

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

6<sup>th</sup> October 2023, Prague

# **MULTIPLE CHALLENGES FOR TRANSATLANTIC PARTNERSHIPS 2023**

**REPORTS**



**FRIEDRICH NAUMANN  
FOUNDATION** For Freedom.







# Table of CONTENTS

**4** BUSINESS BREAKFAST:  
US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2024  
AND ITS IMPACT ON TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

**8** INTRODUCTION

**10** KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

**12** EU – US ECONOMIC RELATIONS:  
ON THE VERGE OF SUBSIDY WAR

**18** EU – US POLITICAL RELATIONS:  
GEOPOLITICAL PARTNERS WITH DIVERGENT  
INCLINATIONS

**26** EU – US SECURITY RELATIONS:  
THE AFTERMATH OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

**36** EUROPEAN LIBERAL FORUM

**37** FRIEDRICH NAUMANN FOUNDATION FOR FREEDOM

**38** INSTITUTE FOR POLITICS AND SOCIETY

**39** CONTACT





## BUSINESS BREAKFAST

# US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2024 AND ITS IMPACT ON TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS



**CHARLES A. KUPCHAN**  
Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations (USA)



**TIMMY DOOLEY**  
Co-President of the ALDE party (Republic of Ireland)



**KRYŠTOF KOZÁK**  
Department of North American Studies, Institute of International Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences Charles University



**IRENA KRCHÁKOVÁ**  
MODERATOR  
Editor, Czech Television (Czech Republic)

## INTRODUCTION

The upcoming US presidential election in November 2024 is already generating immense anticipation on a global scale. President Biden has officially declared his intent to seek re-election, while former President Trump has also thrown his hat into the ring. The world is once again captivated by the spectacle of American democracy in action, recognizing that the occupant of the Oval Office wields influence not only within the United States but across the entire international stage. The US presidential election holds significance for transatlantic relations, casting a long shadow over foreign and security policy decisions. Europe will watch closely for its implications on critical matters, such as the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the extent of American support for victory in the struggle against Russia.

## WHAT DOES JOE BIDEN BRING TO THE TABLE, AND IS HE STILL WINNING AMERICAN INTEREST FOR THE PRESIDENCY?

**“Biden offers continuation, steadiness, a proper understanding of US foreign policy and America’s place in the world as well as the concept of bridge-building. What he does not have is time, and the signs are showing.”**



TIMMY DOOLEY

Biden’s age seems to be a problem for many American voters. However, the American people also recognize other problems affecting their choice between Biden and Trump. Charles A. Kupchan, Senior Fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations (USA), explains the fundamental friction within US society nowadays: *“The next US election can be seen in the context of other tribal battles taking place. The US population seems to be divided between the traditional wealthy ruling class and a disaffected class left behind.”* This disaffected group consists of the white population without a college education, which makes up around 42 % of the American electorate. *“The American working class has seen a secular decline in their welfare in the series of decades and this is what dysfunction in the US is all about and Biden knows about it,”* adds Kupchan.

Domestic policy and economic situation are two major determinants of an average American voter’s choice of who to vote for in the next election. Kryštof Kozák, a Political Scientist at Charles University (Czech Republic), points out the so-called Bidenomics and Biden’s good job on the unemployment rate. *“He is not naive; he has a skilled team and tries to push his favor through economics.”*

One of Biden’s greatest suits is that he is the “real deal”. Kupchan points out that Biden is a “regular guy who means well, what you see is what you get.” In terms of his vulnerabilities, he mentions the growing inflation and immigration. *“Bidenomics has worked but day-to-day life is expensive. Economy overall is going well but regular Americans do not feel it.”*

## WILL DONALD TRUMP’S APPROACH BE A WINNING STRATEGY IN AMERICAN POLITICS?

*“He offers a worry to us,”* Timmy Dooley replies shortly. He perceives Donald Trump as a politician who can be described by his divisiveness. The divisiveness through which he seeks is to identify minorities and demonize them as negative for US society. *“For him, it is all about winning,”* he adds. *“He does not have an ideology and is able to demonize any part of society or social issues if it means it will get him 50 % + 1 vote in the election.”*

Charles A. Kupchan develops this question more profoundly: *“If there is a silver lining to Donald Trump, it is that he delivered a wake-up call.”*



Trump is a very talented politician who knows how to play to the crowd, and he should not be underestimated. *“Playing the racist card and doing the white supremacy thing actually works.”*

In Kryštof Kozák’s perspective, Trump has this dubious advantage of trying to be a strong man, and in times of crises, the natural instinct of people is to follow strong leaders who will get them over the crisis even if they do not abide by rules, and that is a crucial appeal of Trump.

