **EMILY TAMKIN** began the discussion with the question of how each speaker would define Central Europe. **TOMÁŠ PETŘÍČEK**, Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Czech Republic, said that there is a different mentality in countries like the Czech Republic and other Western states. Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and so on are not old democracies, and many of these have grown more skeptical of democracy since the 1990s after the fall of communism.

Petříček outlined the Czech Republic's priorities in the face of this growing disillusionment with the European community, which included deepening the single market, the preservation of basic freedoms including human rights, working on innovations, the integration of the Western Balkans and working with Eastern partners. He said they must pragmatically and transparently pursue all these objectives in order to regain the enthusiasm and optimism of 1989.

Many speakers also noted that such distinctions can be detrimental to European unity and ultimately useless. Petříček said that we do not need a definition of what Central Europe is; it is enough that we live here. **FRANTIŠEK RUŽIČKA**, the Slovakian Secretary of State for Foreign and European Affairs, pointed out that *Central Europe can mean something different depending on where you are, using the example of how some states in the far east include Ukraine in Central Europe. While the ideological divisions between communism and capitalism has left a footprint in the region, now there is a common European identity that must be underscored and preserved*, he said.



FLORIAN HERRMANN, Head of the State Chancellery and Minister for Federal and European Affairs and Media of Bavaria, underscored Ružička's comments with the importance of unity among member states. The EU must show respect to all countries and accept different points of views, he said. **OLIVER SCHENK**, Head of the State Chancellery and Minister for Federal and European Affairs of Saxony, added that *anti-European parties are their real opponents, not individual states, and that we must work together to overcome disenchantment with the EU.*

In reaction to the EP elections, Ružička noted that participation in Slovakia increased from the previous election cycle. However, he also indicated a *paradox in Slovakia, where there is high support for EU membership and the public feels its benefits, but they don't fully understand how the European Parliament functions nor do they feel close to Brussels and the EU.* Petříček called for more openness for debate and discussion, saying that *diversity should not prevent EU members from finding common ground.*

Herrmann also addressed the possibility of a collapse of the political center. Although people think the rise of extremism is regional, he pointed out that it seems to be everywhere because of a strong shift to the left that permitted a vacuum for these extreme parties to come to gain traction. These developments are different in different states and their reasons are diverse. *While there is no collapse of central parties in Germany, Herrmann sees Germany as an interpreter for Eastern and Central Europe, where they can represent their unique historical experience in Brussels and build bridges between the East and West.*

The panel closed with a discussion on the role of Central Europe in the EU-US partnership. All speakers emphasized the need for cooperation on common issues. There is a lot of common history between the US and the EU, as well as a strong interest towards cooperation not just based on profits but on common values, such as respect for individual liberties and freedoms, Petříček said. Schenk emphasized the need to strengthen this union and for Europe to present its agenda as a coherent mass for the US.

Ružička addressed one common issue shared by the EU and US for cooperation: migration. He believes the obligatory quota for states is not systemic and not a solution, saying *the Visegrad Four countries were previously misunderstood for their stance on migration. There is a need to protect the Schengen Area through cooperation between states that take in migrants and the countries where they come from,* he said. Issues of illegal immigration, human trafficking and organized crimes must also be addressed in unison with the US.

Other areas for cooperation that the speakers mentioned included research, digitalization, and artificial intelligence. The panel closed with the ministers underscoring the need to move forward with cooperation and development, advocating for the integration of new European countries, and calling for a collaborative approach to future challenges.

CHAT A

Is It the End of Global Agreements on Common Challenges?

The multilateral approach to issues like trade agreements and weapons regulations that has been in place has recently come under significant strain, from both known opponents, like Russia and China, to past protagonists like the US. Squeezed by these two powers, Europe has failed in many aspects to defend multilateralism. Moderator **VASSILIS NTOUSAS**, Senior International Relations Policy Advisor for the Foundation for European Progressive Studies, began the discussion by asking how can divisive problems like climate change and security be solved in such a political environment?

Both speakers noted how the new trend in unilateral action could impact current policy. **MARIKA LINNTAM**, Director General of the Department of European Affairs from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, said there is increasing pressure on this multilateral system because of the unilateralist actions of certain countries. **VLADIMÍR BÄRTL**, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, said that *US President Donald Trump's take on trade agreements has shifted the approach from a "win for all" to a "zero-sum game" with winners and losers. This has been disarming for both the World Trade Organization and the EU.*

Both speakers emphasized *the need for the EU to set preserving multilateralism higher on the agenda. Although the WTO has sided with the US in the recent trade wars, there have been negative reactions but no constructive policies to confront this,* according to Bärtl. Many countries have taken multilateralism for granted, but it's important when you look at countries like the Czech Republic, which is export-oriented and part of the single market.

When asked how the recent European Parliamentary elections will affect the transatlantic relationship, Linntam didn't believe there will be any direct consequences. Bärtl said it will take more effort to form coalitions and explain the benefits of free trade, referring to the Vietnam free trade agreements, and the CITA with Canada as examples.

