

MICHEL FOUCHER

Member of the Council on Foreign Affairs. Former Ambassador to Latvia.

As a domestic market the European Union “at 27 members and more” is clearly viable. As a political body, it can only be viable if it is based on a reformed project. As an active and recognized geopolitical center, it is not yet viable.

Driven by actors of a growing single market and by a security imperative, the EU's territorial expansion continues without serious consideration of its consequences for the viability of institutions and for the efficiency of decision mechanisms. The sense of belonging to a collective body, which would in turn create a community, has been rendered questionable by the lack of clarity about procedures, the absence of solutions to challenges of the period, and fears of the dilution of individual identities. On a world scale, the EU functions as an economic and monetary center and as a successful laboratory of regional integration. However, it is not considered a major geopolitical actor, due to the lack of unity among the views and actions, expressed and perceived, of its Member States.

What can link these three key dimensions— economy, politics, and geopolitics – is the elaboration, explanation, and promotion of specific European interests, all of which can be examined on three relevant geographical scales: that of the EU itself as a system of relations among a growing number of Member States and their societies; that of nearby and troubled areas next to the EU; and finally that which encompasses a vast world in full mutation.

The workshop was dedicated to the first question, that of possible borders of an enlarged EU on the basis of the presentation of the issue and scenarios by Amb. Michel Foucher. For Kemal Dervis (UNDP), the issue for Turkey, which is already part of an enhanced cooperation through the customs union, is to follow its modernisation within an European framework and to stress policies and concrete cooperations more than border issues which will stay in flux. In 2020-2030, the world will be made of regional unions or even more complex with countries taking part of several groupings. For Arseniy Yatsenyuk (Rada, Kiev), concrete policies are required from the EU in the fields of energy, visas, free trade agreement. The association agreement has to offer precise contents so to make Ukraine closer to the EU. If Ukraine has stable relations with Russia, the task will be easier for the EU. His conclusion is that a EU-30+ is more sustainable than the present EU-27. For Jusuf Wanandi, the EU is defined by its member-states so it looks more like a confederation than a federal system. The EU can help to limit protectionist trends. For Hans Stark (IFRI) Germany is more interested by institutions and solidarity than by border issues. Michel Foucher has described a scenario of greater differentiation both in an enlarged EU, where major states have more weight, and also for the neighbourhood policy, in a “à la carte” policy. To sum up, Quentin Peel (Financial Times) has pointed out the popular resistance, the foot-dragging, on further enlargement, the political inevitability of new round on extension which will change the nature of the EU which could become more sustainable in the world to come.