## WHAT IS THE STANCE OF THE TRANSATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP ON THE WAR IN UKRAINE?

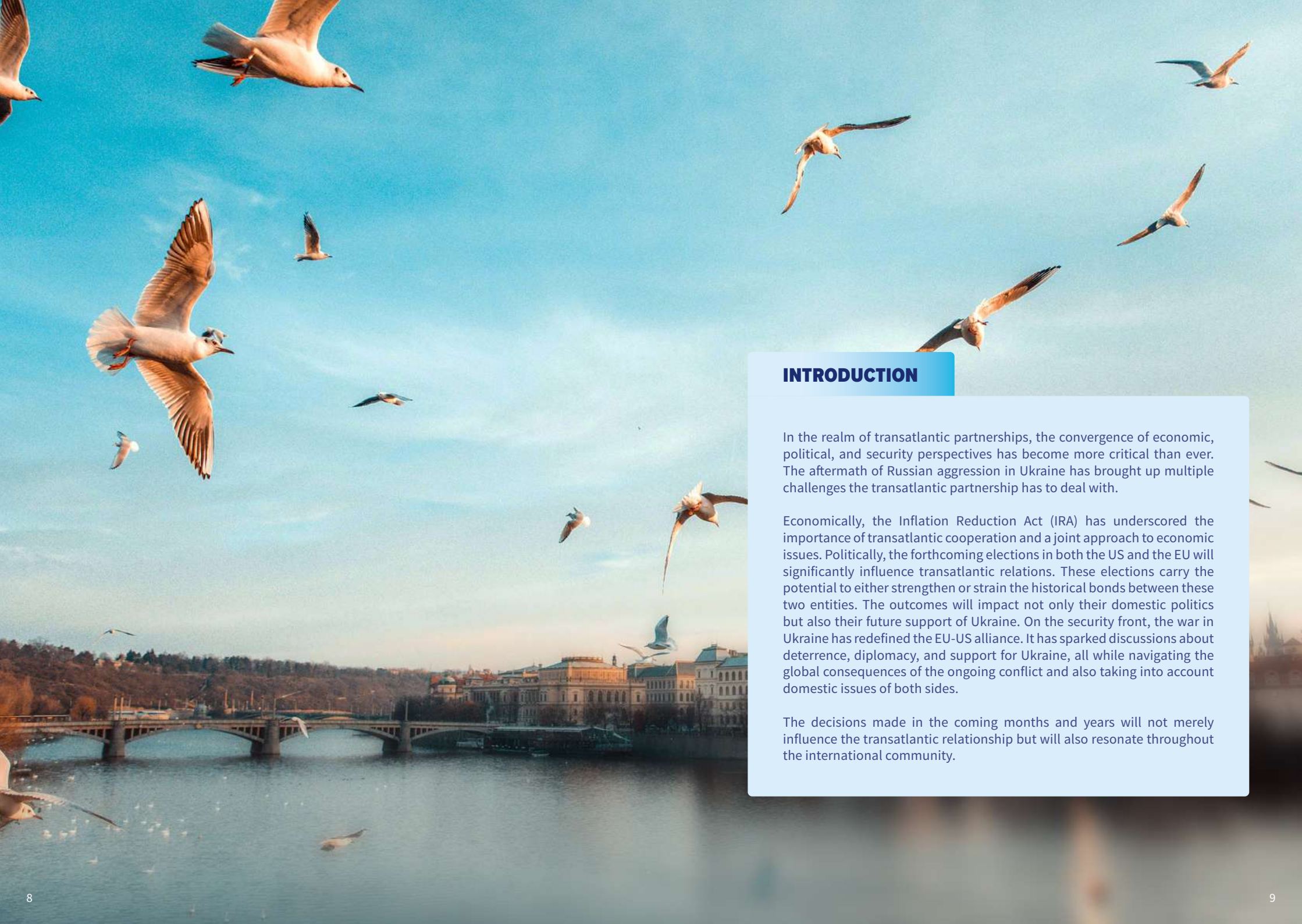
*“There is attention between aspirations and reality in Ukraine. We are gonna win in Ukraine and we are gonna do it for as long as it takes, but that kind of articulation brings a question how? At some point we need a conversation that is more about how we bring this*

*war to an end in a way that is as most advantageous to Ukraine as possible even if that does not mean a full restoration of sovereignty now,”* stresses Charles A. Kupchan.