CHAT A

Is Europe Ready for a Dynamic Future? Role of EU Governments and Governance

The astounding evolution of technology in recent years is bringing us into a fourth industrial revolution characterized largely by automation and the expansion of the tech economy into many spheres, from manufacturing to transportation to policing. Speakers considered what role governments should take on, in relation to the intersection of technology and society.

Many of the speakers emphasized the difficulty institutions have in keeping pace with technological innovation. In order to fix this, MEP **MATTHIJS VAN MILTENBURG** said *EU regulatory bodies should be*



given more power to act in a quicker fashion concerning technology, but this must be done with a loose grip.

For **KALLE PALLING**, Chairperson of the European Union Affairs Committee in the Estonian legislature, this rapid development also requires institutions to reevaluate education. Considering that technology in the last five years has evolved as much as in the past one hundred, Palling emphasized the importance of redefining education in a way that would encourage students to keep pace with innovation. He suggested *adopting the concept of "education as a lifestyle" where workers are required to "re-skill" or "up-skill" so that society and technology evolve alongside each other.* An example would be putting an expiration date on diplomas to encourage constant re-education.

The speakers also emphasized the need to foster trust between the public and government with regards to technology. Miltenburg said regulatory bodies must be in line with strict moral and ethical considerations and operate in a transparent manner in order to gain broad social support, something that is important to entrepreneurs as well as the public. *Without considering the moral and ethical aspects of expanded regulatory power relating to technology, governing bodies will lose the trust of the citizens and, more importantly, entrepreneurs who will take their technological innovations elsewhere,* he said.

NADINE SMITH, Global Director of Marketing and Communications at the Centre for Public Impact, agreed with Miltenburg on empowering regulatory bodies and was adamant that governing institutions across Europe put people before technology. The needs of people and society at large must be understood so technology can then evolve to meet these needs, she said. *"When things go wrong with technology, we tend to blame and regulate technology. But we should regulate people. Technology is not racially biased, it's the people behind it."* Unless governments reposition their loyalty back towards the people, they will undermine the trust in these institutions, something she and Miltenburg both see as pivotal moving forward.

CHAT A

Evolution of Humans in the Next Century Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies

Experts such as Nick Bostrom and Elon Musk are raising concerns regarding the risk of artificial intelligence one day in the near future surpassing general human intelligence and becoming a potential threat to human existence. Panelists weighed in on if these predictions are overstated, and how AI and superintelligence can help government and humanity.

The prediction of AI surpassing human intelligence was met with some disagreement from the speakers. **KAREL JANEČEK**, a Czech mathematician, entrepreneur and anti-corruption campaigner, explained that superintelligence is the connection of many human brains and AI. Thus, as AI lacks the motivation to develop beyond the input and tasks which it receives from humans it can never surpass us in general intelligence, he said. *"AI does not have the motivation, it is a tool. If we implement precautions into the AI, we can make sure it will not be abused. It's important for the EU to be active."*

The speakers also distinguished between AI achieving superintelligence and AI surpassing human intelligence in a specific area. AI has the ability to do the latter, they said, but only if humans create the motivation to do. They illustrated this with the example of the AI called Chinook which was programed to play checkers. Eventually, Chinook beat Marion Tinsley, considered the greatest checkers player who ever lived. So AI can, if given the motivation, surpass humans in highly specified areas of intelligence.

Janeček as well as **ROSA CASTRO**, Senior Scientific Policy Officer at the Federation of the European Academies of Medicine, and **PETER SZENASY**, Managing Partner at EPDOR, agree that AI is a tool that can improve the human existence in various ways, but ultimately lacks the ability to strive beyond the parameters set by its human developers.



For Szenasy, *AI is key to stopping the current rise in CO₂ emissions and mitigating the negative impacts of climate change on a global scale.* For example, using AI to map energy consumption on the household level would help to hold everyone equally accountable for their energy use. AI could also optimize the process of deriving energy, from nuclear to renewable sources, more efficiently. *The cross application of AI is paramount, not only for the lowering of CO₂ but also for human development in general,* according to Szenasy.

Castro agreed with this all-encompassing approach and highlighted ongoing AI projects in the medical sector that improve diagnosis and eliminate human error in some surgical settings. She referenced the 14-year-old paraplegic boy who opened the 2014 World Cup by kicking a ball into the goal. This was only made possible by an exoskeleton the boy was wearing which directly connected to his brain using AI. *"AI can definitely help democracy and society. It can erase obstacles and build bridges between individuals,"* she said. While Castro sees a bright future for AI across all fields, she also gave a tough warning that policy makers must put regulations and policies in place to safeguard against the potential misuse of AI. Such regulations can also ensure the EU remains competitive in the development and utilization of these new technological advancements, a stance that was echoed by Szenasy and Janeček.

