

Preliminary Topics

56th Young Königswinter Conference 2016

1. The UK and the European Union after the referendum

The EU operates on the principle that EU citizens have similar rights across all EU member states. However, the EU already knows a number of exceptions from this rule; for instance, when Eastern European member states joined, its citizens did not immediately get access to all Western European labour markets. Also, not all EU citizens can receive German welfare benefits (such as Hartz IV) when moving to Germany.

How do you evaluate the current agreement between Britain and the EU, which involves that individuals from other EU countries have less access to British welfare benefits when working in Britain? Do you think such exception eventually erode basic principles of European integration?

The EU is currently facing several internal crises (refugee crisis, failure of Dublin regulations) and external challenges (war in Syria, status of Ukraine). Does this interact with the capacity of the EU to undertake a more fundamental reform? In which areas could Germany and Britain contribute to a strengthened European policy, or example CFSP, internal market, structured relations between Euro- and Non-Euro members?

Does the referendum trigger chain reactions for „special wishes“ of other member states or will the other EU member states seek more integration?

What does the referendum mean for the cohesion of the United Kingdom?

Does the referendum facilitate a closer cooperation between London, Paris and Berlin or will it strengthen unilateral forces in the UK?

2. Refugee crisis

The refugee crisis seems to pose an unprecedented challenge to the EU member states and their societies. We see a failure of European institutions and regulations on many levels. This raises several questions:

Why do major players in the EU – like Britain, France, and Germany – do not seem to act in concert in address the challenges of the European refugee crisis? Do EU member states have interests that are too different from one another in order to generate a European response? Does Germany – with Angela Merkel's preferences for comparably open borders – prevent a compromise among EU member states who would otherwise prefer a

tougher stance? What is the nature of the political cleavage on the refugee crisis: Germany vs. all other EU member states?

Does it help Britain in dealing with the refugee crisis that it is not part of the Schengen zone? Does it harm Germany to be part of Schengen? How might the shape of the Schengen zone be different in five or ten years from now? Is there a necessity for Schengen to overlap (roughly) with the borders of the EU?

Why does it seem to be impossible to implement the (re-)distribution of 200.000 refugees that all EU member states agreed on in October 2015? Are refugee quotas beyond the scope of solidarity in the EU?

What are the features of a scenario in which the EU could tackle the refugee crisis? Does the scenario involve NATO or heavily armed FRONTEX forces at the external borders of the EU? What are the obligations of countries that have external EU borders and what are obligations of EU member states that do not have external EU borders? What can Germany and Britain do to realise this scenario? What constrains the power of the big EU member states like Germany and Britain?

What is the role of the EU Commission and the European Council vis-à-vis Germany and Britain in solving the refugee crisis?

3. The neighbourhood of the EU

The EU needs Turkey as a constructive partner in the refugee crisis and in the endeavours to achieve peaceful solutions for Syria and Irak. Some critics argue that the EU overlooks Turkey's poor human rights record so it can rely on it when it comes to refugees from Syria. Is this *Realpolitik* that is without any alternative given the circumstances?

How much bargaining power does Turkey gain by playing a critical role in solving the refugee crisis? What does this power "buy" Turkey, for instance when it comes to its EU membership application?

How do you evaluate the efforts of the UK and Germany to end the war in Syria? What is the role of a Common Security and Defence Policy of the EU in dealing with the war in Syria and the situation in the Middle East?

Given Russia's strategic involvement in Syria and the Ukraine, what are the current priorities of a Common Security and Defence Policy with regard to dealing with Putin?

Experts point out that the action migration is the small beginning of a much larger one: „Africa ante portas“?