With Biden, the conflict in Ukraine could prolong and turn into a frozen conflict. *“He won’t abandon Ukraine and won’t allow Ukraine to fall, but they do not have a clear endgame,”* adds Kozák. Concerning transatlantic relations, he points out that Biden’s protectionist policies, like the IRA (Inflation Reduction Act), have been politically a major improvement, but in terms of economic link with Europe, the impact is rather negative. *“Biden’s administration could have distinguished more that economic relations with Europe are different than with China, and Biden could have done more to strengthen them.”*

Dooley ends this topic with a statement that Europe does not speak with the same voice on military offensive positions as the US, and without the US, NATO is going nowhere.





## INTRODUCTION

In the realm of transatlantic partnerships, the convergence of economic, political, and security perspectives has become more critical than ever. The aftermath of Russian aggression in Ukraine has brought up multiple challenges the transatlantic partnership has to deal with.

Economically, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) has underscored the importance of transatlantic cooperation and a joint approach to economic issues. Politically, the forthcoming elections in both the US and the EU will significantly influence transatlantic relations. These elections carry the potential to either strengthen or strain the historical bonds between these two entities. The outcomes will impact not only their domestic politics but also their future support of Ukraine. On the security front, the war in Ukraine has redefined the EU-US alliance. It has sparked discussions about deterrence, diplomacy, and support for Ukraine, all while navigating the global consequences of the ongoing conflict and also taking into account domestic issues of both sides.

The decisions made in the coming months and years will not merely influence the transatlantic relationship but will also resonate throughout the international community.





## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

If we want to preserve our democratic values, we have to protect them. And that is the case of the war in Ukraine. The Ukrainian people are not merely defending their territory; they are safeguarding their democratic identity, thereby uniting the world behind the principles of self-determination and human dignity. Democracy is neither a default nor a guaranteed state of governance. The path toward democratic societies has been paved with struggle, sacrifice, and an unwavering belief in the values of liberty and equality. *“Our financial interplay, wherein the US invests four times more in the EU than in the entire Asia-Pacific region and the EU invests ten times more in the US than in India and China combined, is not just an investment in economies but a profound investment in trust, belief, and a shared future,”* Timmy Dooley, Co-President of the ALDE party (Republic of Ireland), comments on the current economic bonds between the US and the European Union.



**TIMMY DOOLEY**  
Co-President of the ALDE party  
(Republic of Ireland)



**KAREL HAVLÍČEK**  
Vice-Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies of  
the Parliament of the Czech Republic (Czech  
Republic)

**“It is simple. There is a struggle between good and evil. Between terror and brutality on one side and freedom and democracy on the other.”**



TIMMY DOOLEY

**“Without providing and taking care of the needs of our citizens it might be increasingly difficult to make them see the benefits of transatlantic partnerships.”**



KAREL HAVLÍČEK

**“Together we can navigate the complexities of our time from economic disputes to geopolitical challenges.”**



KAREL HAVLÍČEK

**“The Russian aggression has reignited the transatlantic alliance.”**



TIMMY DOOLEY





# EU - US ECONOMIC RELATIONS ON THE VERGE OF SUBSIDY WAR



**SIGRID KAAG**

Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance (The Netherlands)



**WESTON STACEY**

Executive Director, American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic (USA)



**KAREL LANNOO**

Chief Executive Officer, Centre for European Policy Studies (Belgium)



**JAN MACHÁČEK**

Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Institute for Politics and Society (Czech Republic)



**SIGRID KAAG**

Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance (The Netherlands)



**WESTON STACEY**

Executive Director, American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic (USA)



**KAREL LANNOO**

Chief Executive Officer, Centre for European Policy Studies (Belgium)



**JAN MACHÁČEK**

Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Institute for Politics and Society (Czech Republic)



**MATEUSZ M. PIOTROWSKI**

MODERATOR

Senior Analyst for U.S. Policy & Transatlantic Relations, Polish Institute of International Affairs (Poland)

## ECONOMIC DIMENSION

# EU – US ECONOMIC RELATIONS: ON THE VERGE OF SUBSIDY WAR

## INTRODUCTION

Transatlantic relations have assumed a new dimension with the introduction of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). This groundbreaking legislation aims to tackle rising inflation by implementing a series of measures designed to stabilize the US economy. In this context, understanding the implications of this act on transatlantic cooperation and economic dynamics becomes essential.

## ARE WE ON THE VERGE OF A SUBSIDY WAR?

*“I never believed it was a subsidy war,”* states Sigrid Kaag, Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister (The Netherlands), expresses her belief that the IRA was not the beginning of a subsidy war and highlights its benefits to European companies.