One risk raised by Janeček was that in the future people may choose to live more of their lives in virtual reality than in the real world, which could be damaging to further human development and participation in society and democracy. Instead he encouraged the use of AI to create what he termed *"Social Singularity 21" – optimizing human communication to the benefit of humans at the global and individual levels.* He suggested that this can be achieved via the online connection of human consciousnesses, which would further human intelligence and cooperation.

All the panelists saw technology as the answer to helping humanity, not a threat which humans must be protected against. However, they did acknowledge the bad effects that can arise from technology's misuse, from terror attacks to the invasion of individual privacy. For this reason, all the speakers put great emphasis on the need for laws and regulations regarding the creation and utilization of AI now and in the future. When it comes to regulations, Castro insisted that AI must be considered within the wider context since advances are being made in several fields. The speakers also underscored *humanity's ability and responsibility to code our ethics and values into AI in order to safeguard it against misuse.*

Humanity's reliance on technology, as a possible danger was also addressed. Szenasy claimed humans will eventually become completely reliant on technology due to its usefulness and ability to improve the quality of human existence, from self-driving cars to medical interventions to climate change. AI will be integrated into every sphere of our lives, he said.



The speakers ended the discussion by reiterating that the EU must take advantage of the opportunity to ensure that excellent and competitive AI and other technologies are developed in a swift and safe manner.

WORKSHOP

Czech Perception of the European Union and How it Differs from Other V4 Countries

The Czech Republic is one of the most Eurosceptic nations in the EU. Behavior Labs Managing Director **JIŘÍ BOUDAL**, EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy Research Fellow Vít Havelka, and Director of the European Programme at STEM **NIKOLA HOŘEJŠ** presented their findings of a psycho-sociological study that analyzed Czech attitudes to the EU compared with the other V4 countries.

According to the study, the Czech Republic is the only V4 country that might choose to leave the EU. Only 22 percent of Czechs think their voice is heard at the EU level (with only Hungary and Greece scoring lower). The Visegrad countries share the same attitudes as other EU countries concerning climate, migration and terrorism, but for Czechs the EU brand is very weak and almost the same as China and Russia.

What is startling is that Czechs seem to love Europe as much as others. The researchers attributed this disparity to dissatisfaction with the institutions and a lack of knowledge about how the EU works. They found that 60 percent of Czechs did not know how the budget works or that they have representation.

General distrust and disillusion with the EU are also apparent. The study showed that people who are unhappy with the EU also appear to distrust their own national government. There are little positive emotions concerning the EU, but a lot of neutral and negative associations, driven by trivial, petty issues raised in the EU where nothing gets done, in the minds of many Czechs. Around half of those who participated in the study expressed a feeling that EU supporters lecture, patronize, and look down on people.

Czechs are more concerned with defending their quality of life and security issues, over defending business, safeguarding democracy and freedom of movement. There also seems to be a patriotic paradox,



where those not proud of the Czech Republic are not also proud of the EU. Most Czechs want to reform the EU, compared to those that want to leave or stay. Their reasoning is related to unnecessary bureaucracy and administration. The researchers also noted that framing is also important. 'Euro-optimist' and 'Eurosceptic' are two labels that bear heavy connotations, where new labels such as 'reformist', 'Euro-pragmatist' or 'European patriot' might be more accurate.

CLOSING REMARKS

The fifth Prague European Summit ended with the Director of the Institute of International Relations **ONDŘEJ DITRYCH** thanking the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, the European Commission, the Visegrad Fund, the Open Society Fund, the Municipality of Prague, Hans Seidel Stiftung, all the sponsors and everyone who participated in the three-day event. He expressed satisfaction with the debates and panels that spoke to the fundamentals of politics and the common identity of European nations, which illustrated the difficulty in balancing as much and as little of the union as possible. *"Together we created a singular space for debate on Europe and its future,"* he said.



DISCUSSION BREAKFASTS

What should the EU's Leadership Vision be?

The discussion breakfast held on 28 May 2019 and hosted by the French embassy, in cooperation with the Swedish embassy, was centered on the future of EU leadership against the backdrop of a rise in populist, nationalist, anti-gender, and anti-immigrant movements sweeping Europe. French and Swedish ambassadors to the Czech Republic **ROLAND GALHARAGUE** and **VIKTORIA LI** opened the breakfast by referencing their countries' national policies that advance women's rights and gender equality by focusing on rights, resources and representation, and stating the importance of mainstreaming such policies in every forum available.

ANNIKA BEN DAVID, Ambassador-at-large for Human Rights for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, highlighted *the need for co-operation and shared responsibility in order to combat the spread of populist strongman leadership and the decline of democracy coinciding with this*.

Speakers also noted the need for more women in leadership roles within the EU. **ELIŠKA KODYŠOVÁ**, Chairwoman of the Czech Women's Lobby and Director of Aperio, spoke on taking a bottom-up approach in order to promote gender equality and bring it onto the mainstage of politics in the Czech Republic. She said this is vital to have a balanced perspective on policy issues. **PÉTER BALÁZS**, professor at the Central European University, former EU Commissioner and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, also spoke about the need for more women in leadership across the EU as well as certain national leaders' concerted choices

not to include more women. Looking at the growing divisions within the EU spurred on by nationalist and pro-sovereignty leaders, Balázs believes *the unique and beneficial way women handle problem-solving is needed*.

Coalition Building After Brexit

With Brexit looming, an area which deserves special attention is coalition building as the power dynamics within the EU are primed to be substantially disrupted in its wake. The discussion breakfast on 29 May 2019 hosted by the Embassy of Romania was focused on the implications of Brexit for coalition building within the EU moving forward.

LUCINDA CREIGHTON, former Irish Minister for European Affairs and CEO of Vulcan Consulting, was hopeful that the march of populism, the hard left, and the hard right might be more muted than anticipated as illustrated by the European elections, which she believes were "not as catastrophic" as the pro-European citizens or the media predicted. Additionally, the continued difficulties of the Brexit process leaves room for hope that the Eurosceptics who support Brexit might come to see it as a failed project in the future. *Creighton also believes that the shambles Brexit has fallen into may have influenced some of the populist party rhetoric throughout the EU and pointed out that none of the more influential populist parties are currently calling for their country to leave the EU*. Nevertheless, she maintained that the prospect of Brexit is very distressing to her as a neighbor of the UK and that the UK leaving the EU would surely be a catastrophe.

However, **BARBARA LIPPERT**, Director of Research and the Executive Board at Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, believes Brexit is not the most relevant issue, as far as consensus and coalition building goes. While the prospect of the UK leaving the EU has caused the Eurocentric crowd pain, the UK has played a largely bystander role in the EU in her belief. She illustrated her point by maintaining that coalition building is quite a common thing within the EU. There has been an increase in consensus building across Europe in the last few years, partially as a result of European enlargement, that will continue regardless of Brexit. She also pointed out that there are established cleavages within the EU in relation to cultures, the monetary union, and so on that can contribute to the continued increase of subgroups of like-minded countries with similar interests.

Lippert and Political Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Romania **STEFAN TINCA** both addressed the empty power position the UK will leave in the EU, ending what Lippert referred to as the “informal trilateral leadership” between the UK, Germany, and France. Since the UK has largely stood in opposition to the “supranationalization” of defense policies, Lippert said *the defensive readiness of the EU may change as a result of Brexit*.

Tinca added to this by outlining four security issues that would be at a major loss with Brexit from an Eastern European perspective: the Trans-Atlantic relationship, Russia, the Western Balkans, and the Middle East. However, he believes Brexit and the resulting empty power position will open the possibility for an ad-hoc coalition of medium sized states to take on this role, which could disrupt the paradigmatic view of Europe as being more for either big or small states.

Atlantic Challenges

The relationship between the United States and the European Union is going through a very complicated period. The current functioning of NATO and its future is at the center of this tension. Donald Trump previously dismissed NATO as obsolete and expressed doubt that the future of the EU matters much for the United States. What will be the development of Euro-Atlantic relations? To what extent are Euro-Atlantic relations damaged?

This discussion breakfast hosted by the Institute for Politics and Society on 29 May 2019 featured **REKA SZEMERKÉNYI**, Executive Vice President of the Center for European Policy Analysis, **TONY BARBER**, Europe Editor for the *Financial Times* and **CHARLES GRANT**, Director of the Centre for European Reform. Moderating was **JAN MACHÁČEK**, Chairman of the Board for the Institute for Politics and Society.

Macháček introduced topics related to Atlantic Challenges, including fear of a trade war, the introduction of tariffs on steel and aluminum and disputes between the US and Germany concerning the German-Russian pipeline. He pointed out that the US's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear agreement as another development in the US and EU's relationship. Chinese interests on the trade market and cyber security issues are also one of the main aspects that form the Atlantic challenges.

Barber began by outlining Trump's administration, which contains many contradictory ideas and impulses. In his point of view, Washington is concentrated more obviously on Central and Eastern Europe, considering the annexation of Crimea and war at Donbas. In his opinion, America needs to focus more on NATO and its priorities. He also remarked on Donald Trump's distaste for international alliances. Donald Trump's administration is much different from his predecessors. Firstly, it is his skepticism towards international organizations and secondly his attitude to Germany – no president since the administration of Mr. Roosevelt had such a bad personal relationship with Germany as Trump does.

Szemerkenyi thinks it is necessary to observe the problems that are popping up and what they are showcasing regarding transatlantic challenges. She accentuated the US's growing interest in resolving the very

serious problems of NATO. One of the difficulties she mentioned was the divergence of assessment by both sides, which necessitates more serious discussion and common assessment. She believes *if we want to take the challenges seriously, we have to refocus on very basic priorities*. It brings us to the new understating of possibilities, which can be seen in the US Congress. In her opinion, Congress has never been as open to the debate of Russian threats as it is now.