Karel Lannoo, Chief Executive Officer Centre for European Policy Studies (Belgium), echoes this sentiment, emphasizing that the real competition lies in a global subsidy race involving China, the US, and the EU. He also stresses the need for the EU to address its own issues before criticizing the US and celebrates the US’s commitment to green its economy.

Jan Macháček, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Institute for Politics and Society (Czech Republic), however, takes a more skeptical view of the IRA. He argues that technological progress thrives through the competition of private companies and market forces, cautioning against heavy subsidies in an open global trading system.

**“We should be a little bit more lenient and assertive and confident as a European Union.”**



SIGRID KAAG

## WHAT DOES BUSINESS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT IT?

Weston Stacey, Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic (USA), shifts the focus to the perspective of US businesses, stating that the US is not on the verge of a subsidy war but is in the midst of a significant technological transition. Stacey stresses that the US recognizes the climate threat and that companies need to reevaluate their products and production methods. The IRA is also about putting a lot of money into new sustainable technologies and technological development to cope with climate change. He emphasizes the importance of investing collaboratively to become technological leaders and urges a collective approach to the growing Chinese threat.

Kaag chimes in again, emphasizing the need for a competitive EU response and trust in the transatlantic relationship. She notes that while there is a challenge that requires an EU-level response, unity within Europe regarding the financial aspects remains elusive. She also highlights the importance of remembering the emerging markets in the Global South. The conversation pivots to the role of China, with Lannoo stating that China is a central factor in the IRA’s introduction and a pressing issue for both the EU and the US. He notes the lack of a formal trade agreement between the EU and the US but stresses the strength of their trade and investment relationship.



**“The IRA may have caught the EU by surprise but the friendship is strong enough to respond with the maturity of our response.”**



SIGRID KAAG

**“The whole game is sustainable technologies that will allow us to mitigate climate change.”**



WESTON STACEY

Despite some government disputes, Stacey stresses the strengthening of private-sector relations between the EU and the US. He underlines the significance of sustainable technologies and the US government’s involvement in subsidizing companies in this sector. The Trade and Technology Council (TTC) comes into focus, with the discussion centering on its prospects in transatlantic relations. Kaag advocates for the institutionalization of the TTC to facilitate organized dialogue at both the EU and US federal government levels.

**“Are we mature enough? What do we want to be when we grow up as Europeans?”**



SIGRID KAAG





**“Our power on the financial market is limited by our political will to move forward on these issues.”**



SIGRID KAAG

Macháček emphasizes the importance of freedom and free trade, advocating for simpler rules and lower regulations. However, Kaag and Stacey disagree, highlighting democracy's essence as the ability to compromise.



Effective management of the IRA and the broader relationship between the US and the EU requires a commitment to cooperation, shared values, and strategic thinking. By working together, these two powerful actors can overcome challenges and continue to be leaders in the global arena.

#### WE RECOMMEND

- Both sides should enhance communication and high-level dialogues.
- Coordinated investments in clean energy, green infrastructure, and sustainable innovation can create shared goals and strengthen economic ties. Encouraging collaboration between EU and US companies, researchers, and institutions.
- Work together to resolve trade disputes through negotiation rather than resorting to tariffs and sanctions.
- Recognize China's global influence and work together to create a unified approach to address challenges posed by China's economic practices and global presence. This could include coordinated trade policies, cybersecurity efforts, and intellectual property protection.
- Focus on economic cooperation rather than competition. Joint investments in critical industries, infrastructure, and research can strengthen economic ties and help alleviate the economic impact of the IRA.

**JEFFREY GEDMIN**  
Acting President,  
Radio-Free Europe/Radio Liberty  
(USA)



**JEFFREY GEDMIN**  
Acting President, Radio Free Europe/Radio  
Liberty (USA)



**LIISA-LY PAKOSTA**  
Chairwoman, Parliamentary Committee for  
the European Union Affairs (Estonia)



**STEPHEN B. LONG**  
Associate Professor, University of Richmond  
(USA)



**LARS-ANDRÉ RICHTER**  
Project Director Central Europe and the  
Baltic States, Friedrich Naumann Foundation  
for Freedom (Germany)



**IRENA KRCHÁKOVÁ**  
MODERATOR  
Editor, Czech Television (Czech Republic)

## POLITICAL DIMENSION

# EU – US POLITICAL RELATIONS: GEOPOLITICAL PARTNERS WITH DIVERGENT INCLINATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

In the realm of EU-US political relations, the transatlantic partnership faces a complex environment with some divergent inclinations. The ongoing War in Ukraine has become a test for the strength of this partnership. The upcoming elections in both the European Union and the United States are poised to have a significant impact on its future trajectory.