Grant believes the world is changing in Russia's direction, calling out leaders such as Viktor Orbán and Marine le Pen and claiming that it is their Euroscepticism that is dividing Europe's priorities. Furthermore, they neglect human rights and democratic principles. To find solutions to the Atlantic Challenges, the world powers have to settle the economic problems not only in the European region related to the Eurozone, but worldwide. In his opinion, *the future of the Atlantic Challenges depends on how we handle climate change, the future of the trade market, and dealing with Euroscepticism*.

The audience brought up some interesting questions following the speakers' remarks. The first audience member pointed out that more and more Germans trust China or Russia instead of America. Barber said that former president Obama was very popular in Germany. On the contrary, Donald Trump's popularity is at the lowest level. In fact, the attitudes of German society reflect not only the presidential administration, but also their approach to international responsibilities.

Grant was asked about the possibility of the re-election of Donald Trump as president and if this could soften his attitude toward the European Union. Grant proclaimed that *Donald Trump does not believe in the EU and never will. A segregated Europe means a stronger America*. That is the main reason he does not believe that Trump will change his stance as regards the EU.

Chinese Influence in (Central) Europe

Between the 16 plus 1 plan to expand cooperation between Beijing and EU member states and China's Belt and Road Initiative, Chinese activity in Europe has been increasing significantly in the past years. However, Chinese investment has recently declined and relations with some European states have been strained somewhat over ICT technologies. During the discussion breakfast on 29 May 2019 hosted by the American Center, speakers shared their opinions on what Beijing's influence could mean for Central Europe.

Association for International Affairs Analyst **IVANA KARÁSKOVÁ**, who also acts as project coordinator for ChinfluenCE, said that when looking at what China is doing internationally and domestically, it is clear that the EU has little information as to what China actually wants. China's authoritarian regime, coupled with its competition with the US, had Karásková asking if China has a conspiracy against the West or if it is a big misunderstanding. She referenced *China's strategic interest in Czech media companies as a means to polish its image in the region*. Ultimately, she believes that China is a both a friend and a foe to the EU.

When it came to China's access to the European market, Karásková doesn't think China will achieve its goals. **LAURENT ZYLBERBERG**, Director of Institutional, International and European Affairs at Caisse des Dépôts and Chairman of the European Long Term Investors Association, looked at the issue from another perspective: Why is China interested in Europe? He followed that with a two-fold question: Does the EU need money? And does the EU need assistance? *While Europe is in need of projects and financial enablers, it is unclear if China is coming to help finance Europe or to help finance themselves and their projects*, he said. Many of China's investments involve infrastructure and China uses many of its own materials and labor. Funds could also come in the form of equity, loans for projects, and so on. *While it may be ambiguous if Chinese investment is a geopolitical project or a financial initiative*, Zylberberg did say that *if China is willing to take a risk by helping Europe financially, there must be a good reason why*.



URBAN TALKS

The Urban Talks are debates held in the framework of the Prague European Summit which are open to experts, academics, businesses, journalists, the public, students and young people. They bring the Prague European Summit closer to the public who do not get to attend the Prague European Summit panels at the Czernin Palace. The Urban Talks were held on 27-29 May 2019, each day witnessing one public debate, two in Prague (in the European House and DOX Centre for Contemporary Art) and one in Brno (in Industra). The main aim of the talks was to hold open discussions about the challenges which Europe is facing nowadays, and find common answers to the key questions in particular areas with high-level speakers brought to the public audience.

BIG DATA, INFORMATION AND POLITICS Disinformation in Focus

Considering the effects of disinformation on the European elections and democratic institutions, speakers put forward some suggestions and solutions on how to deal with this problem. They looked at the

negative impact that false information created by the Russian media has had on Brexit, the independence of Catalonia and the refugee crisis in Europe, as well as why Europe should choose Google and Microsoft instead of Huawei.

ŽIGA TURK, a professor from the University of Ljubljana and former Minister for Growth as well as Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports in the Government of Slovenia, argued that in the era of new technology, *Europe needs new ways to manage the exchange of information, because fake news can directly change government policies and the media that make fake news have never been punished.*

Director of Re-Define **LINDA ZEILINA** focused on the situation of Latvian media before Latvia joined the EU. She pointed out that *the problem facing Central and Eastern European countries is that nearly half of the people do not believe the information released by the government.* Atlantic Council member **JAKUB KALENSKÝ** mentioned

how the Russian media made false information to interfere with the 2019 Ukrainian presidential election and said that it is difficult to punish the Russian media that make fake news since EU countries rarely invest in them.

The three speakers agreed that the government should publish official documents and policies in a timely manner to avoid the spread of rumors. In addition, the flow of information should not be controlled by the government or be monopolized by private capital. Finally, they advocated that individuals and media that disseminate false information should be punished accordingly.