## HOW CAN THE US 2024 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION REFLECT ON THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN UKRAINE?

Jeffrey Gedmin, Acting President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (USA), emphasizes that the conflict in Ukraine has paradoxically united the Western nations more than ever before. However, he acknowledges that the counteroffensive against Russian aggression has not yielded the desired results. He underscores the crucial role that the 2024 US elections will play in shaping the approach toward Ukraine, and the outcome may determine whether the partnership continues to stand strong in supporting Ukraine or slides toward a protracted frozen conflict there.

**“Ukraine needs more, urgently.”**



JEFFREY GEDMIN

Lars-André Richter, Project Director of Central Europe and the Baltic States at the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (Germany), points out that even after the resolution of the Ukrainian conflict, new challenges, especially regarding China, will emerge. Lisa-Ly Pakosta, Chairwoman of the Parliamentary Committee for the European Union Affairs (Estonia), observes that while there is unity among Western nations, it is insufficient, especially when compared to the efforts of the US and the UK in supporting Ukraine.

Stephen B. Long, Associate Professor at the University of Richmond (USA), raises concerns about the potential risks associated with the 2024 US election. The uncertainty surrounding Trump’s policy toward Ukraine could be dangerous. The conversation pivots to the role of China, with Lannoo stating that China is a central factor in the IRA’s introduction and a pressing issue for both the EU and the US. He notes the lack of a formal trade agreement between the EU and the US but stresses the strength of their trade and investment relationship.

**“If he is reelected, there is a significant risk of a US pullback or the sabotaging of ongoing efforts.”**



STEPHEN B. LONG

**“The 2024 election will be a huge risk.”**



STEPHEN B. LONG



**“If Donald Trump is elected again, Ukraine is in trouble.”**



JEFFREY GEDMIN

Jeffrey Gedmin delves deeper, suggesting that there is something not right in American politics. Regardless of whether Donald Trump returns to the office, the structural and cultural challenges in the US may persist, which could impact the partnership negatively. Pakosta emphasizes that NATO’s functionality should remain a top priority, regardless of the presidency, as the stability of Ukraine has repercussions for all of Europe. Richter expresses dire consequences if Trump were to be reelected, comparing it to a catastrophe.

**“Reelecting Trump would be a catastrophe not only for the US but also for the international community and the idea of the Western philosophy.”**



LARS-ANDRÉ RICHTER

## HAS THE UN FROZEN AGAIN AND WHAT IS THE PERCEPTION OF VLADIMIR PUTIN?

The conversation then shifts to the effectiveness of the United Nations, and Stephen B. Long describes the UN Security Council as resembling its Cold War ineffectiveness. The discussion characterizes the current state of the UN as a „sideshow.“ Russia’s persistent presence and use of its veto power hinder structural changes, leading to a Realpolitik approach in international affairs.

Gedmin highlights that the war in Ukraine is a prime example of how the UN Security Council often falls short. He regrets missing opportunities to arm Ukraine in 2014 and underscores the importance of having a clear vision for Ukraine’s future before allocating resources.

When it comes to assessing Putin’s position on the international stage, Stephen B. Long notes that Putin is rational in his own way, with goals that may not align with Western perspectives. Long believes that Putin will eventually find it rational to back away or claim victory on different terms.



**“The time to arm Ukraine was 2014 for defense and deterrence and we missed it.”**



JEFFREY GEDMIN

**“With all the transatlantic unity and all the supplies we provided, we have missed a clear vision of how this war will end and what is the vision for Ukraine.”**



JEFFREY GEDMIN

Lisa-Ly Pakosta and Jeffrey Gedmin both emphasize that Putin’s reputation is not a primary concern for him. They argue that Western economic sanctions do not have the desired impact because the Russian value system and culture differ significantly from Western values.

Lars-André Richter criticizes Putin’s regime, characterizing it as a propaganda-driven mafia. Despite his disdain, Richter warns against underestimating authoritarian regimes, as they are well-versed in Western tactics and strategies.

## WHY IS CHINA A REAL ISSUE AND HOW SHOULD THE TRANSATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP APPROACH IT?

In the context of the transatlantic partnership and its approach to China, Jeffrey Gedmin highlights the miscalculation of inviting China into international organizations, which failed to modify its behavior. The rise of China and its geopolitical ambitions necessitates a new template for handling the situation.

Stephen B. Long sees two existential challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: climate change and the rise of China. He stresses that total isolation of China is not an option and emphasizes the importance of economic interconnection in order to prevent conflict.





**“Right now we are stuck and we are awkward dancing partners with China and we never know when we’re going to land on their foot or they are gonna land on ours.”**



STEPHEN B. LONG

Lars-André Richter warns against becoming economically dependent on China and emphasizes the need for diversification to reduce China’s influence and mitigate risks.

In summary, the transatlantic partnership faces geopolitical challenges concerning Ukraine, the rise of China, and the effectiveness of international institutions. The outcome of elections in the US and the EU will play a pivotal role in shaping the partnership’s future course, while managing relations with China and Russia will require strategic thinking and a coordinated approach.



**“Winning in Ukraine is vital for Ukraine, it is vital for the whole region, and it is vital for global international peace and security.”**



JEFFREY GEDMIN

Lisa-Ly Pakosta discusses the EU’s de-risking policy toward China, aimed at minimizing risks in the partnership. Environmental concerns regarding China are also a significant part of this strategy.



## WE RECOMMEND

- Robust communication channels and regular high-level dialogues should be maintained to ensure a unified stance on critical issues.
- The partnership should work collectively to define a clear vision for the future of Ukraine. This includes determining the desired end state of the conflict and outlining concrete steps to achieve it.
- While recognizing China as a major geopolitical challenge, the partnership should work toward a unified approach. This entails balancing economic interdependence with the need to address concerns related to trade practices, intellectual property, and human rights.
- Transatlantic cooperation should continue to promote democracy, human rights, and shared values in its engagements with countries around the world.
- Beyond the transatlantic partnership, efforts should be made to foster global alliances with countries that share similar values and interests. Engaging with like-minded nations can amplify the partnership’s influence on the global stage.



# EU - US SECURITY RELATIONS THE AFTERMATH OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION



**CHARLES A. KUPCHAN**  
Senior Fellow,  
Council on Foreign Relations  
(USA)



**LAURYNAS KASČIŪNAS**  
Head, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Delegation  
(Lithuania)



**JAROSLAV BŽOCH**  
Vice-chairman, Parliamentary Committee on  
Foreign and European Affairs (Czech Republic)



**GRIGORE-KALEV STOICESCU**  
Diplomat and member of the Parliament,  
National Defence Committee (Estonia)



**CHARLES A. KUPCHAN**  
Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations  
(USA)



**LAURYNAS KASČIŪNAS**  
Head, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Delegation  
(Lithuania)



**JAROSLAV BŽOCH**  
Vice-chairman, Parliamentary Committee on  
Foreign and European Affairs (Czech Republic)



**GRIGORE-KALEV STOICESCU**  
Diplomat and member of the Parliament,  
National Defence Committee (Estonia)



**DORKA TAKÁCSY**  
MODERATOR  
Research Fellow, Centre for Euro-Atlantic  
Integration and Democracy (Hungary)

## SECURITY DIMENSION

# EU – US SECURITY RELATIONS: THE AFTERMATH OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

## INTRODUCTION

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has undeniably reshaped the landscape of global politics and, in particular, the dynamics of the transatlantic partnership between the European Union and the United States. The perspectives of our experts shed light on the evolving nature of this partnership, the response to the crisis in Ukraine, and the critical need to address both domestic and international challenges as they navigate the future of transatlantic relations.



## WHAT HAS MADE THE WEST MORE UNITED THAN EVER BEFORE NOW

Charles A. Kupchan, Senior Fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations (USA), states that the Russian invasion has triggered a repositioning of Europe as a focal point within the US geopolitical strategy. Consequently, the United States now finds itself allocating its resources between two pivotal theaters of operation: Europe and Asia. Despite enduring moments of turbulence in transatlantic relations since the end of the Cold War, Kupchan highlights a pressing concern – vulnerabilities within the United States itself. These vulnerabilities encompass domestic issues such as the rise of illiberal populism and racism, issues that demand equal attention.

**“The Russian invasion has brought Europe back to the center of the US geopolitical strategy.”**



CHARLES A. KUPCHAN

The unity displayed by NATO in response to the crisis in Ukraine has taken Russia by surprise. NATO's strategic shift toward a defense concept and its increased presence in Eastern Europe are undeniably positive developments according to Laurynas Kasčiūnas, Head of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Delegation (Lithuania). These changes indicate a more resolute approach toward the security of the alliance's eastern flank.