BIG DATA, INFORMATION AND POLITICS

New Technologies in Focus

The second debate of the Urban Talks series was held at the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art. Speakers included **JAKUB JAŇURA**, Big Data Expert at the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, **WOJTEK TALKO**, Advisor and Member of the Cabinet of Commissioner Věra Jourová, and **ADELA ZÁBRAŽNÁ**, Executive Manager at the Slovak Alliance for the Innovative Economy.

All of them had a positive approach to using Big Data and considered its use unavoidable, but the question is its misuse. According to Talko, we do not realize that no service is free. Big companies are telling us they are using our data for optimization when they are actually using it for advertising. Jaňura described the chain for information as collecting, capitalization, information becoming a product and selling of the product.

The main question they asked was: should every country have its own regulations? One way is to create an independent body to regulate the use of personal data. Currently the EU and the Czech Republic are working on legislation to protect customers from misuse. According to Zábrazná, the problem is that we do not have the digital single market yet and it is too expensive for new companies and start-ups to handle

the different laws of each member state. So, they go to the USA or Asia to start the project and then they come back to Europe.

Reflections on the Results of the European Parliamentary Elections

This talk was held in Brno, the Czech Republic's second largest city and known as the city of students, and brought discussions about the integration process and current EU issues to the wider public as well as to the younger generation. The recent EP elections present numerous questions pertaining not only to the future five years of the European Parliament, but also for the future of the European Union as a whole. The discussion was moderated by **HELENA TRUČLÁ**, editor of online portal Aktuálně.cz and the daily journal Hospodářské noviny.

At first, the panelists tried to identify winners and losers of the election. **LARISSA BRUNNER**, Policy Analyst of the European Policy Centre in Brussels, explained that this is not easy to specify due to the diversity of the results across the EU. Speakers agreed that the increase of Green parties in the EP will bring fresh air and could lead to positive steps.

Another big question was the fragmentation in the EP, which will probably create challenges. Speakers also spoke about the voter turnout in the elections. In Czech Republic and Slovakia, the turnout was generally low, but higher than at the last elections. **LUCIE MOKRÁ**, Dean of the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences at Comenius University, believed that more people were aware of the importance of the elections this time.

Regarding the Eurosceptic parties, **JAN KOVÁŘ**, senior researcher at the Institute of International Relations in Prague, posited that they will not have a big influence on EP decision making, because these parties will not be in the positions where it would be possible for them to change some legislation or the direction of the EU's thinking.



PARTNERS



THE OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS work to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. To achieve this mission, the foundations seek to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. On a local level, the Open Society Foundations implement a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health, and independent media. At the same time, they build alliances across borders and continents on issues such as corruption and freedom of information. The foundations place a high priority on protecting and improving the lives of people in marginalized communities. Investor and philanthropist George Soros established the Open Society Foundations, starting in 1984, to help countries make the transition from communism. Their activities have grown to encompass the United States and more than 60 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Each foundation relies on the expertise of boards composed of eminent citizens who determine individual agendas based on local priorities. The Open Society Initiative for Europe aims to contribute to more vibrant and legitimate democracies in the European Union by supporting the activists and civil society organizations confronting Europe's many challenges. In a time of disillusionment and uncertainty, the Open Society Initiative for Europe endeavors to strengthen the rights, voice, and democratic power of society's least privileged groups, and thus make democracy work better for all in Europe. We support organizations that channel active participation in democracy by majorities and minorities alike, and that uphold open society values, particularly in places where the rollback of civil and political rights is most severe.



STRATOS AUTO

STRATOS AUTO LTD. was established in 1994, when it launched its activity as a small family company on the Czech market, where it later progressively expanded. Nowadays, it employs more than 150 employees in its divisions (Iveco, BMW and Fiat Professional). A significant recognition of the company was provided by its winning the tender for the position of the new BMW dealer in the Pardubice district, through which the third showroom of BMW STRATOS AUTO in Pardubice will be built within two years.

The BMW division offers its services in the most modern showrooms in Prague – namely those in Prosek as well as in Hradec Kralove. It is an AUTHORIZED DEALER OF BMW, BMW i, and BMW Motorrad vehicles and a CERTIFIED DEALER of BMW M vehicles. It is also one of the largest dealers of BMW vehicles in the Czech Republic. It provides the maximum possible transparency and a premium customer approach for you and your BMW. The company was also awarded the prize for the best M-Certified dealer of BMW vehicles in Eastern Europe.

The shuttle service for the Summit will be secured by ten innovative BMW 5 limousines, which will be complemented by five exceptionally comfortable X5 vehicles. With both the character of the BMW X model and its sporty style, the BMW X5 surpasses all boundaries. The new BMW Line 5 has been chosen because it symbolizes a perfect combination of sporty dynamics and an elegant appearance. The BMW Line 5 establishes a new set of benchmarks, and utilizes the most modern technologies at the same time, and it is a joy to drive it. IT PROVIDES A TOP-CLASS OUTPUT WITH A BUSINESS DESIGN.



THE MUSIC AND DANCE FACULTY (HAMU) of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague was established in 1945 as one of the Academy's three components, following on from the Prague Conservatory master school (the second oldest institution of its kind in Europe). HAMU is located in the heart of Prague's historic centre, in the premises of Lichtenstein Palace and Hartig Palace. HAMU cooperates with domestic professional artistic circles, the partners are prominent orchestras (The Czech Philharmonic (ČF), PKF – Prague Philharmonia The Prague Symphony Orchestra FOK), festivals (The Prague Spring International Music Festival, Dvořákova Praha, Smetanova Litomyšl), and many theatres and media organisations.

Public presentations of students' academic work are held in HAMU's own premises which spread over two historical buildings of the Lichtenstein Palace and Hartig Palace. Concerts and conferences are held in Martinů Hall and the HAMU Gallery; stage and jazz performances are held in the Inspiration Theatre which is also a part of the Lichtenstein Palace campus. The school has its own sound and recording studio, library, practice rooms, and detached training facilities

The school provides top-level education in music and dance programmes at all three academic levels (3-year Bachelor's Programme, 2-year Continuing Master's Programme and 3-year Doctoral Programme) in both Czech and English. In the Art of Music study programme the fields of study provided in English are composition; conducting; voice and opera directing; keyboard, wind, string and percussion instruments; chamber music and jazz interpretation; sound design and music management. Students in most fields can earn a teaching credential. In the Art of Dance programme, instruction is provided in choreography, dance science, dance pedagogy and non-verbal theatre.

PARTNERS



The CSU-associated **HANNS SEIDEL FOUNDATION** is a German party-associated foundation. It was founded in November 1966. Since its foundation in the year 1967, the Hanns Seidel Foundation practices political education with the aim of supporting the "democratic and civic education of the German people with a Christian basis", as the foundation's statutes say.

For its numerous seminars, conferences, conventions and cultural events, the Hanns Seidel Foundation can utilize the new Conference Center Munich along with the educational center of the Banz Monastery. Most of the seminars are conducted at the Banz monastery Training Center. Further events are held at the Munich Conference Center and in various parts of Bavaria.

The Hanns Seidel Foundation is a respected global partner on issues of democracy, the rule of law and contacts with Germany. Global challenges today can only be tackled through global cooperation. One player in this process is the Institute for International Cooperation, with projects in over 60 countries worldwide. The aim of this international engagement, which is based on Christian social ideals, is to promote humane living conditions and to contribute to sustainable development by strengthening peace, democracy and social market economies.



PRAGUE is the capital city of the Czech Republic and the centre of politics, international relations, education, culture and the economy of the country. It is the seat of the supreme legislative, administrative and political bodies of the state. Prague has a population of over 1 200 000 inhabitants and is visited daily by over 100 000 tourists. The head of the City is the elected Mayor of Prague – since 2018 Mr Zdeněk Hřib.

The main body of the city administration is Prague City Assembly comprising of seventy members. 11 of them form Prague City Council. There is a four-year term in office. The executive authority is Prague City Hall with specialized departments and units. The operation of the City and the services for its inhabitants and visitors is ensured by 90 organizations and businesses, established by the City of Prague.

Prague is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Its uniquely preserved historical centre, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1992, reflects eleven centuries of history. This culturally rich city full of fabulous monuments charms visitors not only with its impressive and diverse architecture and breath-taking views, but also its intimate, romantic atmosphere that is ideal for long walks. Prague is a city of (not just classical) music and art, found here at every step, a city of gardens and parks, and last but not least, a city where the best beer in the world is brewed and savoured.



LINDNER HOTEL PRAGUE CASTLE is a charming hotel set in a historic building dating back to the 16th century, nestled in the historical and tranquil grounds of Strahov Monastery. Perfectly located within sight of Prague Castle or Petrin tower (sometimes so-called "Czech Eiffel Tower") and in short distance from Charles Bridge, Lesser Square and other Prague sights, attractions and well-known restaurants. Vaclav Havel's international airport is only 12 km and 20 minutes by car away.

Beautifully appointed fittings and friendly service combined to an unforgettable experience amidst Prague's most charming location. Lindner Hotel Prague Castle offers 138 guest rooms including 6 spacious suites and 8 First class rooms. All rooms are designed with taste and to take full advantage of the exceptional heritage building. Standard room amenities include individually adjustable air-conditioning, bathroom with bathtub, comfortably designed working desk with phone, tea, and coffee making facilities, LCD screen with Sat-TV, safe and minibar. For all hotel guests, there is a free entry to sauna and fitness room.

The hotel is the perfect venue for exclusive meetings or social events. There are 4 flexible meeting venues with a maximum capacity of up to 200 guests. Spacious garden restaurant SENSES, cozy bar MUSE, and summer terrace will meet all catering requirements. Library with artificial fireplace shelters guests from the noise of the hectic life inviting to relax. The exclusive usage of the meeting and the dining area can be agreed.