Grigore-Kalev Stoicescu, Diplomat and member of the Parliament of the National Defence Committee (Estonia), emphasizes that NATO has not only endured the post-Cold War era but has, in fact, expanded and grown stronger. He underscores the European Union's robust security dimension attributing it to the US and highlights the commitment of the United States to safeguard Europe's security.

**“A good strategy is not just about the desirable it is also about the possible.”**



CHARLES A. KUPCHAN

## IS IT TIME FOR A “PLAN B” FOR UKRAINE?

While the transatlantic coalition has displayed remarkable stability, Kupchan also draws attention to the necessity of informing the public regarding the continued importance of providing aid to Ukraine. Yet, there is a growing sentiment, particularly within some factions of the Republican Party, advocating for a reduction of aid to Ukraine. Kupchan suggests that the time is ripe for an open dialogue regarding a „Plan B“ – an alternative strategy, which may involve the acceptance of a frozen conflict or diplomatic solution in the face of an ongoing, and potentially protracted conflict.

For Kasčiūnas, the most potent strategy to contain Russia is to provide unwavering support to Ukraine. This approach implies that the international community must continue to bolster Ukraine's capacity to defend itself, maintaining unyielding pressure on Russia.

**„We need to enforce peace through strength.“**



LAURYNAS KASČIŪNAS

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has effectively buried the concept of EU strategic autonomy, resurrecting NATO as a collective defense organization. In light of these shifts, Kupchan anticipates mounting pressure on Europe to intensify its contributions to NATO partnership. He also emphasizes the imperative of the transatlantic community to engage the Global South.

**“The stronger Europe gets the better the partnership will be with the United States because the US will pay more attention to Europe.”**



CHARLES A. KUPCHAN

Jaroslav Bžoch, Vice-chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign and European Affairs (Czech Republic), acknowledges the persisting undercurrent of rivalry between the United States

and Europe, largely attributed to their shared status as economic superpowers. The challenge that lies ahead is to refine their cooperation while effectively managing their economic rivalry.

## WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIPLOMACY AND RUSSIA?

Russia's aggressive behavior is rooted in its domestic policy. Grigore-Kalev Stoicescu, Diplomat and member of the Parliament National Defence Committee (Estonia), expresses skepticism about the credibility of agreements with Russia, suggesting that a „Plan B“ should be considered, as Russia's track record erodes trust.

Kupchan comments stating that Russia is going to be a troublemaker no matter what, no matter when and where. He also warns that the war in Ukraine should not be underestimated as it could spin out of control. Although Russia may not seek a direct confrontation with Ukraine and NATO, the situation remains volatile.

Stoicescu counters Kupchan's argument, objecting that Ukraine alone cannot defeat Russia but rather necessitates collective action to liberate itself. Jaroslav Bžoch proposes a diplomatic approach, cautioning against underestimating the power of democracy. Laurynas Kasčiūnas

**“A bully at home is a bully outside its home.”**



GRIGORE-KALEV STOICESCU

raises a crucial question: what is the ultimate goal of supporting Ukraine? He acknowledges disparities between some EU countries and the US concerning whether the goal is prolonged defense or an ultimate victory.

The discussion further delves into the issue of Russia's political landscape. Stoicescu and Bžoch highlight the importance of the Russian people driving change within their country. Kupchan, on the other hand, underscores the durability of the Russian regime and Putin's long-standing position through warfare, it could potentially undermine international law and establish a “rule of the jungle”.

**“If Russia escapes and gets out of this war without being taken responsible both for war crimes and the damage, we will be in much bigger trouble in the future.”**



GRIGORE-KALEV STOICESCU

**“If Ukrainian territory goes through war to Russia's possession, we can immediately throw the international law into the garbage because it would become a rule of the jungle.”**



GRIGORE-KALEV STOICESCU





## IS UKRAINE'S FUTURE THE BATTLEGROUND FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW AND TRANSITION TOWARDS THE WEST?

The conversation shifts to the critical topic of Ukraine's reconstruction after the conflict. Kasčiūnas emphasizes the need for immediate action in this regard. Bžoch suggests that companies willing to contribute to Ukraine's reconstruction require guarantees, leaving the question of whether states or the EU will provide them.

**“The biggest defeat for Putin would be Ukraine as a successful liberal democracy anchored in the West, and the longer this war goes on the harder it will be for Ukraine to get there.”**



CHARLES A. KUPCHAN

Kupchan expresses that Ukraine's success as a liberal democracy anchored in the West would be a significant defeat for Putin. Still, he also underscores the necessity of an honest conversation regarding Ukraine's best but real interests.