PARTNERS

PRECIOSA

PRECIOSA is a leading international glass manufacturer. For decades it has brought, and continues to bring, new blood to the art of glassmaking through creative ideas, colour and our brilliant glass and crystal components. Preciosa designs one-of-a-kind, awe-inspiring chandeliers and elegant jewellery. People in over 140 countries worldwide admire its craft.



THE FRIEDRICH-EBERT-STIFTUNG (FES) is the oldest political foundation in Germany with a rich tradition in social democracy dating back to its foundation in 1925. The foundation owes its formation and its mission to the political legacy of its namesake Friedrich Ebert, the first democratically elected German President. The work of the FES focuses on the core ideas and values of social democracy – freedom, justice and solidarity. This connects us to social democracy and free trade unions. As a non-profit institution, we organize our work autonomously and independently.



EVENTIVAL was founded in 2009 to fill the gap in the film festival industry that needed affordable, professional tool for the planning and organisation of film festivals. Initially a simple application for small events, the platform eventually grew into an all-in-one solution that empowers festival teams in all stages of the event, helping them simplify their planning, improve their organisation, increase their visibility and impact and provide better services to their professional visitors and regular audience.

Eventival is present at most prominent film festivals and markets and works closely with its clients' teams to constantly improve the platform's tools. It has a unique position in the film industry – a company whose relevance is centered around its software but whose real products are its outstanding skills, knowledge and experience. While most of its clients are film festivals and events, its software is also used by music festivals, conferences and cultural, social and business events.



FRANCO-CZECH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE unites more than 300 French, Czech and multinational member companies. It is a platform for the development of the French-Czech community, trade and cultural relations between the two countries, and the supporters of the idea of an open Europe. The Chamber's team organises debate lunches and conferences, cultural and social events or sports tournaments for its members and the public. The Chamber provides consulting and other services to Czech and French companies that want to start a business in a new market.



THE TRANS EUROPEAN POLICY STUDIES ASSOCIATION (TEPSA) is the first transeuropean research network in the field of European affairs. It consists of leading research institutes in the field of European affairs throughout Europe, with an office in Brussels. TEPSA is an international non-profit association under Belgian law (AISBL) and was established in 1974. Ever since then it has steadily increased its membership in response to the enlargement rounds of the European Union. Today TEPSA consists of 41 member institutes and associate members located in 35 European countries.

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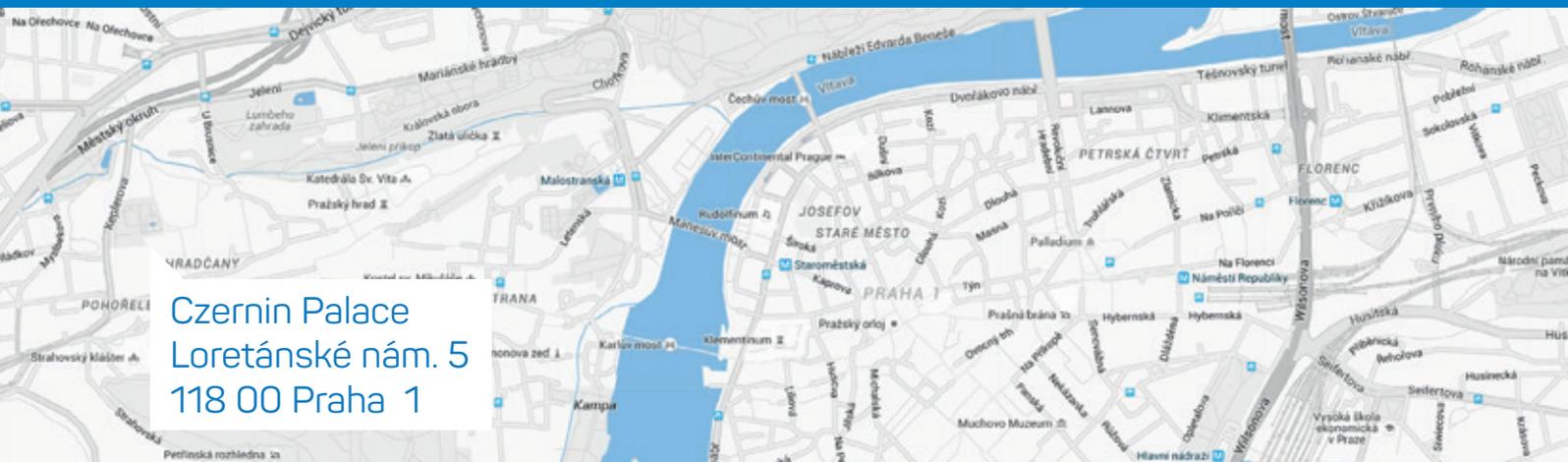
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