**„We are entering an uncertain bumpy period in international history. How it turns out is going to depend upon the ability of the West to anchor that transition to stay together and to rebuild confidence in our economies and our democratic institutions.“**



CHARLES A. KUPCHAN

**“I am not giving up on Ukraine's territorial integrity but I think we should have an honest hard conversation about what is in the interest of Ukraine.”**



CHARLES A. KUPCHAN

The collective sentiment is that the West is entering an uncertain and challenging period in international history. The outcome will depend on the ability of the Western world to maintain cohesion, rebuild confidence in democratic institutions, and confront the multifaceted challenges posed by the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

### WE RECOMMEND

- The EU and US should bolster their deterrence capabilities in Europe, reaffirming their commitment to collective security within NATO.
- The transatlantic partners must maintain a unified and unwavering stance on Russia's actions.
- The EU and the US should actively engage in diplomatic efforts to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict.
- The EU and the US should continue providing political, financial, and military support to Ukraine. This assistance should be aimed not only at helping Ukraine defend itself but also at facilitating the country's recovery and reconstruction in the post-conflict period.
- It is crucial to maintain transparency about the situation and communicate the reasons for supporting Ukraine to the public. Public support is essential in sustaining long-term commitments.









## European Liberal Forum

European Liberal Forum (ELF) is the foundation of the European Liberal Democrats, the ALDE Party. A core aspect of the forum's work consists in issuing publications on Liberalism and European public policy issues.

The foundation also provides a space for the discussion of European politics, and offers training for liberal-minded citizens. The aim is to promote active citizenship in the European Union. The foundation is made up of a number of European think-tanks, political foundations and institutes. The diversity of membership provides a wealth of knowledge and is a constant source of innovation. In turn, we provide our members with the opportunity to cooperate on European projects under the ELF umbrella.

ELF works throughout Europe as well as in the EU neighbourhood countries. The youthful and dynamic nature of ELF allows us to be at the forefront in promoting active citizenship, getting citizens involved with European issues and building an open, liberal Europe.

 europeanliberalforum

 EurLiberalForum

 eurliberalforum

 @EuropeanLiberalForum

[www.liberalforum.eu](http://www.liberalforum.eu)



## Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom

Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom is a German liberal foundation with over 60 years of tradition. It aims to promote values of liberal democracy, freedom and human rights in more than 60 countries all over the world. With safeguarding and development of its statutory projects the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom wants to contribute to shaping the future. Furthermore, it assists the development of democratic and constitutional structures by supporting liberal parties, NGOs as well as talented individuals. The foundation's central idea is the realisation of freedom and responsibility.

 FriedrichNaumannStiftungFreiheit

 FNFreiheit

 stiftungfuerdiefreiheit

 @stiftungfreiheit

[www.freiheit.org](http://www.freiheit.org)



## Institute for Politics and Society

Institute for Politics and Society is a Czech think-tank founded in October 2014. The mission of the Institute is to cultivate the Czech political and public sphere through an in-depth and open discussion and to create a living platform which addresses problems and offers recipes for their solutions through international conferences, seminars, public discussions, political and social analyses available to the whole Czech society. We believe that an open discussion is a prerequisite for any successful solution to political and social problems.

Our main themes are foreign and security policy, defence, European matters, but also schooling, digitalisation, power industry, urbanism, life in a city and in the public space, values in politics and human rights in our country and abroad.

 politikaspolecnost

 institutps

 politika\_spolecnost

 @Institutpropolitikuaspolcnost

[www.politikaspolecnost.cz/en/](http://www.politikaspolecnost.cz/en/)

### CONTACT



**Šárka Shoup**

Executive Director  
Institute for Politics and Society

[shoup@politicsandsociety.cz](mailto:shoup@politicsandsociety.cz)  
+420 602 502 685



**Kristína Majerčíková**

Project Manager  
Institute for Politics and Society

[majercikova@politicsandsociety.cz](mailto:majercikova@politicsandsociety.cz)  
+420 607 050 621

Published by the European Liberal Forum in cooperation with the Institute for Politics and Society. Co-funded by the European Parliament. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) alone. These views do not necessarily reflect those of the European Parliament and/or the European Liberal Forum.





**[WWW.MULTIPLE-CHALLENGES-FOR-EUROPE.EU](http://WWW.MULTIPLE-CHALLENGES-FOR-EUROPE.EU)**

Organiser



Partners



**FRIEDRICH NAUMANN  
FOUNDATION** For Freedom.

INSTITUTE  
FOR POLITICS  
AND SOCIETY